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OBITUARIES

John Edwin Adams

Dr. John Edwin Adams, a renowned neurosurgeon at the University of California at San Francisco Medical Center and an internationally known expert on cerebral palsy, epilepsy and Parkinson's disease, died May 18 at the UC San Francisco Medical Center. He was 85.

Dr. Adams was among the first to use radioisotopes to help unlock the riddle of brain functions. And he assembled an interdisciplinary team at UC San Francisco to develop a pioneering program in stereotaxic surgery for the treatment of Parkinson's disease, cerebral palsy, epilepsy and intractable pain.

A descendant of the Adams presidential family, Dr. Adams was born on April 18, 1914, in Berkeley, where his father, George Plimpton Adams, was a philosophy professor at the University of California and a founder of the Berkeley Academic Senate.

Dr. Adams attended Milton Academy in Boston and graduated from UC Berkeley in 1935. As an undergraduate, he was a member of the varsity crew team. He continued rowing throughout medical school at Harvard, rowing with the Union Boat Club in the Henley Regatta in England in 1936.

As a member of the Lake Merritt Rowing Club, Dr. Adams rowed again at Henley at the age of 80.

He received a master's degree from Harvard in 1939 and was surgical house officer at the Brigham and Children's Hospital in Boston when his postgraduate training was interrupted by World War II.

A combat Marine paratrooper, Dr. Adams served in the Pacific Theater as a battalion surgeon with the Marine Corps parachute troops on the battlefields of Guadalcanal, Vella La Vella and Bougainville. In 1945, he was aboard the first American ship to enter Tokyo Harbor after V-J Day.

Dr. Adams resumed his postgraduate training at UC San Francisco in 1946. In 1948, he was appointed an instructor in the newly formed Department of Neurological Surgery, rising rapidly to associate professor and then chairman of the department in 1957.

His innovative programs prompted the University of California regents in 1970 to dedicate his laboratory as the Howard C. Naffziger Institute for Neurological Research, named for Professor Adams' mentor, and to name him director and Guggenheimer professor of experimental neurological surgery, a position he held until his retirement in 1984.

Dr. Adams married a Berkeley classmate, Sally Patterson, the granddaughter of a pioneer California settler, in 1935.

Dr. Adams continued after retirement to remain an eminent presence on the UC San Francisco neurological surgery faculty.

He was a member of the Harvey Cushing Society and the American College of Surgeons. He was also a board member of the Avery-Fuller-Welch Children's Foundation in San Francisco, which provides grants to handicapped and disabled children.

In 1968, Dr. Adams was elected president of the Neurosurgical Society of America. He was co-founder of the Epilepsy Research Group at UC San Francisco. And in 1986, the Adams endowed the annual John and Sally Adams Neurosurgery Lecture at UC San Francisco, which continues to this day.

Dr. Adams is survived by two daughters, Abigail Adams Campbell of Woodside and Susan Adams Engs of Reno; a son, Henry Patterson Adams of Camarillo; his sister, Cornelia Adams Lonnberg of Noce, France; eight grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

Dr. Adams' wife of 60 years, Sally, died in 1995.

Contributions in Dr. Adams' memory may be made to the Epilepsy Research Fund, Department of Neurosurgery, Box 0520, UC San Francisco, San Francisco, Calif. 94143-0520.

Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

Volume III

THE PATTERSON RANCH, PAST AND FUTURE:
THE FAMILY'S PERSPECTIVE

Interviews with

Donald Patterson
William Volmer
Jeannette Korstad
Marilyn Price
Sally Patterson Adams
John E. Adams
David G. Patterson
Robert Buck
Leon G. Campbell, Jr.
Wilcox Patterson
George Patterson
Bruce Patterson
Abigail Adams Campbell

Interviews Conducted by
Stanley Bry
Ann Lage
Knox Mellon
Donald Patterson
in 1964, 1977, 1986, 1987

Since 1954 the Regional Oral History Office has been interviewing leading participants in or well-placed witnesses to major events in the development of northern California, the West, and the nation. Oral history is a modern research technique involving an interviewee and an informed interviewer in spontaneous conversation. The taped record is transcribed, lightly edited for continuity and clarity, and reviewed by the interviewee. The resulting manuscript is typed in final form, indexed, bound with photographs and illustrative materials, and placed in The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley and other research collections for scholarly use. Because it is primary material, oral history is not intended to present the final, verified, or complete narrative of events. It is a spoken account, offered by the interviewee in response to questioning, and as such it is reflective, partisan, deeply involved, and irreplaceable.

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DONORS TO THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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Alameda County Water District
Brooks Family Foundation
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East Bay Regional Park District
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David and Joan Patterson
Dorothy Patterson
J. B. Patterson Trust

Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

VOLUME I

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ELVAMAE ROSE BORCHI	Girlhood in a Patterson Ranch Farm Family, 1931-1948
RUEL BROWN	Observations of a Ranch Worker's Son, 1918-1950s
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VOLUME III

THE PATTERSON RANCH, PAST AND FUTURE: THE FAMILY'S PERSPECTIVE

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ROBERT BUCK	Patterson Property Management, 1970s-1980s
LEON G. CAMPBELL	Balancing Agriculture and Development, Family and Public Interests
WILCOX PATTERSON	Donald Patterson and Patterson Ranch Management, 1950s-1980s
GEORGE PATTERSON	Recalling the Pattersons' Past: The Family, Land, and Historic Homes
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PREFACE

The Patterson Ranch

The historic George Washington Patterson home and ranch in Fremont, California, provides the focus for this oral history project which explores changing patterns of land-use in southern Alameda County over the past 130 years. George Washington Patterson was a forty-niner from Lafayette, Indiana, who left the gold fields to settle on the rich alluvial plain created by Alameda Creek, on the southeastern shore of San Francisco Bay. He accumulated properties to form a 4,000-acre ranch in this area known as Washington Township and an additional 10,000 acres inland in the Livermore Valley. In 1877, he married Clara Hawley and added on to his home to create the Queen Anne style mansion that now is the centerpiece of the Ardenwood Regional Preserve, a historic farm operated by the East Bay Regional Park District on former Patterson ranch lands.

Since George Patterson's death in 1895, three generations of his descendants have continued to oversee the ranch operations, sharecropped in the earlier years by tenants who grew vegetable crops on family farms and later leased to larger-scale and more modernized agricultural operations. Agriculture continued to flourish on Patterson ranch lands while surrounding lands succumbed to the pressures of urbanization from the burgeoning Bay Area metropolis in the post-World War II population explosion.

The rapid urbanizations of the area brought with it inevitable political changes. The several small unincorporated towns of Washington Township--Alvarado and Decoto; Irvington, Mission San Jose, Niles, Centerville, and Warm Springs; and Newark--incorporated into the three cities of Union City, Fremont, and Newark in the 1950s. The Alameda County Water District, formed to conserve the ground water for the area's farmers, expanded its operation and its water supplies to deliver water to suburban customers. The Alameda County Flood Control District channelized Alameda Creek, putting an end to rich alluvial deposits, but making year-round farming and, most significantly, housing development possible on the northern flood plain.

By the 1970s the Patterson family succumbed to development pressures and began selling off major portions of ranch lands for housing development. Their sale to Singer Housing of the lands surrounding the historic mansion and its landmark eucalyptus trees precipitated the controversy that, after several years of lawsuits and negotiations, resulted in the creation of Ardenwood Regional Preserve. In the 1980s, the family has organized into a corporation with professional management from family members and has managed the development process in accordance with a master plan that emphasizes planned development and preservation of open space. Three regional parks are on former Patterson lands: in addition to Ardenwood, the Coyote Hills and surrounding marshlands are preserved, and in Livermore, the Del Valle Regional Park stands in the middle of Patterson cattle lands. Adjacent to

the industrial park and the suburban housing tracts, lands still held by the Patterson family are leased to a modern truck farm growing cauliflower, lettuce, and specialty vegetables for Bay Area gourmets.

The Oral History Project

With a series of twenty-six interviews, the oral history project explores the transformation of the Patterson ranch as a case study of the complex evolution from agricultural to urban land use. The idea for the project came from the collaborative thinking of Knox Mellon and Leon Campbell. Dr. Mellon, former director of the California State Department of Historic Preservation and professor of history, was assisting the Patterson family to place Ardenwood on the National Registry of Historic Places. He saw the potential for an oral history project and found ready support among the Patterson family, particularly his friend and fellow historian, Leon Campbell, who was part of the management team for Patterson Properties. David Patterson, who has a keen interest in tracing family history, also took a supportive role.

Dr. Mellon came to the Regional Oral History Office with his idea, has worked steadily with us to formulate and direct the project, and has served as interviewer and consultant throughout the three years to the project's completion. Leon Campbell was instrumental throughout in arranging funding and serving as advisor. Because of his ability to look at the story of the Patterson Ranch with a historian's eye, as well as his first-hand knowledge as a family member, he was asked to write the introduction to the project, which places the twenty-six interviews in historical context.

As the planning for the project evolved, three main themes emerged, and these are reflected in the organization of the interviews into three volumes. Volume I focuses on agriculture and rural life on the northern plain of Washington Township in the prewar years and on the agricultural operations of the L.S. Williams and Alameda and Sons companies, the two outfits which farmed on the ranch during the transitional period from the mid-fifties to the present.

Volume II tells the tales of water, development, planning, and historic preservation in the area--topics seemingly diverse which are seen to be closely interrelated in these histories. Volume III focuses on the Patterson family, past and present. Two generations of family members combine nostalgic looks back to rural childhoods with insight into the processes of present-day property management by a family corporation.

Each volume has been enhanced with interviews completed on previous occasions for other purposes, but ones which added so centrally to our project that we requested permission to include them here. These include, in Volume II, the interviews with William D. Patterson, son of George

Washington Patterson, on his work with the Alameda County Water District; and Larry Milnes, assistant manager of the city of Fremont, on the city's role in the negotiations leading to the establishment of Ardenwood.

Volumes I and III have interviews which were recorded in 1975 and 1977 by family member Donald Patterson for the family archive at the Society of California Pioneers. These include the interview with neighboring farmer William McKeown in Volume I and cousin William Volmer in Volume III. Donald Patterson also recorded his own recollections on tape and later was interviewed for the Society of California Pioneers by Stanley Bry. Transcriptions of these tapes are included in Volume III. The project was further enriched by the volunteer assistance of Bill Helfman, a Fremont resident who recorded two interviews for the project. His interview with Donald Furtado is in Volume I.

To enhance the reader's understanding of the interviews, illustrative materials have been included. Maps of the southern Alameda County area in 1956 and 1987 are in the introductory pages for each volume. Family trees of the Patterson and Hawley families are included in Volume III (pages 2 and 31). The 1981 town development plan for the Patterson Ranch is in the appendix to Volume II. In addition, interview histories preceding each memoir give specifics on the conduct and content of the interviews.

All of the tapes for the project interviews are available in The Bancroft Library. Society of California Pioneer tapes are in their archive in San Francisco. In addition to the transcribed interviews included here, three interviews recorded for background information are available on tape only. These are interviews with Dorothy Wilcox Patterson, wife of Donald, and Eleanor Silva and Mary Dettling, former housekeepers for the Henry Patterson family.

Research Resources

Many resources exist for research on the subject matters of these interviews. The Society of California Pioneers has papers and business records and photographs of the Patterson family. A guide to these papers, a useful bibliography, and other information exists in Faces in Time: An Historic Report on the George Washington Patterson Family and the Ardenwood Estate prepared for the East Bay Regional Park District by Susan A. Simpson, 1982. The local history collection and the Grace Williamson collection in the Alameda County library in Fremont is another valuable source. Their collection includes many untranscribed oral history interviews with individuals prominent in Fremont's history. The library of California State University at Hayward also includes works on the history of the region. A CSUH master's thesis in geography gives specific information about the history of land use on the Patterson Ranch; it is based in part on a 1971 interview with Donald Patterson (Jerome Pressler. Landscape Modification through Time: the Coyote Hills, Alameda County, California. 1973).

Research Use

The diversity and the universality of themes explored in this series of oral history interviews insure that they will be consulted by a wide variety of researchers. They are intended to be of use to the East Bay Regional Park District in planning and interpretation. They provide information on the history of agriculture, particularly the loss of agricultural lands to urbanization and the problems of farming in an urban setting. They discuss the process of land planning from the perspectives of city officials, developers, and property owners. They give an indepth history of the Alameda County Water District and illuminate the role of water in development. Finally, they provide a candid look at a family business over four generations and give insight to the dynamics of personalities and intra-family, inter-generational conflicts in shaping decisions in family businesses.

Ann Lage
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

INTRODUCTION by Leon G. Campbell

The three volumes of interviews prepared by the Regional Oral History Office of the University of California, Berkeley, dealing with the Patterson family and ranch between the years 1851-1988, constitute a case study of changing land use in southern Alameda County from the days of the first Californios to the present. George Washington Patterson (1822-1895) came to California with the Gold Rush but remained to found an extensive farming and ranching enterprise in Alameda County. Originally known as Rancho Potrero de los Cerritos (Cattle Ranch of the Hills), the 4,000-acre Patterson Ranch has remained in family hands as an agricultural and livestock enterprise to the present day. Under the ownership of George Washington's sons, Henry (1878-1955) and William (1880-1961), the Patterson Ranch became a dominant economic institution in southern Alameda County and the family an integral part of the emergence of Fremont as a major Bay Area community.

Situated between the eastern terminus of the Dumbarton Bridge, which connects Alameda County with the West Bay, and Highway 880, the Patterson Ranch is a prominent feature of the East Bay landscape. Today known as "Ardenwood-New Town" in honor of the Shakespearean title sometimes used to describe the ranch, Ardenwood serves as the western gateway to Fremont and the entire South Bay. Despite the fact that the planned district of Ardenwood is less than four years old, the size and scope of the changing land-use patterns on the Patterson Ranch resemble those taking place on the Irvine and Bixby Ranches in southern California, where uninterrupted family ownership has retained influence over time and throughout change.

Several important themes emerge from the various interviews contained within the three volumes. Volume I, Agriculture and Farm Life on Fremont's Northern Plain, chronicles the transition of the Patterson Ranch from a family farm in the nineteenth century to a large-scale agricultural enterprise operated by the L. S. Williams Company during the 1950s. The several interviews of tenant farmers and Patterson Ranch workers covering the period from approximately 1900-1950 constitute an excellent social history of farm life in Fremont's Northern Plain. Collectively, the memoirs of farmers and ranch workers not only inform about the Pattersons as owners but as well provide a third-party perspective upon changing public uses including the development of the Nimitz Freeway (1953), Alameda County Flood Control Project (1965-70), and the dedication of Coyote Hills Regional Park (1968).

The oral histories in Volume I hint at subjects which Volumes II and III treat more centrally, namely the immense changes taking place in the area during the lifetimes of the individual interviewees, particularly during the period following World War II. During the fifties and sixties, southern Alameda County shifted from a rural to an urban orientation, resulting in the incorporation of cities and the initiation of water and flood control projects, as these new municipalities began to debate the land and water use issues which had prompted their incorporation.

Volume I: Agriculture on the Ranch

The initial interviews contained in Volume I represent a broad sample of ranch workers and tenant farmers who were closely associated with the Patterson family during the postwar. As a group, they reflect the value of family and neighbors and of traditional virtues associated with farming and farm life. Quite apparent is the fact that these attitudes ran as deep in rural Alameda County as in more traditional agricultural areas outside California. Indeed, the Pattersons considered many of these individuals as their extended family, sharing with them an ethic of hard work and perseverance in the face of drought, flooding, poor crop years, and economic uncertainty. The interviews also cover the transition from cattle ranch to farming and provide important data on the presence of Chinese laborers, Mexican braceros, and migrants of all nationalities who came to comprise the ranch work force. Also recollected are recreational activities from horse racing to duck hunting, the introduction of the tractor to Ardenwood, and the life of the mind in a farming environment, particularly within the context of the development of Stanford University and the University of California at Berkeley where many of the early Patterson family members matriculated.

The second section of Volume I covers the more recent history of the larger-scale L. S. Williams and Alameda family farming operations on the ranch. In addition to providing an excellent overview of the agricultural basis of the Patterson Ranch, this section chronicles the decisions to grow various crops and the reasons for so doing, particularly the ability of various crops to withstand increasing salinity levels as a direct result of the ranch's location on San Francisco Bay and saltwater intrusion into the underground aquifers.

These interviews also reflect the rapidly changing agricultural orientation of northern California as East Bay farmland was converted to housing and industrial uses and agricultural operations relocated into the Salinas Valley, which in turn reoriented transportation and marketing networks. Increasingly isolated from the large growers and packers in the Salinas Valley, agricultural operations in southern Alameda have been forced to either transship their produce to the Midwest and other areas by means of refrigerated trucks or to diversify and reorient their production towards local markets. Since 1984, the Alameda Company has shifted from agribusiness to more of a diversified local farm operation. The Alameda family operates at Ardenwood for only half the year, relocating to Arizona and northern Mexico to grow cauliflower and lettuce during the winter months on a more convenient and large-scale basis. These growers' interviews provide an important case study of the decisions required when farming in a community which is making a rapid transition to urbanization in a precarious agricultural environment.

Volume II: The Context for Rapid Postwar Development

Volume II, Water, Development, and Preservation in Southern Alameda County, provides a more in-depth study of the dynamic tension between development, preservation efforts, and the water projects which have all impacted Alameda County during the period after 1945. The first-hand account of Mathew Whitfield, general manager of the Alameda County Water District during the years 1953-1977, provides a case study of this process of change in the East Bay. Whitfield's vivid recollections, the longest interview in the history, offer a fascinating study of family, water and South Bay politics during the postwar period. Whitfield's oral history may well be the most important single contribution to the project, for the actions of the Alameda County Water District in the 1950s provided the foundation for the subsequent growth of Fremont and the Northern Plain.

Whitfield was a close associate of W. D. Patterson, himself a director of the Alameda County Water District from its inception in 1914, whose recollections, based on a 1955 interview on the subject, are also included in this volume. Whitfield's perspective on the 1950s, the period in which the water district took a central role in planning for controlled growth, provides a context for assessing the subsequent changes which would alter Fremont and the Patterson Ranch thereafter. His reflections also touch upon an important aspect of Patterson family history not treated in this project, namely the events leading up to and including the creation of the Del Valle Regional Park in Livermore, which was created as the result of state condemnation of Livermore ranch land for the Del Valle reservoir. At one time the Patterson Livermore Ranch in Alameda County complemented the Fremont Ranch in an integrated farming-livestock operation. The Livermore operation is not treated herein in any detail, but is an important component of the history of the East Bay Regional Park system.

In addition, Whitfield provides an important perspective on the State Water Project South Bay Aqueduct, which linked both Patterson ranches to the future of water transportation projects. These decisions to import water for groundwater recharge and the subsequent Aquifer Reclamation Program of 1974 to counteract saltwater intrusion were determining factors in the continued agricultural development of southern Alameda County in general and the Patterson Ranch in particular. This interview thus provides an important complement to the Regional Oral History Office's series of oral history interviews on California water issues and relates changes on the Patterson lands to statewide water issues.

Another pivotal interview contained within Volume II is that of John (Jack) Brooks, an important developer in southern Alameda County from the postwar to the present and the primary planner of Ardenwood. Brooks's recollections, because of his long association with the Patterson family and his central position as a political force in Fremont, offer an invaluable look at the city as it has emerged to become the fourth largest municipality in the Bay Area. As Brooks makes clear, with the five communities making up Fremont, the Northern Plain was always anticipated to be a sixth or "New Town," its name today.

Whether this concept of an urban area on the North Plain was acknowledged by Henry and William Patterson before their deaths as Brooks contends, it was apparently supported by William's oldest son, Donald Patterson (1905-1980), who, as the oldest surviving Patterson son, assumed management responsibilities on the ranch after 1961 under an informal primogeniture (Henry Patterson's children were both daughters). Brooks holds that Henry and Will Patterson had virtually agreed to enter a development plan just before Henry's death in 1955. Subsequently, he recollects that the city of Fremont had begun to insist upon cancelling the Williamson Act, which had protected the Patterson family from future tax increases as an agricultural enterprise, so that the Pattersons would in the future pay their fair share of taxes.

Although Brooks understates his role in the process, under his guidance and with Fremont's cooperation, Ardenwood was brought out of Williamson in 1981 and substantial parts of the Patterson Ranch were sold, initially to the Singer Company and later to Kaiser Development Company and to Brooks himself. No less important are Brooks's recollections concerning the advent of a planned district concept and the complicated series of negotiations which led to the creation of Ardenwood Historic Park and the preservation of the George Washington Patterson House at its present location adjacent to Highways 84 and 880. Brooks's interview also describes in some detail why particular land-use decisions were made as they were and how a series of urban villages were created to establish a residential new town and a commercial and high technology center amidst a traditional farming enterprise.

The interview of Dr. Robert Fisher also provides valuable background on the politics of preservation involving Ardenwood. Fisher, the leading light in the Mission Peak Heritage Foundation, describes from his viewpoint how various interested local historical associations including the Washington Township Historical Society, Patterson House Advisory Board, and Ardenwood Regional Park Advisory Committee were all drawn into the question of who was to control and implement what had belatedly been recognized as an important historic and civic asset, namely, the Ardenwood Historic Farm and attendant Victorian mansion which formed its centerpiece.

The recollections of Fisher and of Larry Milnes, assistant city manager of the city of Fremont, provide a balanced view of how municipalities become involved in the process of acquiring valuable assets for future preservation, how these assets are administered, in this case through the aegis of the East Bay Regional Park District, which also operates Coyote Hills Regional Park adjacent to the site. Besides corroborating Brooks's reflections on the Ardenwood process, Milnes's interview describes how decisions were reached over the often controversial questions of deciding the focus and implementing the historical theme. Milnes also depicts, from the city's perspective, the evolution of the Patterson Ranch from agriculture to mixed use.

Following the gift of forty-six acres, including the family home, to the city of Fremont by the Patterson family in 1981, the city consulted the State Office of Historic Preservation in Sacramento to verify Ardenwood's historic value. This in turn led to the city and the Patterson family petitioning the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C., to have the ranch placed on the National Registry of Historic Places, which was accomplished in 1985. Since then, the historic farm has become an increasingly popular tourist attraction featuring demonstration farming and the recreation of nineteenth century farm life.

In sum, this volume treats the interrelated themes of water projects, municipal formation, planned district development and historic preservation within the context of Fremont politics, 1950-1988. It would be naive to contend that the issues delineated have all been resolved or to deny that choices forced upon the various groups involved have not produced bitter disputes. Nevertheless, these interviews, offered by the primary surviving decision-makers in each area, provide basic data about the campaign which transformed the Patterson Ranch from a sprawling agricultural enterprise beset by regular flooding and other natural hazards into a Planned Urban District (PUD).

From the Patterson's perspective, however, a view no doubt shared by Fremont and EBRPD, pride is taken in the fact that a large portion of the Patterson Ranch has been converted to public use, first for the Nimitz Freeway in 1952, then for the flood control uses proposed by Alameda County, and later by the dedication of large tracts of permanent open space, including both the Coyote Hills Regional Park and the Del Valle Reservoir and Park in Livermore as well as the most recent dedication of the Ardenwood Historic Farm now operated by the Park District. The Patterson family's strong advocacy of open space preservation is reflected in the creation of no fewer than three East Bay Regional Parks on Patterson family lands and a substantial portion of the acreage within the planned district being dedicated to public use. This distinguishing feature of Ardenwood, like the better known Irvine and Bixby Ranches in southern California, for example, is intended to provide for the needs of future generations and is a part of the continuing stewardship of the Patterson family management group.

Volume III: The Family Recalls the Past and Confronts the Future

Volume III, The Patterson Ranch, Past and Future: The Family's Perspective, is devoted to the reflections of the third and fourth generation of Patterson family members. The variety of these interviews reflect the quite different personalities and temperaments of George Washington's two sons, Will and Henry, who apparently contemplated a division of their undivided landholdings prior to their deaths, a decision which was never consummated. It was traditional in most large landowning families for the eldest son to assume management responsibilities following his father's death. This was true in the case of George Washington's eldest

son, Henry, who succeeded him in 1895 at seventeen years of age and subsequently with Will Patterson's oldest son, Donald, who assumed responsibility for ranch management in the period after 1961. Donald Patterson's interview, taped by the Society of California Pioneers prior to his death in 1980, provides interesting observations on both his father and grandfather and the nature of their lives at Ardenwood.

Perhaps the most insightful observation corroborated by many others in these volumes was the respectful and cooperative relationship between Will and Henry Patterson, who "never had a disagreement" and consulted one another on every major decision to be made concerning the ranch. Although the two sons differed in temperament and personality and were not what one might call close, they accommodated these differences pragmatically, with the quieter Henry running the ranch and his more outgoing brother Will dealing with the public. Their mutual respect and deliberate way of reaching consensus decisions in addition to their division of labors, both running the ranch and defending the ranch's interests in the South Bay, resulted in a profitable landhold. Ardenwood dominated the regional agricultural economy through the production of row crops (lettuce, cauliflower) and other high quality produce. Will and Henry were excellent farmers, good businessmen, and outstanding citizens, who extended and consolidated their father's agricultural presence in southern Alameda County.

The interview of David Patterson, Will's youngest son, who assumed management responsibilities for the ranch following the death of his older brothers, Donald and John (known as Jack), provides a frank assessment of the difficulties which a family agricultural enterprise faces when it suffers the loss of its patriarchs in a period of transition. During the period in which Donald Patterson ran the ranch, Henry's daughters, Sally Patterson Adams and Marjorie Patterson, were not actively involved in decision-making, this role having been assumed largely by John Brooks, a real estate developer who was close to Donald Patterson and both anticipated and orchestrated the development process.

The interviews with Donald's sons, George and Wilcox, provide considerable information concerning the ranch and their father. None of these memoirs, however, sheds additional light on the process of decision-making between the city, the Pattersons, and John Brooks, although it is likely that the public records of the period (1980-1984) would be helpful to historians interested in understanding the development process. The next stage of land use clearly mandated turning over of substantial portions of the ranch for residential development as rising land values and the shortage of available land for homes resulted in a new Fremont and a transformed Northern Plain.

Following Donald Patterson's death in 1980, David Patterson continued to manage the family farm as the city entered into a development agreement with Brooks. Despite serious rifts within the family, which included an abortive attempt by two of William Patterson's grandchildren to bring suit against their family to obtain the value of their undivided interest in the ranch property, the family held firm against this challenge. When the two

young people hired the nefarious Melvin Belli to sue the Patterson family and were defeated in court (1981), it prompted the Pattersons to move rapidly to incorporate as Patterson Fremont Management, Inc., (PFM) and to set up a series of limited partnerships to manage the land in order that one or more minority family members could not, through undivided ownership, lay waste to the family's plan for future ownership and management of the property. It was this incident which convinced the Pattersons that the days of consensus decision-making as it had existed with Henry and Will had ended. By 1982 the Patterson Ranch had converted to a true business organization.

Interviews of Sally Patterson Adams and her husband, Dr. John E. Adams, shed light not only on the personages of Henry and Sarah Patterson but also provide an alternative recollection on how decisions were reached during the 1960s and 1970s, as the transition was made from agriculture to development by individuals and forces outside the family. Sally Adams provides an intimate portrait of growing up at Ardenwood. John Adams, an ardent preservationist, casts a skeptical eye on the chain of events which led to the ultimate transformation of the ranch, contending that the demand for change was orchestrated by a prevailing coterie at City Hall rather than by population dynamics or other inexorable forces. Adams clearly believes that the ranch could have continued in farming had the family been given the opportunity to make this choice through timely dissemination of information and discussion of alternatives to development.

Interviews by the fourth generation of Pattersons are informative for their explanation of the transition from ranch management by individuals towards a corporate form of business organization. Bruce Patterson provides insights about his father, Jack, as well as the strongly independent natures of the W. D. and H. H. Patterson families. In this regard, interviews by the fourth generation of Pattersons make clear that the testamentary dispositions of their grandfathers, William and Henry, as well as their parents, has resulted in a current generation of Pattersons spread throughout the state and country, of different economic means and lacking common objectives for Ardenwood. This, in turn, has resulted in growing differences of opinion stronger than those developing during the tenure of the third generation. The implications of land being sold to outside developers and the first cash distributions to family members both raised expectations and produced further disputes, rather than silencing them. Certain limited partners began to question the decisions of those family members serving as general partners and to urge a liquidation of remaining ranch assets. In general, these disputes follow family lines.

Interviews with other members of the PFM Board include those by former president Robert Buck, a Patterson son-in-law and attorney who currently serves as PFM's legal counsel. Buck provides yet another perspective on the events leading to the Ardenwood development, particularly the Kaiser land sales and the creation of the Patterson Properties business enterprise during the 1980s.

Leon Campbell, another son-in-law serving as PFM's executive vice president, recounts how he and Buck were called upon to assume management and investment responsibilities for the Patterson family. As the vast, undeveloped acreage appreciated in value, situated within one of the most rapidly growing parts of the Bay Area, they completed tax deferred exchanges, putting the family into income-producing properties which PFM managed and operated. As they assumed their posts in 1985, Buck and Campbell were increasingly called upon to mediate between decisions which had been made prior to the Pattersons' complete awareness of a political process which had developed apart from them and future policy issues which loomed ahead, such as those of wetlands, the subsidization of agriculture, and the Town Center development.

These business recollections are paralleled by those of Donald Patterson's other son, George Patterson, who provides a sensitive internal history on the family at Ardenwood, and Abigail Adams Campbell, daughter of Sally Patterson Adams, on her grandparents, Sarah and Henry Patterson.

Taken together, the several interviews by the fourth generation of Patterson family management underscores the dichotomy of events which have transpired in Fremont's North Plain during the period since 1980 and particularly since 1984, when the initial land sale to Kaiser Development Corporation was instituted. Hardly conclusive in their entirety, these last interviews restate the younger generation's perspective on their fathers and grandfathers, as well as their own perceptions about the rapidly changing nature of the real estate which they have been requested to monitor in the future. These changes have rendered the personal managerial tradition of the Patterson family largely unworkable, although considerable nostalgia for the "old ways" still exists, which often precludes certain limited partners from adhering to a general partnership organization. In many ways the family runs each other rather than running a business, a not uncommon aspect of organizations with strongly paternal origins. The challenge ahead will be to forge a new consensus to accommodate an era promising even greater alterations in the Patterson Ranch and the East Bay.

Conclusion and Acknowledgements

In conclusion, this oral history of the Patterson family and ranch, 1851-1988, has much to contribute to the general history of southern Alameda County and is particularly informative on the transitional years between 1945 and the present, which are largely omitted in the historical literature, by drawing on the reflections of those who were the primary actors during those years.

The Regional Oral History Office of The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, has provided an ideal method for understanding the linkages between the Patterson family, its agricultural and ranching enterprise, and actions taken by city, county and state

organizations in response to the pressures of rapid urbanization occurring in the East Bay during the postwar period. These interviews with the surviving senior members of the Patterson family and key individuals associated with the family agricultural and business operations over the past fifty years not only underscore the enormous changes taking place in the area during the lifetimes of those interviewed, but they also indicate how and why these changes were implemented. Often it appears that matters of great significance were reached by informal agreement rather than formal debate both within the family and perhaps outside of it. These interviews reflect a simpler time, prior to the advent of citizen-sponsored initiatives and environmental impact reports, a period when many leaders shared common assumptions concerning the value of growth and development to municipalities. Few could have comprehended the scope of growth which was to transform the Bay Area so dramatically during the postwar period and the reactions which it would produce.

The Patterson family is proud to have its history included in The Bancroft Library's treasury of interviews with major figures in the history of California and the West. The three-volume oral history project represents a substantial historiographical advancement towards the development of a comprehensive history of the East Bay and its progenitory families.

I should like to thank the staff of the Regional Oral History Office at Berkeley, particularly Division Head Willa Baum and Project Director Ann Lage, for the dedicated effort which they have made in bringing this project to fruition through the recording, transcription and editing of these interviews. The trained oral historians on the ROHO staff, whose careful research and sensitive interview techniques are clearly manifest throughout the project, have clearly set the tone for the entire project. My long-time friend, Dr. Knox Mellon, former head of the State Office of Historic Preservation in Sacramento, who skillfully directed the nomination of the Ardenwood Regional Preserve to the National Register of Historic Places, has also been pivotal in finalizing this project. Dr. Mellon's liaison as a consultant to the Regional Oral History Office and ROHO's strong ties to state and local historical groups both assure that the project meets specific needs as well as serving the larger scholarly community through the questions it raises and the information it preserves.

This oral history project substantially advances earlier studies carried out by the East Bay Regional Park District, which were designed to analyze the property exclusively in terms of its archaeological significance. By recording the reflections of two generations of Patterson family members about life and work on the Patterson Ranch, the project also relates centrally to the history of Fremont and to the entire East Bay which otherwise might be lost forever.

Through the incorporation of interviews with members of the Patterson Ranch labor force, water district officials and a broad spectrum of Fremont city officials and politicians, as well as interviews with other key individuals now deceased, recorded earlier by the Society of California

Pioneers, and interviews with individuals charged with the stewardship of the remaining lands of Patterson, this oral history project anticipates a full history of the Patterson Ranch and the South Bay. The subject should be of future value to scholars interested in urban planning, land use decision-making, agricultural history, the process of municipal formation and water issues, matters related to conservation and historic preservation as they pertain to the East Bay and, of course, the political matrix in which these issues are situated. In this regard, this project, which deals with life, land and politics on the Patterson Fremont Ranch, exceeds the sum of its parts.

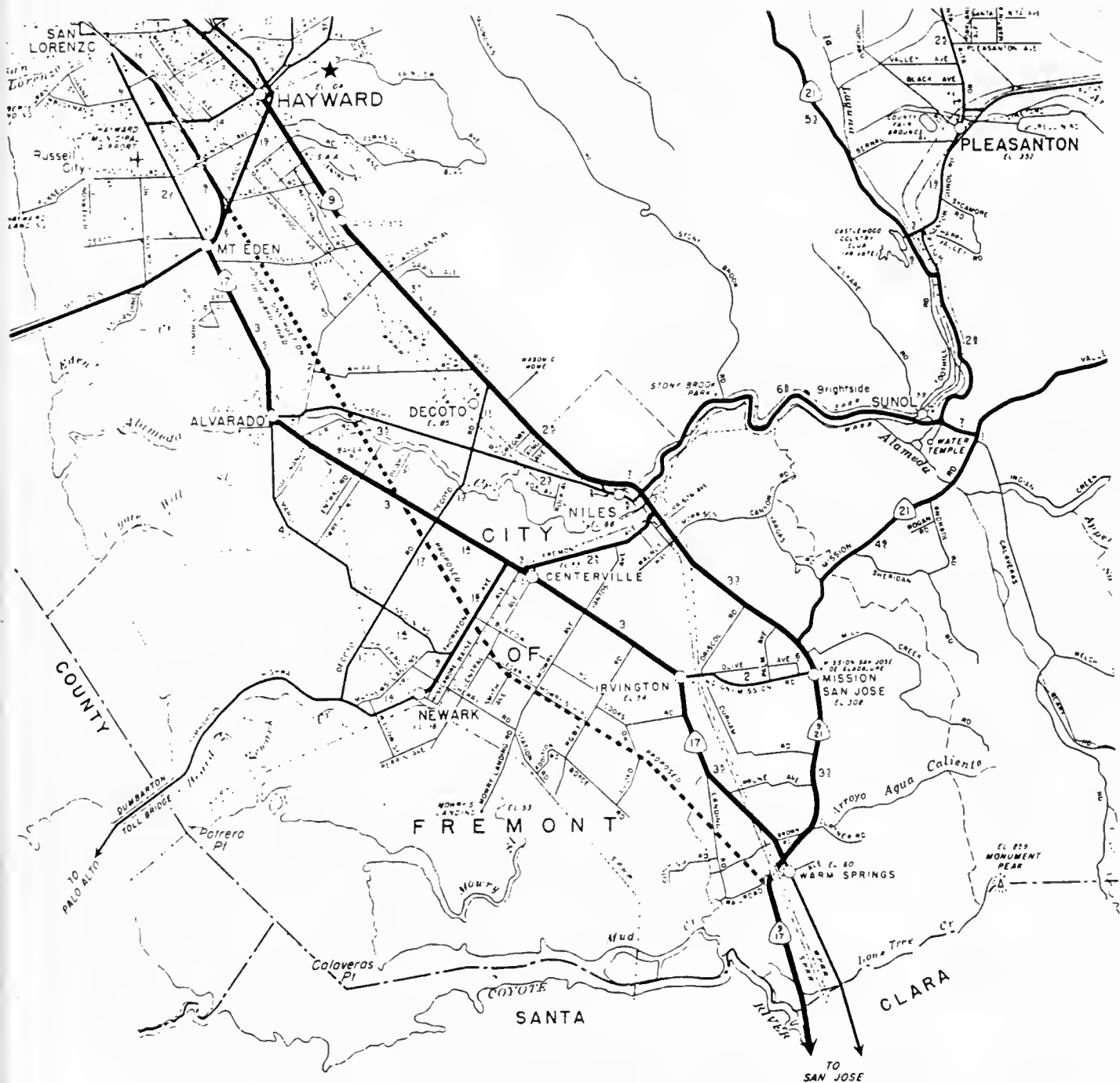
The personal and financial support of several individuals and groups also made the project possible. Financial sponsorship of the project has been provided by the East Bay Regional Park District, the Brooks Family Foundation, the City of Fremont, the Oliver De Silva Company, the Alameda County Water District, and various members of the Patterson family, especially David and Joan Patterson, Dorothy Patterson, and the J. B. Patterson Trust. David and Joan Patterson have been steadfast in their determination to preserve the history of the Patterson family over time and have supported this work at every juncture.

The present project goes well beyond the Pattersons to focus upon the Patterson Ranch during the years in which it was transformed from a rural agricultural enterprise to the Ardenwood planned community. A "New Town" both in concept and in fact, Shakespeare's idyllic Ardenwood may be an elusive metaphor masking the difficult choices that changes in land use inevitably bring.

Leon G. Campbell
Executive Vice President
Patterson Fremont Management, Inc.

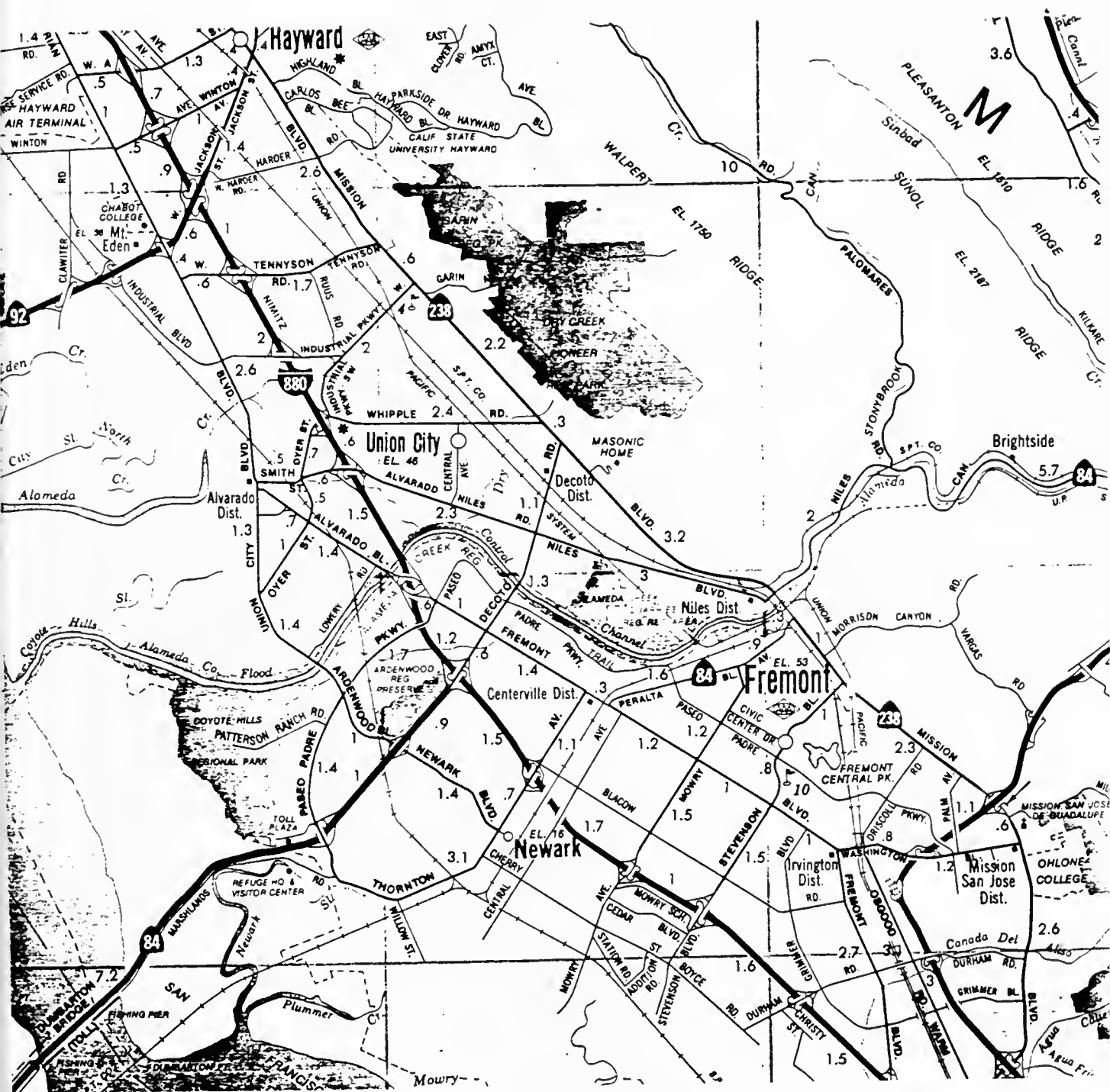
May, 1988
Fremont, California

SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY, 1956



from the 1956 Alameda County map
California State Automobile Association

SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY, 1987

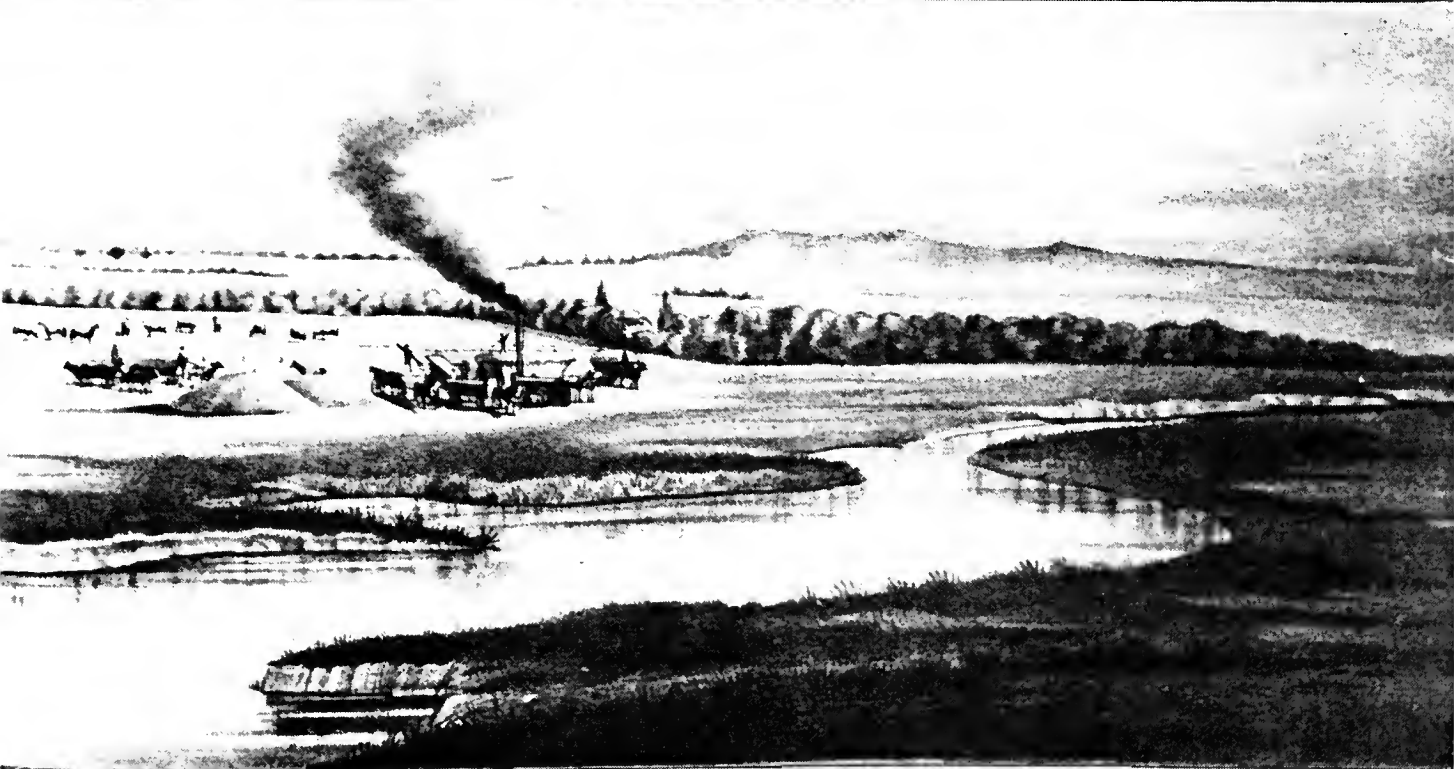


from the 1987 Alameda/Contra Costa map
California State Automobile Association



LANDING AND FARM OF G. W. PATTERSON

G. W. Patterson home and ranch, from the Official and Historical Atlas



ALFAMADO, ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

PREFACE -- Overland Journey, 1849
by George Washington Patterson

In 1872, the founder of the Patterson family and ranch in California, George Washington Patterson, was asked by historian Herbert Howe Bancroft to write his recollections of his overland journey from his home in Indiana across Mexico to the gold fields of California. The following manuscript is a thoughtful and stirring account of his trip, undertaken in 1849 with a twenty men, "from fiery youth to vigorous middle age," from Lafayette and Americus, Indiana.

Patterson, who is remembered in the oral histories in this project as being a reserved, perhaps dour, no-nonsense businessman-rancher, displays in this letter to Bancroft sensitivity, a colorful style, and good humor. He describes the group's gala departure on March 13, 1849, as they set out on an unknown route in high spirits. Several of the company were members of a brass band; they played for the group of well-wishers and carried their instruments along with them, only to have them later "dashed to pieces on bucking mules and tumbled over precipices in the Corderlas Mountains." On the arduous journey across Mexico, the company suffered severe privations: "That men from the Wabash--the land of pork and corn--should be limited in their eating was not to be endured." Despite the hardships, he was able to appreciate the beauty of the Sierra Madre as they traveled along their eastern base, a sight that was "to us, never having seen a mountain before, exceedingly grand."

The depth of his emotions is revealed as he describes the loss of a young, favored member of the company to cholera. He breaks off his account of the journey after describing the youth's death, leaving the company in Durango and referring Bancroft to other members of the group who might furnish more information. His account is so lively and reveals so much of an unknown side of George Washington Patterson that the reader deeply regrets he was unable to continue at this point, "for want of time."

It is fitting that this oral history project on the Patterson Family and Ranch, undertaken by The Bancroft Library's Regional Oral History Office, should include this letter from George Washington Patterson to Herbert Howe Bancroft. Bancroft was a regional historian from San Francisco who collected vast quantities of written documentation about western North America. In addition, he might be considered the father of oral history, for, recognizing that many pioneer westerners would not commit their recollections to paper, he hired a team of assistants to interview and record their autobiographies in a series of "Dictations."

After publication of his thirty-nine volume history, Bancroft's vast collection went to the University of California in 1905. This collection became the nucleus of the university's Bancroft Library. A half-century

later, when the advent of the tape recorder made recorded interviews a good deal more feasible, Bancroft's "Dictations" became the inspiration for the establishment of the library's Regional Oral History Office.

The G.W. Patterson letter is included here with the permission of the Patterson family and the director of The Bancroft Library. It may not be copied without the permission of the library. Readers should note and follow Patterson's page numbers as they read. Because he was writing on sheets of folded paper, the pages as presented here are not in numerical order.

Ann Lage
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

Overland Journey

1849

Indiana ^{from} to California

Geo. W. Patterson

Alvarado, Cal.

1872

if one of La-Hoyette and the other
from Americas a village
8 miles above on the River, and
they carried their instruments
along to be dashed to pieces on
knocking mules or tumbled over
precipices on the Cordilleras
Mountains. But I am ahead
of my story and must go back
to a steam boat passing the wharf
at La-Hoyette with our Band bid-
ding farewell to half the assem-
bled young. Sheer followed cheer-
till they died in the distance and
some far away on the billow.

Now for the first time all sob-
bered down and turned a hard
to business. We went to Coahuila
where on the "Offham Powers"
to New Orleans. Here we were
compelled to select a route, and
leaving Houston off with war in
Mexico proposing to cut a military
road through by way of the River
Gila decided to go that way, or at
least to go to the front for information
from Mr. O. to Fort Laramie by the
new ship. Portland. Here we bought
over and wagon to haul the baggage
and some horses to ride

Across Mexico

by
G. W. Patterson
El Paso April 4-1892
H. M. Bancroft.

Dear Sir

your commu-
cation asking for material to be
used in the Pacific Encyclopedia
was received some ^{days} since.

I feel flattered with your
notice and will gladly do what
I can to promote a work so
desirable and auspiciously begun.
Up to the present I have been
unable to decide upon what to
do, or what answer to return.

As to my Personal History so
humble and obscure - Surely no
one can be interested in it; But
as connected with the Company
in which I serve it may be sl-
ightly otherwise so, I will give
the brief outlines of our Exped-
ition and you can pick out suc

items as full within the plan of your work and would be of Public interest and send them back for further elaboration.

omitting at present all Biography I will commence with the winter of 1849-50 with the excitement or rather frenzy or furor that followed the news of the discovery of Gold in California.

I lived in La-Grayette Indian at that time and every man with blood in his veins and a few dollars in his pocket, or credit to borrow, turned head toward California - His heart was already here. At first all was confusion and each for himself but at length association suggested its advantages and a Company was formed. Ours (for there were others) consisted of over

thirty members organized as a Joint Stock Company to carry on the business of mining manufacturing and trading. It was composed of the best material from the middle class of society running from fiery youth to vigorous middle age. Each member put in five hundred dollars (no small sum at that time) one half of which was sent to New York to purchase ^{and ship} supplies to San Francisco. The other half was carried with us in Gold. At that time every known route to California was, or soon was to be blocked up with the rush of emigration and we turned our faces to the West without knowing what route to go. The morning of the 13th March 1849 may be forgotten by others but it is glorious to us. In our Company was the better part of two Brass Bands

and swam to an island $\frac{1}{4}$ mile S 5

below where they took me off. Completely exhausted. Before leaving Texas. Come say it was the Paradise of the off-center traveler or lazy man of the best of water and food everywhere and an unbroken meadow ^{of grass} ^{growing} ^{up} ^{to} ^{the} ^{height} ^{of} ^{the} ^{horses} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{breeze} ^{for} ^{hundreds} ^{of} ^{miles}. Add to this the immense herds of horses and cattle as fat as feed can make them, and hundreds of deer ^{con-} ^{tinually} ⁱⁿ ^{sight} ^{and} ^{you} ^{have} ^{Texas} ^{as} ^{we} ^{sub-} ^{mit}. We had a small wagon along to carry the sick which was towed across the river with horses, attached to the horns of the saddles and when it went up the steep bank on the other side with a whoop, I was gratified to hear a soldier remark to his comrade standing by, that "these Hoosiers were some pumpkins."

The country was now rapidly changing for the worse and feed growing shorter ^{from} ^{daily}. Our provisions getting short we were put on rations and this was the severest trial of all that men from the Babash - the land of Pork and Corn should be limited in their eating was not to be endured, and we were rationed as ^{as} ^{was} ^{three} ^{times} ^{often} ^{as} ^{eating} ^a ^{plentiful} ^{breakfast} ^{and} ^{through} ^{out} ^{of} ^{nothing} ^{else}. Such is the power of ^{of} ^{imagination}.

At San Antonio we were told the roads ahead were impassable for heavy teams and changed the entire plan, by selling the team and unnecessary baggage and buying mules and Mustangs to ^{go} ^{on}. These animals were sleek and fat and selected for their good look from large droves of half wild horses called Casaca or Casagord or some such name. They were sold cheap ^{for} ⁵⁰ ^{cents}. and the owner said they would make excellent pack animals when broke. He engaged to lasso and blind their eyes, and then we took possession. Now we were from a Chiricuan Country where they don't raise mules and know nothing of their nature and in a few days nearly all could show wounds more or less severe - some kicked some bitten some skinned with ropes and some whose spurs were nearly broken and bruised at once.

Mr Dennett said we were ⁶ too severe; to treat them gently

The Law of kindness governed all &c. In reply it was said of them as of the State before they were "ill begotten and illegitimate conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity" that God never made them or any Law to govern them, Dennett's proposition was voted down and the war went on as before. A month or more passed with various success sometimes the mules had it and sometimes me, During ^{the} the time nearly all had the cholera but strong to say more died here. The cholera caused frightful destruction of life all around us and especially in Genl Worth's camp near by himself dying. th Here we decided to hear to the Son and make our way through Mexico; and the men being better prepared to start,

we packed the mules and tied them heads and tails in ^{le} a string but had not gone a mile when twenty of them were bucking at the same time and our goods scattered to the winds, we kept on working however, and things grew a little better from day to day.

But we were under a tropical sun and the labor was great and progress slow, When to the River Grand at Eagle Pass where crossed by swimming the horses and ferrying the goods in a boat made of an ot hide stretched over hoops in the shape of a kettle on baskets, a little adventure of my own my horse was dashed over a rock and went down back foremost. - Left the saddle to save myself and came up below in the stream, Had an overcooled round my neck belt & pistols and rifle - disengaged the latter but could not the others and thus was con-

not reach water till ten next 12 9 At length, Princeton and Tail
 day ready to fall from our horses Long continued worked a dis-
 with thirst and fatigue. But our solution of the Company near San
 suffering was nothing compared to ta-Hain in Mexico, the Company
 that of our animals, At Rancho ^{moving} was divided equally and the men
 Hacienda or village we obtained mersed ~~together~~ in squads to seek
 limited supplies, but our men would often eat at a single meal what was their function. There was no
 often eat at a single meal what was their function. There was no
 for sale in a village, where places all feeling however and all ten
 were full of long low specimens of needed together as before. This
 of humanity. Lolling in the street was necessary for safety as well
 with blankets around them or from they were ^{at once} as desirable otherwise, for the Indian
 lying ^{about} our camp to steal. were bad and the Mexicans not
 They were ^{at once} thieves as we have seen away mysteriously there was no
 need at our camp. If a horse thing to be trusted - the men having
 ed away mysteriously there was no their fellows a few dollars and he
 were for us to look after him but often was forthcoming ~~in a few~~ in a few
 hours, travelers were murdered on the road frequently - said to be by
 Indians but we were not sure of that and kept well together.
 We traveled a long distance along the base of the Sierra Madre Mon-
 tains, often with their towering domes of limestone rock glittered like silver in the sun, and were to us, never having seen a mountain
 as before, exceedingly grand. At the foot of one of these where
 a small river cut its perpen- dicular way through grey lime-
 stone 2000 feet high, we came to a stop.

We remained together and worked in common to the end. Percy Starr was an unusually smart boy of 19 or 20 years of age. His parents were from Virginia and settled on the River directly opposite the old Prophet's Town at a very early date, and raised a large family there. They had two daughters and Perry was the fifth in line of seven sons. His father had been unable to make them understand dead slave years but left a value where we wanted to go. Their ignorance and they were all more or less contributed much to this last derately meeting, and with a large difficulty for their knowledge of circle of relations moved in the best ended only to effects or places in Society. His elder sister moved mediotely around which were not Dr. Garrett but was their dead. worked on our map. These plain two brothers died in, on the way we broken at intervals of a day's to Oregon and two at home two travel more or less with lowland remain on or near the old town or oasie where grass grows; and and the sister in the same county where people can exist occupied by moved, His Mother full of years a race that seemed only half and sorrow for the loss of her same, one of these desolate stretches family died a few years ago must have been 60 miles or more in extent for we started at ~~four~~ o'clock in ~~the~~ the evening and did

Under a burning sun over dry plains covered with sage brush and cactus we walked our weary way for days and weeks together. The roads dim and uncertain were more likely to lead astray than direct right. Added to this, none of us could speak their language intelligibly and our poorer

Dangers and Perry was the fifth in line of seven sons. His father had been unable to make them understand dead slave years but left a value where we wanted to go. Their ignorance and they were all more or less contributed much to this last derately meeting, and with a large difficulty for their knowledge of circle of relations moved in the best ended only to effects or places in Society. His elder sister moved mediotely around which were not Dr. Garrett but was their dead. worked on our map. These plain two brothers died in, on the way we broken at intervals of a day's to Oregon and two at home two travel more or less with lowland remain on or near the old town or oasie where grass grows; and and the sister in the same county where people can exist occupied by moved, His Mother full of years a race that seemed only half and sorrow for the loss of her same, one of these desolate stretches family died a few years ago must have been 60 miles or more in extent for we started at ~~four~~ o'clock in ~~the~~ the evening and did

16

... The Boy's Rifle was handed to him and Doctor Garrett (his brother-in-law) took charge of his other effects, and we passed on to the City of Durango where the other Party were waiting for us. Here we rested a few days to gather strength for journey over the Mountains.

13 From Memphis Tennessee we had been on the high tide of Cholera in its westward march and at different times and places nearly all attacked but strange to say no deaths occurred up to the present. Here young Starn was taken down with every indication of a fatal result. It was peculiarly afflictive for he was the life and favorite of the Company, and when a difficult feat was to be performed with horse or rifle he was the first to volunteer and the first to succeed. I have seen him load his pistol guiding his horse on a keen run at the same time, and his rifle was often brought forth to show inquisitive Mexicans what could be done firing at a target. A tent was made of bushes and blankets, and a party sent through the cut in the mountains to a village below for supplies. They brought back some corn but it was found

14 impracticable for all to stay and
 God went on, leaving his own
 party of six and a few others.

(Come
 All that Medical Skill or man - But too well we knew let whosoever
 ing could do, was done without Let fortune attend us, or danger
 avail and he did the next day. Our Comrade was sleeping ^{in his home} for from
 this was on the 14th day of June 1899 And alone, in the land of the strong-

A Glow was prepared on the
 bank of the stream and he lay - Nay - sweetly he sleeps in his low narrow
 ered to his long home, with his ^{head} for near him grim-visaged and fiery
 Mexican Serapis around him and the Mountain remains, to watch over
 his horn (I think the tenor drum) And the River to bring his yad strong
 by his side. A Prayer was said,

and a board placed over the Glow,
 on which was written his name
 and years by the unlettered Nurse

Small acts to hide grief it was vain to employ -
 Each heart-throb and tear answered other
 For we knew we had buried along with her Boy
 the spirit of his dear-sainted Mother
 And, slowly and sadly we turned to go
 Every Bosom was heaving with sorrow
 For we knew not the way; nor the woe
 And new perils to come, with the morrow

No 32

Alvarado April 8/92

H. H. Bancroft

Dear Sir I find myself unable to proceed further with my notes of our trip for want of time. I shall be glad to continue them if they can be used in any way. But of this I am doubtful for they are certainly too long for ^{your} purpose and to abridge them greatly we might as well strike all out. Of course they must be rewritten and this I expect you to do. If it is a long story you want or even a short one let me suggest a plan. If you think best open a correspondence with the members of the party whose addresses are known and let each supply what items he will ^{own}

and from all you may write
 something to suit your purpose
 I was to the east last ~~fall~~ October
 and saw all the Americans coming

Dr Anthony Garrett was ^{the} Coun
 Clerk for Carroll County address
 "Delphi Indiana" Littleton a
 Justice of Peace in Lafayette address
 "La Fayette Ind" Richardson
 keeping Hotel in Crawfordsville
 address "Crawfordsville Ind,"

Fishers address is "Battle-ground
 Tippecanoe County Ind"

Alpheus Bull (was a Universalist
 minister when with us) was Ban-
 king in or about Tharta or Red-Bluff
 - probably afterwards in San Francisco.

Granville Dall was in the Caly
 senate one or two terms address
 probably "Red-Bluff" G. H. G. Sta-
 ckhouse "Grass Valley" and "Palm
 Bungle and Joseph Grey Portland, Or

Letter Continued from Portland.
 Wm. H. Hawthorne address
 "San Francisco Cal," and
 I know the address of no other
 at present. I wish this story
 to place all on equal footing
 and will ^{not} accept of a place more
 prominent than the rest.

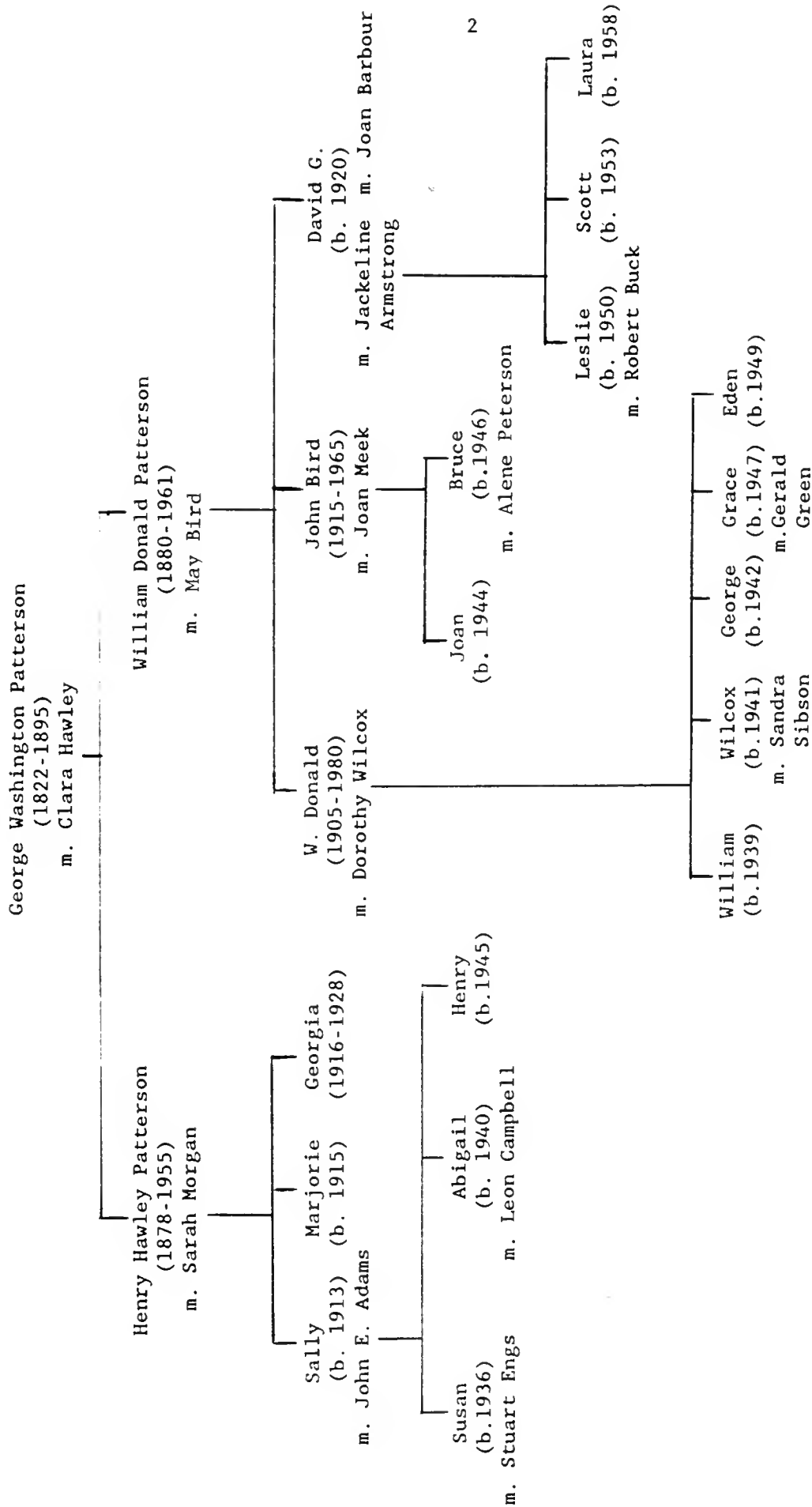
Be assured if you cannot use
 these notes I shall not have
 the slightest feeling in the matter
 but take the same interest
 in your Book as before.

Awaiting further instructions I remain

Very Respectly

Geo. W. Patterson
 (in haste, excuse these scraps)

PATTERSON FAMILY TREE





LEFT: George Washington
Patterson

BELOW: Clara Hawley
Patterson





LEFT: William
(left) and Henry
Patterson, ca
1886



BELOW: Henry,
Clara, and William
Patterson, ca 1895

Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

Donald Patterson

Family Lore: The Pattersons and
Their Land Since the 1850s

A Narrative Recorded
in 1964
and
An Interview Conducted by
Stanley Bry
in 1977



DONALD PATTERSON

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INTERVIEW HISTORY — Donald Patterson

George Washington Patterson, grandfather of Donald Patterson and the founding member of the Patterson family in California, was an early member of the Society of California Pioneers. His son William was also an active supporter of the Society; he gathered and preserved in the attic of his home old ranch records, account books, dairies, family letters and photographs. William's eldest son, Donald, continued this historical interest and the involvement with the Society of California Pioneers, serving as president of the Society in 1966 and 1967.

Donald donated the collection of family artifacts and records to the Society and arranged to have it organized and catalogued. At the same time, Donald began to fill in the gaps in the written record by tape recording his own recollections of Patterson family history, as well as conducting interviews with an elderly cousin and a nearby rancher. When the Regional Oral History Office embarked on its documentation of the Patterson family and ranch, the first step was to transcribe these interviews to make them accessible to researchers by including them with this project. The original tapes are available at the Society of California Pioneers in San Francisco.

The first two chapters of the following transcription were recorded in narrative form by Donald Patterson on October 10, 1964. The third and fourth chapters are the transcription of an interview of Donald by Stanley Bry of the Society of California Pioneers. Both sections were clearly seen as a supplement to the Patterson papers at the Society. Donald recalls family stories about his grandfather, presenting him as a "hard-driving operator" whose acquisition of land in southern Alameda County and Livermore and careful management of the farming and ranching operations provided the basis for the family's success. He recalls his grandmother, Clara Hawley Patterson, whom he knew as a child and remembered well, as a "magnetic personality". His narrative/interview also gives a first-hand picture of his father and his uncle, Henry, and their remarkable relationship in managing the ranch after their father's death.

Donald, the oldest son in the Patterson family, took over the management of the ranch after his father's death. Two of his sons, Wilcox and George, have been interviewed for this project and their oral histories in this volume give additional information about Donald, his many interests, and his management of the ranch.

Ann Lage
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

I GRANDFATHER GEORGE WASHINGTON PATTERSON

Journey West

[Date of Narrative: October 10, 1964]##

Donald P.: I am doing this in the hope that it will tie together some of the historical material which is available on my grandfather and my father. As you know, this material has all been deposited at the Pioneer Society in San Francisco and can be found there.

My grandfather, George W. Patterson, came to California in 1849. He came by way of the Mississippi River, across Texas, down into Mexico, and out at a port which was important then but has practically disappeared now--the Port of San Blas.

One of his companions, that is out of the four, died in Mexico. The three of them, arriving in San Blas, sold their horses, waited for the next ship, and got aboard because there had been such a mortality on the ship coming up from Panama that there was plenty of room. They went on up to San Francisco without any special happenings, as far as I know.

Upon arrival in San Francisco, he went to the American River. We don't have very much information as to just when he went or exactly how long he stayed. The story is that he stayed a year, was moderately successful, but that he had found that the exposure and work was undermining his health. And, for that reason, came back to Mission San Jose in 1850.

I know that he must have been moderately successful because among his papers you will find where he was loaning money to his associates. Much of this he never collected.

This symbol indicates that a tape or segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes see page 26.

Acquiring Land in Southern Alameda County

Donald P.: When he arrived in Mission San Jose, it would appear that he went immediately to farming, probably as a partner with Viejo. It would seem from the stories that I've heard that he probably actually acquired the first land in Alameda County around 1852. The usual method in those days was to make a verbal or unrecorded contract to buy a piece of land and then pay it off from the proceeds. The first deeds which we can find are from around 1856. But I believe that he had taken possession of the land and started to work it in about 1852 and was able to pay off in about '56.

He made a policy of acquiring adjacent pieces of land (and this can be checked out from the legal records of the time). But if you'll notice, after the home piece, that is the willow field, as we call it, adjacent to Jarvis Avenue, he added progressively, piece by piece, out in all directions. Sometime, I guess it was in 1870 or so, he did buy, around Decoto, additional land which was not connected. Then in 1875 or '80, he acquired the Livermore ranch, which has a story (I don't know whether the story is accurate or not), but the story is that he got word that the piece would be available, that Mr. Pope was tired of cattle ranching and had expressed a desire to sell out.

George got into his buckboard, went immediately to the bank, drew out in gold coin what he thought would cover the purchase, went up to Livermore, and talked to Mr. Pope. He was the first one to talk to him and, with the cash in his hand, was able to make a good purchase of the piece. He then, in later years, added to it, piece by piece, until it assumed its present acreage. This certainly was a characteristic of George, that first, he acted promptly, and second, he had the cash.

A Hard-Driving Operator

Donald P.: He appears to have been a very hard-driving operator, because as a boy, I talked to neighbors who had known him. Their stories would indicate that, for instance, he would follow around in his buckboard when the grain was being harvested, and if any of the grain was left on the ground, he would immediately stop the operation and make them adjust the machine, or whatever was necessary. He would do the same thing when they were bailing hay. If there was hay left on the ground, he would make the baler go back and pick it up, simply as an incentive to better work in the future.

Donald P.: There is a story which we have not been able to substantiate-- that when the Central Pacific Railroad wanted a right-of-way through the ranch, he not only refused to allow it, but he stood, gun-in-hand, at the border to see that they didn't come on his property. The story goes on further that he was about to be married; therefore, he couldn't guard his property. He hired somebody to stand with the gun while he went off to get married. But the railroad, through some devious method, either bribed or threatened this man, and he went off and got drunk. When my grandfather came back, the ties were laid across his property and he was not able to get them removed. I say again that this is an apocryphal story and probably is a better illustration of his character than it is a matter of fact.

Patterson Landing and the Changing Landscape

Donald P.: All of the produce from the ranch in the very early days was shipped to San Francisco by boat from what was known as Patterson Landing (just below what is now Newark Boulevard, where it crosses the slough). In my grandfather's day, this slough was nearly a hundred yards wide at the warehouse. It gradually narrowed by silting, so that in my father's day, it was probably half that width. My father used to keep his yacht at the Patterson Landing and sail up to San Francisco. To be able to tack out of the slough, it must have been at least one hundred and fifty feet wide. I can remember, as a boy, when it was still perhaps seventy-five feet wide, and easily navigable at half-tide or higher. At the present time, the slough has been almost completely obliterated by the progressive silting, to a point now where it's not five feet wide and you have to search carefully through the grass to find it. This indicates the change which has taken place since the early days.

Clara Hawley Patterson, a Magnetic Personality

Donald P.: My grandfather, of course, did not marry until late in life, and when he did, it would appear that it was somewhat precipitous. His great friend, James Hawley, who lived next door, and who had also come in 1849, had four daughters and one son. One of them, Clara Hawley, was apparently a very lovely girl. She was raised on her father's ranch near Centerville but apparently went to school in Oakland. You will find among the records some very interesting documents and comments on her education. She lived in the home of a, an apparently, doctor-friend.

Donald P.: The wedding is somewhat obscured in mystery, in that it took place very suddenly and apparently came as a complete surprise to the countryside. I think that research on this subject would be very rewarding. Perhaps locating some written records in the papers of the time--we don't have anything. It was apparently a very happy marriage, though my grandmother was very much younger than my grandfather. I think that it was at least twenty years.

He built a very beautiful addition to his house, at the home place, presumably as a wedding present for her. May I say that the original house, as we understand it, was built in 1856, but that it was added to, to a point where there is none of the original house showing. Additions have been made from all sides, so that the original house is contained inside of the present house.

When my grandfather died, my father and my uncle were in their teens. My grandmother remarried, and it's a subject which has never been discussed in the family, and there is no good reason for it. Mr. [William] Layson, or, I believe, Dr. Layson, from all accounts was a very fine man. He was a distinguished linguist, and, I believe, was proficient in six languages. He was a churchman and, as far as I can determine, a very upright person. But for some reason or other, the marriage was not successful, partly because the teenage boys resented another man so completely different from their father. Their father was a two-fisted operator, a dynamic person, whereas Mr. Layson was purely a scholar. After a year or two, it would appear that Mr. Layson simply disappeared from the scene, lived his own life, and he died some ten or so years later. There seems to have been no misunderstanding or no bitterness involved.

My grandmother was a remarkable person whom I remember very well. She was very gregarious, in the--my point being, that she had a great many friends, was active in good works, was a leading citizen in the community, a philanthropist, and, as I remember her, a very magnetic personality. And she was very handsome, even in her later years, and had a very charming personality. She had done a good deal of traveling. In fact, she spent most of her later years in traveling, her two sons handling the ranch affairs while she was gone.



LEFT: Four Generations, ca 1910,
left to right: Mrs. James
Hawley, Clara's mother; Clara
Hawley Patterson; William
Donald, Jr.; William Donald, Sr.

BELOW: May Bird Patterson,
wife of William Donald
Patterson, Sr.



II FATHER WILLIAM D. PATTERSON

Father and Uncle, a Remarkable Relationship

Donald P.: My father and my uncle operated the ranch as equal partners during their lifetimes. It was a remarkable relationship, and one that would be hard to duplicate. I always had a deep interest in the ranch. I spent a good deal of time, after I was not living at the ranch, there on weekends with my father, and there in holidays and summer vacations, so that I saw a great deal of the relationship between the two. They met on the ranch at some point almost every day and would sit down and talk over the day's problems. They would then come to a common decision, and that would be acted upon. And in all the years that I was associated with them in this manner, I never heard a basic disagreement. It was unusual because you would think that there would be times when there would be a perfectly natural disagreement, but at least in my opinion, it never occurred.

They both spent as much time as possible right on the ranch, watching all of its activities. I think that is one of the secrets to the success of their operation. They were there, personally, on the job, and never delegated their responsibilities to anyone else.

Will's Stanford Days

Donald P.: You will find a great deal of information and memorabilia of my father, during his school days, in the collection. Apparently, he was a man who had a great many interests from the time he was a boy. He was an excellent athlete, an indifferent scholar, a very gregarious individual who had many friends and enjoyed seeing them. He had a yacht during the time he was at college and apparently was quite a man-on-campus. His football activity was somewhat remarkable, in that he played on the Stanford

Donald P.: freshman team when he weighed only 150 pounds; he was the lightest man on the team. He told me that the reason that he made the team was that he had studied the rules of the game so carefully--committed them to memory--and when the coach was asking questions in the preseason training periods, that, in one case, he was the only man on the squad who could answer the question. He was a first-class drop-kicker, and it was his function to kick goals from drop kick. He told me that he hadn't missed a drop kick in the games prior to the Big Game with the University of California, at which time he stepped on the field and overconfidently missed the goal; however, Stanford won, nonetheless.

Will's Interest in Mining and Travel

Donald P.: After college, he, of course, came back to the ranch and operated with my uncle. However, he very early became interested in mining. His greatest interest in activity outside of the ranch, during everything except the last of his life, was in mining. He was conspicuously unsuccessful. He always told me that he realized that he should stay out of it, but that he felt it was, in a manner of speaking, his hobby; therefore, the money that he lost was really what he might have been spending on other hobbies. And, I think, within reason that is true.

He first became interested in Alaska. He went in 1900 on an exploring--and also mining--trip into the interior and claimed to have been the first man to come out from the interior of Alaska over the Taku Glacier in winter. This, I think, is probably true because he was a first-class explorer and outdoorsman.

He then became interested in other mining ventures; you will find most of the data on them in his business files [at the Pioneer Society]. There must have been a dozen. It was very interesting; as I became old enough to understand it, around ten or twelve years old, I went with him on many of these trips to the mines; I followed it closely. This is the reason I took mining engineering in my undergraduate work.

The people he dealt with were mainly his college friends--engineers, people he had known in college--and it was on a personal basis. He liked these people, he trusted them, and therefore, he went into these ventures. There were a few that were successful. The Eight (?) Oil Company paid very well. He also went into a non-mining venture; he and three others financed the originators of the Magnavox Electronics Company. That was quite successful, and he made a handsome profit out of

Donald P.: it. However, overall, the business program outside of the ranch was a very considerable loss. However, looking back on it, the fun that he had, I think, was worth it.

Another aspect of my father's life which is worth mentioning is that he enjoyed travel very much. In 1913, he took my mother and my grandmother and myself to Europe for almost a year. Then, I believe, on two later occasions (I didn't go along) he took my mother and also my brothers. And both my father and mother enjoyed Europe to a point where, if they had felt it were possible, I think they both would have lived abroad. My father was a great skier, and Switzerland meant a great deal to him. My mother enjoyed Switzerland very much, and she would have lived there in her later years if she could.

Reclaiming the Salt Marshes

Donald P.: I think it is worth pointing out the basic policy of land use on the ranch. My grandfather bought the ranch as a grain farm. But as he got into it, he found that there was a very lucrative market for vegetables in San Francisco. And as an ex-farmboy, there was a fresh vegetable operation on the ranch in the very early days, and they then shipped them up by sailing scow to San Francisco. My father and my uncle, when they became active in the ranch, decided that some of the lower country, which is salt marsh, could be reclaimed. They put up a series of levees, starting about 1912 or 1913, which cut off the salt water and allowed the floods to deposit sediment in the lower country. They carried this on and actually diverted the Alameda Creek by plowing in the overflow channels in the summer and letting it wash out in the winter, until the full flow of Alameda Creek came through the ranch. This greatly increased the deposition of sediment and was instrumental in filling up the tidal channels, as well as making new land behind the levees.

In this manner, the entire lower salt marsh of the ranch has been reclaimed to a point where, at the present time, we are going to be able to farm intensively practically the entire old salt marsh. This reclamation has come about naturally, but it has taken at least fifty years to accomplish.

Will's Home, Garden, and Autos

Donald P.: My father built a house soon after he was married, which was quite large, even for the times. I can remember when we had a gardener full time on the lawns. There must have been an acre of lawns. We had a cook and, at one time, an upstairs nurse. The house was impractically large, and always was, until it was finally disposed of after my father's death.

I can remember when the house stood in the middle of the open fields and you could see out on all sides. My father was a great tree planter, and he must have planted forty acres of trees around the house. These have grown into a large forest. He also planted an extensive orchard, and always was very interested in it. He spent a lot of time, particularly in his earlier years, grafting, putting new varieties in, watching them--He was also interested in the garden, as my mother was. My mother was a good gardener (understood it), and we always had a large garden.

My father was interested in automobiles, as well. He had a very early model--in, it must have been, 1905--of the Brush car, which has since disappeared. He then got White Steamers. And I can remember, as a small boy, seeing him under the car, making some kind of an adjustment, when he started a gasoline leak, which then caught fire from the pilot light and enveloped the car in flames. He came out from under the car, scrambled out, and jumped into a horse trough, which was conveniently nearby, and then quickly got out, dripping with water, got into the car and drove it away from the barn, or garage, so that it wouldn't burn the place down. The car was a loss, but the barn was saved.

He then went on and bought the gasoline car put out by the White Company, which was never very satisfactory, in my opinion, but he was very proud of it. We also had one of the very early Hupp roadsters, which we used to take up into the Sierras on our camping trips and trips to the mines. It was a fine car, but underpowered. On the steep grades, it was my job to jump out and help push it up the grade. At one time, we also had horses and buggies, but that didn't last very long. As soon as the cars became effective, Dad got rid of the horses.

My father's most important contribution to the community was his work in originating and carrying on the work of the County of Alameda Water District. He was on the board, or was president, for over forty years and saw it develop from a very small beginning into an important factor in the community. It was mainly concerned [with] and started for the conservation of the underground water supply. Water was always a problem on the ranch and was my father's particular field of interest.

III THE EARLY DAYS ON THE RANCH

George W. Patterson and his Family in Lafayette, Indiana

[Date of Interview: May 20, 1977]##

Bry: What do you know of George W. Patterson's youth, that is, his life before he left for California in March of 1849?

Donald P.: I don't have very much information on George's life back east before he started for California, except that I know that the family lived in the little town--their house was in the little town--and they were farmers [in Lafayette, Indiana]. So they must have been farming somewhere adjacent, and I would suspect that they rented some of the land and didn't own it. I'm sure that they didn't own any large amount of land. I know that they were relatively poor, had a hard time making ends meet. There were, as I recall, five children--four boys and one daughter. The daughter, Sarah, seems to have taken the lead in the family, as far as helpfulness and decisions [that] were made. The mother, Lydia Patterson--George's mother, seems to have been in rather poor health. Now, I can't tell you whether his father (George's father) was alive just before he left for California or not. I don't know.

From what I've heard, most of the acquisition of the Patterson Ranch was from early American owners, rather than from the original Spanish grant. I think this can be explained by the fact that, when George Patterson started farming in 1850, he didn't own any land. His early acquisitions of parcels were done by making an arrangement with the owner that he would buy a piece of land with a small down-payment and pay for it over a period of years out of the produce. Thus, the passing of title would take place when it was finally paid for, and would show on the records as being relatively late. For instance, land which he started to farm in, say, 1851, he probably did not take title to for perhaps ten years later. This would explain, I think, the relatively late acquisition of some of the early parts of the ranch.

Donald P.: He went step by step in his acquisitions and had a basic policy of buying adjacent land, rather than pieces which were in other parts of Washington Township. This was based on a very sound economic theory that an efficient farming property should all be in one piece, so that there wouldn't be the lost time and problems of supervision of separate pieces. Later in the acquisition of the ranch, there were cases where this policy was not followed; but, in general, he would pay high prices for adjacent land but was not interested in picking up independent pieces.

Supervising and Feeding the Hired Men

Donald P.: Some of the small items that I have heard my father tell about my grandfather are such as when they were threshing grain, which they did on quite a large scale (they raised wheat in the early days, and then a little later they also raised barley and oats), he would follow, in his buckboard, the threshing that was taking place. If the hired men dropped any of the unthreshed material, or if they let any grain go onto the ground, he was right there to find it and immediately took drastic action to see that nothing was wasted. He was a very hard-fisted operator, but as far as any comments I've heard, he was very fair.

They had a large group of men who were hired on the ranch in the early days--perhaps as many as thirty or forty. They lived in what they called a bunkhouse, near the residence. Of course the feeding of these men was an important factor. They had a Chinese cook who lived in a small house by the main bunkhouse, and occasionally they would send one of the men out with a buckboard into the grain fields in the fall with a ten-gauge, double-barrelled shotgun and a barrel to put on the back of the buckboard. He would drive through the fields, and the wild geese were so thick in those days that in a couple of hours, he would come back with a barrel full of geese. They would be used as meat in the bunkhouse.

Chinese Truck Farming

Donald P.: One of the reasons that land was far more valuable and sold for higher prices than many people realize in the very early days--in the 1850s and early '60s--was that southern Alameda County was the source of fresh vegetables for San Francisco. Milk and cheese and butter came down from Marin County, but most of the onions, potatoes, and cabbages were raised in southern Alameda County and were shipped up to San Francisco by sailing scow.

Donald P.: The actual raising of these crops on the Patterson Ranch was in the hands of the Chinese. The Chinese apparently came from an area in China where they had similar crops, or perhaps they learned quickly when they came here. But they were considered to be the best truck farmers that we had. They used long, square spades--not the type of shovel you often see now, but spades which would turn the soil fairly deeply.

They farmed in what we called the Willow area, the swamp area of the ranch, which was (and still is) the lower elevations. This was a black peat soil, extremely rich and productive, but difficult to work because, if it was too wet, it was sticky; if it was too dry, it broke up into large clods. So the Chinese would follow the drying of the soil in the spring, and turn over by hand, with these spades, just the soil which was in the right condition for the growing of vegetables. My father has told me that the yields that they got per acre were probably larger than we've ever had since on the ranch.

These vegetables would then be taken down to Patterson Landing, put on the sailing scow, and would sail up to San Francisco with the tide. They would go from the landing down the slough, out into the bay, and up to San Francisco, and then come back the next day. The records of some of these shipments have been retained and we have them in the documents, and they are very interesting in showing what was raised, in what quantities, and the prices that were paid for it.

Native Grasses and Artesian Wells

Donald P.: A small point that I believe was told by my grandfather to my father, and which he then told me, was that it's hard to realize how tall the native vegetation (the grass and weeds in that part of Alameda County where the ranch is situated) was in the early days, in the Spanish days, just before my grandfather came. They say that a man on horseback, riding across through the trails and the open fields there (before they were cultivated)--you could only see the upper part of his body. Whether this is a true statement which has been passed down, or whether it has grown in stature during the years, I don't know.

But I do know that in the early days the area on which the ranch is situated now was what they call subirrigated, in that it was artesian. The pressure of the water in the aquifers was such that, if you drilled a well, it would become artesian and flow under pressure. There were springs on the ranch which ran all year round. The old--what we called--Pacheco Ditch, which shows on the early maps, and which ran just back of my

Donald P.: grandfather's house, and of which there are still remnants to be seen, was a slowly flowing marshy area year round. This fact, that there was so much moisture underground, is probably the explanation of why the vegetation in the area was so heavy, and why they were able to get such very heavy yields both in grain and vegetables. It was an important factor in the economy of the area and is one of the reasons that the land values in southern Alameda County, in the very early days, ran as much as four or five hundred dollars an acre. It took almost a hundred years for land values to equal those of the fifties.

A Boyhood Memory of the Winter Flood of 1911

Donald P.: Another factor in the agricultural economy, which is of prime importance in this area that we are speaking of, is the effect of the winter floods which came down through Niles Canyon and spread out on what they call the Niles Cone, which was, in general, the area of the Rancho Potrero Los Cerritos. It did two things. It irrigated the land, so that the moisture lasted well into the summer, without any further addition of water. It also deposited a fine silt over the entire area, which is another explanation of the very productive nature of the soil.

In my grandfather's time, and in my father's time as well, they depended on the winter floods for both these factors, and a dry winter, where there was no flooding, meant that the ranch productivity would be substantially less than in the wet years. The magnitude of the floods is hard to realize now because the tributaries to Alameda Creek have been dammed up and the creek itself has been confined within banks due to the various flood control procedures. But, in 1911, which is about the first of my memories of the ranch, we had a very wet winter, and I can remember that my father put me in a five-gallon washtub, tied a rope to the handle, and towed me (he was in rubber hip boots) from our home to my grandfather's home, which was about a quarter of a mile away. I can very well remember the slowly flowing water of the backed-up flood, and the wildlife (particularly rabbits) which had been isolated on patches of driftwood. The animals, such as small mice, rabbits, even snakes--because of the, I suppose, traumatic experience--appeared to be perfectly tame in that you could go up to one and just pick it up. I remember picking up one of these wet rabbits off floating debris, putting it into the washtub, and then taking it home and taking care of it.

Acquiring the Pope Ranch in Livermore

Donald P.: Going back to the acquisition of property, my grandfather acquired the cattle ranch south of Livermore around 1870-1880. Again, he picked it up piece by piece, buying adjacent pieces, until he had developed the entire ownership. One of the stories which my father told me illustrates the way my grandfather operated. He heard that there was a piece known as the Pope Ranch that would come up for sale. He got word of this, went immediately to the local bank, drew out what he thought would be the asking price in gold coins, got into his buckboard, and went, posthaste, up to Livermore, which was a drive of thirty miles. He got there late that afternoon or evening and went into Mr. Pope's cabin and sat down to buy the place. Because he had gold coin in hand, [he] was able to buy the property for a good price and before anybody else had been able to even bargain for it. This was a good illustration of his business methods. He was very aggressive, he knew what he wanted. Later in his business career, he had the capital to operate with, and he used it to the best advantage.

Family Stories: Eucalyptus Trees, Oranges, and Shooting the Steer

Donald P.: The story on the eucalyptus trees on the ranch that's come down in the family, and, again, I have no proof of its accuracy, is that the eucalyptus trees which are now adjacent to the old house (my grandfather's house) were the second planting in California. I don't know where the first planting was, but my grandfather had a ship captain friend who brought seed back from Australia on one of his trips, gave it to my grandfather, and he is reputed to have planted them. Now, these are the same trees now well over a hundred years old. This is in character because he was always interested in new crops, new trees, shrubs, fruit, whatever.

Another story which has come down in the family is that--in his interest for exotic plants, trees, and so forth--somebody, perhaps his friend the ship captain, gave him an orange. This was in--I don't know the date, but I know it was early. His two boys were very anxious, of course, to taste the orange. But, instead of allowing that, he planted the whole orange. And, of course, oranges in the first place don't grow from the seed, and in the second place, you wouldn't plant the whole orange. So, nothing ever came up, and the two boys still remembered, even in my time, how disappointed they were that they didn't get a chance to taste that first orange.

Donald P.: Because of the amount of food necessary for the men that worked on the ranch, they depended on their own beef. Every week or two it was necessary to kill a steer. One of the men, and his name was Andy Logan (worked for my grandfather), had a rifle--I believe it was a 45-70, I think that's one of the early rifles, heavy rifles--and he would go out and shoot one of the steers in the field. Then it would be brought in and butchered and the meat used both for the family and for the men in the bunkhouse. They tell the story of--. I believe that someone else had borrowed the rifle and changed the sighting. In those days, with those rifles, they didn't shoot very flat; therefore, you had to raise the sights if you were going to shoot long distance. Somebody had raised the sights without his knowledge. He went out, shot the animal, and, instead of killing it, he just wounded it. It started charging around the field. He then changed his sights. He shot it several times, which would normally have killed the animal if it had been cool and unexcited, but it kept raging around, and it took an unusual number of lethal shots to kill the animals because it was already excited.

THE HAWLEYS, THE HOUSE, AND OTHER TALES

The Hawley Family and George and Clara's Marriage

Donald P.: I've said elsewhere that my grandfather had a reputation of being a rather stern and hard individual. My father has told me that, when he and my uncle were small boys, they were not allowed to speak after dinner in the living room without being spoken to. I think that the discipline in the family must have been very, very strict if this is an example of it. My grandmother, whom I knew as a small boy, was just the opposite. She was a very outgoing, very pleasant person, and I'm sure that the strict discipline was imposed by my grandfather and not by my grandmother.

Bry: What can you tell us about the relationship between your grandfather and James Hawley, the father of Clara Hawley?

Donald P.: George came to San Francisco in about August of 1849. James Hawley also came about the same time. They didn't meet in San Francisco. My grandfather went to the mines and my other grandfather, James Hawley, went to Mission San Jose. George spent almost a year on the, I think it was the, American River (it's in the records, somewhere), then went up to Siskiyou County, spent, I guess, a few months there. [He] was not too successful in Siskiyou County and came down with some kind of a fever, which made him quite ill. So, he came back to Mission San Jose to recuperate and met my other grandfather there. They became friends. They both did some farming, though not together. James Hawley was a carpenter and later a contractor, and built a hotel in Mission San Jose. He then brought his family out from the East a few years later, and they settled there. He owned a small piece adjacent to my grandfather's ranch and built a house there. They continued their close friendship through the years. James Hawley had, I believe it

Donald P.: was, four daughters and one son. The youngest daughter, Clara,* was really a strikingly beautiful girl and went into Oakland to complete her high school education and lived with a family there--a doctor. My grandfather seems to have fallen in love with her about this time; but for some reason, [he] had kept his feelings to himself and to Clara. We know that they were anxious to get married, but for some reason, George didn't want it known ahead of time among his friends. It may be that he felt a little reticent about marrying the daughter of his best friend because of the age difference. (There was a difference of almost twenty years between them.) So, they arranged to go to Sacramento and be married there, which they did, and then he brought her back to his house on the ranch.

There is no evidence that there was any objection on the part of James Hawley--in fact, quite the contrary. It seemed to have been a very happy arrangement, and it developed into a very happy and outstanding marriage. It [his reticence] seems strange because in those days it was quite usual for an older man to marry a younger girl, because the feeling was that one should be able to take care of one's wife in the best possible manner. There seems to have been no reason for this reticence, but nevertheless, that's the case.

My grandfather lived in a modest house. He brought his bride back to this house, and they lived that way for quite a while, while he was building up his land holdings. I have heard it said that he might be called a stingy man, and it's been said in the family through the years that he would not allow his wife to have her own carriage. However, this changed because, by 1883, the house had been enlarged and had become, one might say, a modest mansion. And I know that my grandmother had her own carriage by that time because we still have the carriage.

One of the reasons, perhaps, that the marriage was successful, is that the two personalities were entirely different. My grandfather was extremely able, hardworking, aggressive, and far-seeing. My grandmother was very charitable, had many friends, many interests, and a very outgoing personality. She belonged to local organizations; she was interested in travel; she did a great deal of reading. So she complemented the character of her husband.

* James and Hettie Hawley had five daughters and a son. Clara was the third-born. She was born in 1853 and married to George Washington Patterson in 1877.

Clara's Remarriage to William Layson

Bry: What do you know of your grandmother's remarriage, after the death of George Patterson?

Donald P.: My grandmother, after her husband's death, ran the ranch with the two boys, who were now in their teens. They formed, apparently, a very effective management group because the ranch continued to prosper. They made additions to it. The records show that it was very successful.

A minister came to the--I believe it was--Presbyterian church about, I guess, five years after George's death. My grandmother was very much interested in the church--always had been. They met. He was a rather exceptional man in that he was a scholar, a linguist of almost national reputation, had a very good background. They became engaged and married [in 1900]. It would seem that it should have been very successful; however, for some reason, it did not work out. One, perhaps, factor was that the two boys were, by this time, almost men. They had taken a lot of responsibility for the ranch. They were constantly involved with my grandmother, and tension developed between the boys and the second husband. This is understandable, I think, because he was so entirely different in background and interests from what the boys and my grandmother were doing.

They did take a trip to the Holy Land. I think it was very successful; I think they enjoyed it. But they gradually drifted apart and, presently, they separated. Dr. Layson went on in his profession in Oakland and was highly regarded. I don't think there was a divorce. I think it was merely a separation. We do have papers which show that he renounced any claim to her estate, so that it seems to have been an amicable-- [tape ends]

##

Dr. Layson died sometime after 1900. We have his obituary, and by that time, there seemed to be no communication between them.*

* William Layson died March 8, 1909. At the time he was living with his sister, Mrs. H. L. Todd, in San Francisco.

Additions to the G. W. Patterson Home

Bry: What can you tell us about the Patterson house--when it was built, when the additions were made, when, perhaps, the family moved into it?

Donald P.: We have always thought that the original house was built in 1856. Dr. Robert Fisher, the local historian, has almost convinced me that the house which we think is the original house, may not have been it at all, and that the first part of the present, so-called, old house was built at a considerably later date. It was a small, square house with a kitchen, dining room, living room, stairway up to the upper story, and I'm not sure how many bedrooms. It probably could be worked out by studying the attic configuration; but, anyway, it was a very modest house.

Over the years, four different additions were made. I am not sure just the sequence of the additions, but one was made fairly early, where they built an enclosed office, you might call it, and the front door and a porch. The front door apparently opened right out into the yard, but then that was moved and enclosed. Then there was some kind of an addition put on the rear of the house. Then there was a main addition in 1883, which is the major part of the house now, and is a very fine job of carpentry, construction, and particularly the paneling.

This addition was made under the supervision of James Hawley, who had become a contractor. It seems, in some of the documents, that he built, or was involved in the building of, one of the early lighthouses on the coast. He also was involved in a mine and construction project in Alaska. We don't have any details of this, except we know that he went to Alaska and was a partner in the project there, that the other partners were lost at sea, and that the project then was discontinued when he came back home. But at any rate, that addition, which is the most interesting part of the house, was built in 1883 under his supervision.

The last addition was made in about 1920 when my uncle and my aunt were raising their family of three girls and needed more space. That was the fourth addition. I have been told by architects that the house is of interest because it was typical of that period when the early settler built a modest house, and then as his family grew, additions were made, so that it is a mixture architecturally, but from a sociological standpoint, it was typical of the development of early California homes.

Memories of the House and the Milk Room

Donald P.: As a small boy, I can remember the bowling alley in the attic. (There are three stories and a completely finished attic.) In rainy weather, I was sent up to keep me out from under foot. I can remember the fun it was bowling, though it was noisy and the noise could be heard downstairs.

An incident of some [laughs] interest is that, when I was quite small, I can remember going over to my grandmother's house and seeing my mother and my grandmother carefully pulling a sofa apart--that is, the fabric--piece by piece, and going through the stuffing. My grandfather had three diamond studs in his shirt-front. These were rather handsome gems. They were, I think, somewhat over three carats apiece. This was a common practice in the early days--to put your money into negotiable jewelry of that type because the banks were not well developed and this was a safe place to put some of your money. At any rate, there were the three diamonds. One was given to my mother when she was married; one was given to my aunt when she was married; the third one was never found and the supposition was that it had been hidden somewhere in the house. In those days, they very often put jewelry into the upholstery of furniture because, again, there were no banks and safe deposit boxes. So, this sofa was pulled apart, but they did not find the gem. But as a small boy, it made quite an impression on me to see the stuffing all over the living room floor.

The stone structure [in] back of the house was known, when I was a boy, as the milk room, and I'm sure that it was used for that in my grandfather's time because there was no refrigeration then, and they had to have a place which was cool in the summertime. And it was specially built: half underground, and half above ground, heavy stone construction, and a heavy roof. This is still standing, and I can remember, as a boy, the flat milkpans that were left there for the cream to rise to the surface and then be skimmed off. And the remainder was either taken out and fed to the chickens or allowed to sour and then turned into cheese.

Search for Buried Gold

Donald P.: Somewhere along the line, in the early days, my grandfather took a leather pouch that contained fifty-dollar gold slugs and buried it back of his house. When he went to dig it up again, it was not there, and of course, he dug extensively looking for it. My father and my uncle, as boys, also dug extensively.

Donald P.: When I was a boy, I went out and dug for it. And my sons have also gone out with metal detectors and tried to find it, but it's never shown up. It would be quite valuable now because, I believe, there were forty or fifty gold slugs, presumably, and they would be not only intrinsically valuable, but extremely valuable as numismatic treasures now. But I suppose that somebody was watching when they were buried and quietly went and dug them up when nobody was looking.

George's Interest in Republican Politics and Lincoln School

Bry: What can you tell us about the political activity of George Patterson?

Donald P.: Not very much, except that, as far as I know, his only outside interest (outside of business) was politics. He was a strong Republican. He belonged to a group of his associates who had come in the Gold Rush and apparently was active with them. But beyond that, I don't know. They had a--wasn't it a Tippecanoe Club, or something of that nature? That's correct. There was a club that he belonged to by that name. He also had some interest in education. His friend on the adjacent ranch gave the land for the Lincoln School. And he organized either a party or some sort of an affair--that is, George did--to raise money for the school building. And he did take considerable interest in the local school.

This school was first to eighth grade. My father went there, and I went there when I was a boy for a couple of years. It was an interesting experience because the school had changed practically not at all since my grandfather's time. All eight grades were in the one room. There was a wood stove with a pile of wood to keep it warm in wintertime. The teacher sat on a raised dais in front. The girls came in one door, and the boys came in the other door. The big boys brought the wood in. The type of education, I think, was very good because you heard what was going on in the grade above you, so that you absorbed some of it, and you helped with the grades below you, which gave you practice. I think that there were only twenty children in the entire eight grades, but I think that we probably got a pretty good basic education. We certainly had excellent social training and the discipline was outstanding.

The Flamboyant Andrew Patterson

Bry: What do you know of Andrew Patterson, who also came to California? He was George Patterson's brother and also was in farming and ranching.

Donald P.: I believe that as George Patterson became successful in farming, he sent back home to his brother Andrew and suggested that he come out, which he subsequently did. [He] went into farming in what's now Union City but was then Decoto and acquired substantial area. The piece that he had there was at least four hundred acres, and I think he had more than that. He also acquired the Black Ranch, near Livermore, which is the basis of our present cattle ranch. That was, I think, twenty-seven hundred acres, so he was a substantial operator. He must have had help from his brother, George, to set him up in business to this extent, but I don't have any direct data on that point.

Now, Andrew was an entirely different character from George. Andrew was apparently a rather flamboyant operator. The story which had come down in the family is that his problem was that his women were too fast, and his horses were not quite fast enough. I know the horse part of it must be true because we have an old lithograph showing his farm with a racecourse on it and a racehorse standing there with a blanket, on which is the name "Clara." The supposition is that this racehorse was named for his sister-in-law, Clara Patterson. Later on, he failed in his business and the property was taken over by George. We do know that he died in George's house, I believe, just before George was married.* So he was living with George at that time.

Andrew did marry. He must have married a widow because there's a daughter with a different name, and this lady and the daughter are both buried in the family cemetery. But, exactly the details of his family life, I've never heard. In fact, the reason that we know so little about Andrew is that it was not a subject for conversation in the family when I was a child. When Andrew's name was mentioned, there was always a significant silence around the table; but I'm wondering if, perhaps, Andrew was the only member of that early Patterson group that really had any fun. The other people were all working hard, apparently.

##

* Andrew Patterson died on November 2, 1895. He was 66 years old.

Transcribed by Katie Stephenson
Final Typed by Shannon Page

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THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

William Volmer

Whipples, Beards, Ingalls, and Pattersons:
Looking at the Hawley Family Tree

An Interview Conducted by
Donald Patterson
in 1977

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INTERVIEW HISTORY -- William Volmer

As part of his effort to preserve his family's history, Donald Patterson recorded this interview with his cousin, William Volmer, on August 12, 1977. The interview was recorded at the Society of California Pioneers in San Francisco. To refresh memories, the two men looked over photographs in the Patterson family archive at the Society and referred to the Hawley family tree, a copy of which is included on page 31.

William Volmer was related to Donald Patterson through the Hawley family. His grandmother, Charlotte Hawley Whipple, was the eldest sister of Donald's grandmother, Clara Hawley Patterson. Volmer was eighty in 1977, when the interview was recorded, about eight years older than Donald. His memories of the Hawley family reunions go back further than Donald's, and his knowledge of the Hawley family's several branches is more extensive. Still, they had enough experiences in common for interview to become an occasion of shared reminiscence, which gives us a fuller picture of Donald's recollections of his grandmother and of his interest in family history.

This interview was transcribed with the permission of the Society of California Pioneers. The original tapes are available at the Society.

Ann Lage
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

A portion of the Underhill-Hawley family tree, showing the James Hawley family

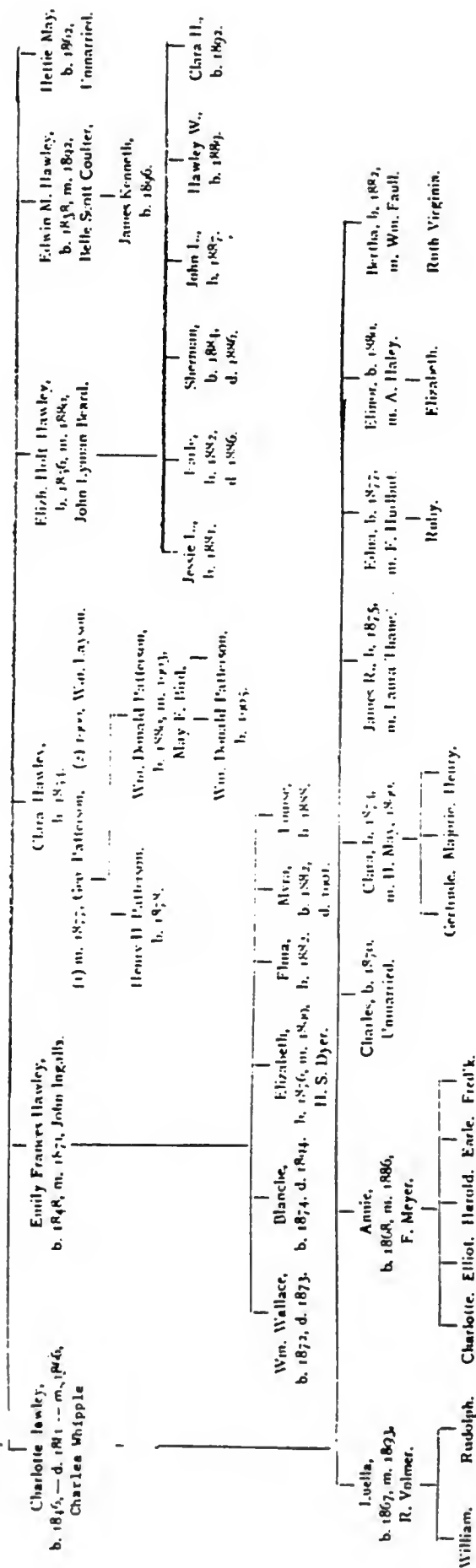
Compiled by Anna Thorsent, M.A., M.D., Reader of Linguistics.

The HAWLEYS in the United States and 1907

Compiled by CIANA HAWLEY LARSON, Newark, Cal.

and
FRANK L. HOLT, Chancellor at Law, New York.

James Hawley,
b. Sept. 12, 1822, — d. Feb. 4, 1906,
m. May 21, 1845,
Hettie Munn,
b. 1822.



James Hawley, First Generation in California

[Date of Interview: August 12, 1977] ##

Donald P.: Bill, let's review, for a moment, the family relationships. James Hawley, then, was our great, our grandfather.

Volmer: Yes, our great-grandfather.

Donald P.: Great-grandfather, that's right. So, we're, in effect, the fourth generation in California.

Volmer: That's right.

Donald P.: Now, he came to San Francisco, I know, in 1849, and I have copies of some of the letters that he wrote home. They are very interesting and they are in the collection here [at the Society of California Pioneers].

Volmer: You let me read them before you--

Donald P.: That's correct, yes. Then, he went to Mission San Jose in 1850, and I believe built and operated a hotel there. He was a contractor; did you know that?

Volmer: Well, I took it from his letters that he arrived here in 1849 with a tool set.

Donald P.: That's right, yes.

Volmer: Or, a box of tools.

Donald P.: Yes, and we have those downstairs, too, that's right. Then he sent east for his wife. His wife came out. And they had--was it, am I right?—five daughters.

Volmer: Well, yes, let's see. There was-- The oldest was your grandma, Clara--

Donald P.: Oh, she was the oldest. This I didn't know.*

This symbol indicates that a tape or segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes, see page 60.

* Clara was the third Hawley child. Refer to Hawley family tree, p. 31.

- Volmer: I think. And then, well, I can't give you--well, I'll give you the names. Now, whether they're in order, I don't know. Lizzy, Elizabeth Hawley, who became Elizabeth Beard. Aunt Lizzy Beard. Aunt Em Ingalls, Emily--Emily Hawley, who became an Ingalls. My grandmother, Charlotte Hawley, who married a Whipple.
- Donald P.: Which Whipple was that? Was that John Whipple? No, that was--
- Volmer: No, that was Charlie Whipple, John Whipple's brother. You see, John Whipple was a bachelor--well, the old man, you see. And then, next was May Hawley [May was the last child], who was an old maid till, oh-- And then, she finally got married to a man by the name of Paterson--
- Donald P.: That was Uncle Billy.
- Volmer: Uncle Billy, yes, right.
- Donald P.: Yes. Now, did you ever hear that he's the man who invented the Fresno scraper?
- Volmer: I heard something about it--I'm not quite sure.
- Donald P.: Well, that was the story that I heard. I knew him quite well. Did you know him?
- Volmer: Oh, very well.
- Donald P.: Yes, he was a jolly fellow, with a red face--
- Volmer: Yes, yes, typical Scotch. [laughter]
- Donald P.: Yes, that's right. And he spelled his name was one "t".
- Volmer: Yes, one "t", that's right. And then, there was Ed Hawley, the only son that I know of.
- Donald P.: Yes, I see where that fits in. Well, that makes four daughters, then, and one son--five children. [Actually five daughters and one son.]
- Volmer: [thinking] Yes, I think that's right.
- Donald P.: I think that's right. Because I remember the five, but I forget the boy.

The Volmer Family and Business

Donald P.: Well, now, tell me where the Volmers come into the picture.

Volmer: Well, my grandmother, Charlotte Hawley, became a Whipple. And that family--there were five children, I believe--and my mother was the oldest.

Donald P.: And what was her name?

Volmer: Luella Whipple. And she married Rudolph Volmer. So, there you've got the Volmers.

Donald P.: Now, did they live down in that area when they were first married, or did they come up to San Francisco?

Volmer: You mean the Volmers?

Donald P.: Yes.

Volmer: Yes. My father started the warehouse in Decoto in 1888, say. And the name of the firm was Lowry, Steller, and Volmer.

Donald P.: Which Lowry was that?

Volmer: Well, that was a San Francisco Lowry--Will Lowry. No, not a local Lowry. And Steller got out very early. I don't know which, I think around 1900, something like that. Or maybe before. And then the firm became Lowry, Volmer, and Perry.

Donald P.: What Perry was that? Was that a local Perry?

Volmer: That was a local Perry that lived on the-- Well, they had a place right-- The corners, there, where you go down to your--

Donald P.: Sure.

Volmer: You [have] any ideas that Perrys lived there.

Donald P.: Yes, because--I'll tell you why I'm so interested. We've just purchased the Brown ranch. And Joe Perry is farming it. So, he'll keep on as a tenant of ours now, and it's the same family, and he's related to the one that you're talking about. But, whether it's--probably, it's the third generation.

Volmer: Oh, it probably is. But, there were three brothers in this Perry family. Charlie was one, and another Perry lived in San Francisco, and the third lived on the ranch.

Donald P.: It's the same outfit.

Volmer: Yes, the same outfit. And that firm went on till 1903, when they sold out to Sauls.

Donald P.: Oh, that's where the connection came in with Sauls.

Volmer: That's right. And that's how Sauls got the old iron-clad warehouse. Sauls used to have the other warehouse on the other side of the--

Donald P.: Now, is your family home still in Decoto, or--?

Volmer: No, that was torn down, maybe, fifteen years ago.

Donald P.: I see. Do you have any of the early records anywhere of either the business or the family--any letters or documents?

Volmer: All I have is a letter to my father from Stanley Moore's father that owned the ranch on Mission Creek. Well, I suppose this is... My father went broke in the warehouse--in the grain business. He was broke in 1930 [sic] and Mr. Moore was his attorney, and he advised him not to go through bankruptcy. So, he and Charlie Perry came down to San Francisco and started the firm with Volmer and Perry in 1903. And I have a letter that--from Moore-- In other words, [he] cleared my father with his credit piece. And I still have that--

Donald P.: Was that A. A. Moore?

Volmer: Well, that was Stanley Moore's father. That was the A. A. Moore who was--well, [inaudible] married into the Moore family, that was the same family.

Donald P.: Yes, same one.

Volmer: So, I have that letter now, if it's any use to the historical society. They can have it, but I don't imagine they'd be interested.

Donald P.: Well, I think we could--you could loan it to us to put with the hoard down here. [laughter] When did your family leave Fremont, which was then Decoto?

Volmer: The Volmer family?

Donald P.: Yes.

Volmer: 1903.

Donald P.: Came to San Francisco?

Volmer: In 1903.

Bertha Faull, Niece of Clara Patterson

Donald P.: Now, let's get to the Faull family. Bertha Faull was who? Now where did she tie in?

Volmer: Bertha Faull was--

Donald P.: --the daughter of--

Volmer: Well, Bertha Faull was my mother's sister. So, she must have been a Hawley, too. That's why we're missing--

Donald P.: Yes, sure, that's right. That's where it ties in. Now, she was apparently very close to my grandmother. Did you ever hear of that?

Volmer: Yes. Your grandmother practically educated her.

Donald P.: Now, why was that?

Volmer: Well, your grandmother always picked somebody in the family to help.

Donald P.: Yes. But why did she need help?

Volmer: Well, I don't know. Maybe your grandmother just took a liking to her. [See interview with Jeanette Korstad and Marilyn Price.]

Donald P.: Now, there's a story in the family that, at one time, my grandmother was going to give her a part of the ranch. Did you ever hear that?

Volmer: Yes, I heard something of that.

Donald P.: Apparently, it never went through.

Volmer: It never went through.

Donald P.: But, she was very, I know they were very close. And, as I remember, I can remember her as Bertha Faull. And, she was a very nice person. My memory when she was very--

Volmer: Now, let's go back. I think we made an error here. Bertha Faull was my mother's sister, so she wasn't a Hawley. She was a Whipple.

Donald P.: You're right. Her grandmother was a Hawley. That's right. That straightens it out. Now, then her daughter--the one that I saw so much of because she's about my age--

Volmer: Virginia.

Donald P.: Virginia.

Volmer: Yes, I imagine she's about your age.

Donald P.: And, so she's now living then in Alameda.

Volmer: Alameda, yes.

Donald P.: And she would probably remember quite a few things.

Volmer: No doubt.

Donald P.: You'll have to talk to her sometime about-- She probably would have memories of my grandmother, too.

Volmer's Memories of the Patterson House

Donald P.: Did you ever hear a discussion as to when George Patterson's original house was built, or where it was?

Volmer: No, I couldn't--

Donald P.: We haven't been able to--

Volmer: No, that was back before my time.

Donald P.: Oh, yes. It would be before that. In thinking back when you were a boy, around the old house (the old Patterson house), do you recall whether there was a little--well, you might say, quarters for the help--back of the kitchen, a little house there?

Volmer: I have some recollection of that, yes.

Donald P.: You do. Then, beyond that was the--whatever you call it--the stone house, where they kept the milk.

Volmer: Yes, that's right.

Donald P.: But, you think there was a little wooden house.

Volmer: I can remember something of that.

Donald P.: Well I can remember, back as far as I can remember, it was there.

Volmer: Yes.

Donald P.: Did you--? You probably-- Oh, another question. You remember some of the big gatherings.

Volmer: Yes.

Donald P.: We have some pictures of those and I want to, sometime, have you look at them and see if you can identify some of the people. Some of them are identified, but many of them are not. You see, that was-- I can just barely remember the gatherings, let alone the people.

Clara's Good Works, Second Marriage, and Travel

Volmer: Well, when your grandmother was alive, she had quite a few gatherings, as I remember.

Donald P.: Yes, I think so. Do you know, did she tend to--was she sort of the center of the family, and she'd gather the family together?

Volmer: Oh, yes. She would-- Well, I'm trying to find a good description. She was, I would say, a leader of the family. I mean, she--your grandmother did a lot of good.

Donald P.: Yes, I think that's right.

Volmer: She did a lot of good.

Donald P.: She must have been fairly strong-willed.

Volmer: She was. She did a lot of good. And she helped a lot of people, including Bertha Faull. And I know she also-- Another member of the Whipples, Jim Whipple--I think she put him through the university.

Donald P.: Now, he made quite a record in the university.

Volmer: Why, yes, he was a football, yes--he was captain of the team, and later coached in 1904 or 1905.

Donald P.: No, I didn't know that. It's a sensitive area, but have you any idea of why my grandmother's marriage to Layson didn't work out?

Volmer: Well, I don't think your father and your uncle really approved of it. Now, that's the impression that--

Donald P.: I'm sure you're right. You think that's what broke it up?

Volmer: Well, [it] had something to do with it. I can just remember Mr. Layson--he was a very nice gentleman. I can remember one time when we had dinner there, and your Uncle Henry was there (that was before he was married) and I think, my father and mother--I forget who was there. But I can remember Layson was there.

Donald P.: Is that so?

Volmer: Yes.

Donald P.: Oh, that's interesting. Well, you know--

Volmer: He was a kind of a nice-looking person, rather mild-looking. As I can recall, a kind of sandy complexion, you know, I mean--

Donald P.: You know he was quite a scholar? He was a linguist--spoke five languages--and was well regarded scholastically.

Volmer: Wasn't he a minister?

Donald P.: Yes, he was the minister of a local church there. Yes, he came to the, I think, a Presbyterian church. Well, I think you're right. From what I've been able to dig out of the records, to an extent that was it. The boys, of course, were older. Here was a stranger coming in, and I think they made it difficult for him. I've always wondered why my grandmother, who was a strong character and quite self-sufficient, would have remarried. There didn't seem to be any reason for it. She had a, you know, happy family. She was happy with the boys; she was busy with the running of the ranch. I never could resolve in my own mind why--I suppose she was lonesome.

Volmer: Well, she was always Aunt Clara Patterson. She never was Aunt Clara Layson, as far as my end of the family was concerned. I always referred to her as Aunt Clara Patterson--I never could get to call her--

Well, she was a very fine person and, you know, what she would do on some of her trips, oh, like-- And I guess she did it for the whole family. One of her trips, she came back, and I was just a little, young boy, I guess, maybe, I don't know, thirteen, fourteen, and she brought a stick pin back, I believe, from Egypt. You know how you used to wear stick pins in your neck ties, or cravats, or whatever you want to call them? Those are the things she did. She never forgot anybody. And, of course, she traveled a lot. You know that.

Donald P.: Yes. Shortly after my grandfather's death, as soon as the boys, apparently, could take over on the ranch, she traveled. And, it must have been much more of an undertaking then for a women alone to travel the way she did all around the world.

Volmer: Yes. I don't know whether she took anybody or not. I can't recall--

Donald P.: No, she went with her husband, Layson, to Egypt and the Holy Land, and she took the boys east to the, I guess it was the mid-winter fair, or something like that. But, outside of that, her trips were apparently alone. She'd go alone on these long trips.

Scows, Warehouses, and Duck Hunting, 1900s-1910s

Donald P.: Do you remember anything about the shipping of produce from the ranch? Do you remember discussions about the ship Broadgauge?

Volmer: Just slightly. I know it used to come up to Mr. Patterson's landing, there.

Donald P.: But that was really before--

Volmer: Well, that was about the time that there were a couple of scow-schooners coming up to the Jarvis landing, too. It was about that time.

Donald P.: Do you remember those--?

Volmer: Yes. They were the Murray Fernandez and the George Washington.

Donald P.: Now, the George Washington, I've run across that name. That wasn't the Patterson boat--

Volmer: No. Those are the ones that brought to Jarvis, Jarvis Landing.

Donald P.: That's correct, yes. Well, do you remember Patterson Landing and the warehouses there?

Volmer: Oh, yes.

Donald P.: I guess they weren't still using it, though, when you--

Volmer: Well, I really don't know, but I knew they were there. But they were using the Jarvis Landing warehouses up till, oh--after you were born, I know that. Past 1906, I know that. Just about that time.

Donald P.: Now, when did you first go duck hunting down there, do you remember?

Volmer: Well, the first time I ever shot ducks-- I'm right now, let's see, you can figure it out. I'm eighty years old and I was sixteen when I shot ducks there.

Donald P.: That would have been about 1910 or 1911.

Volmer: Yes, along in there.

Donald P.: And you went to what we call the old shooting lodge, with the little house by the lake.

Volmer: Yes, that was the-- Yes, the house was right on the lake, wasn't it?

Donald P.: Yes, I think it was.

Volmer: [laughs] Do you want to hear a funny story about that? My father always liked finnan haddie, and we always brought a finnan haddie, and he was supposed to soak it just before overnight. So my dad, the next morning, went out and had a hold of the fish by the tail, and he had a hold of the pan, and he threw the water out into the slough, and he only was left with the tail. [laughter] So we ended up by having eggs for breakfast.

Donald P.: The slough must have been pretty close--

Volmer: Well, you could, just like you come out on a balcony, look over it. Whether it was the main slough, or what it was, it might have been a smaller slough--

Donald P.: Did you shoot there, or did you go down--?

Volmer: Oh, no. We had to go quite a ways.

Donald P.: To the Indian mound.

Volmer: That's right, the Indian mound.

Donald P.: See, I got in a little bit later on that. But they were still shooting for a few years there when I started. Now, at that time, were they still raising grain down in that--below what we called Marsh Road? Or would that have gone into vegetables and field crops, sugar beets, and that sort?

Volmer: I think, mostly, as I remember, sugar beets. I don't remember so much grain. Maybe there was some grain. It might be so. But, I--

Donald P.: You remember the sugar beets.

Volmer: I can remember the sugar beets and the cattle coming down from the--

Donald P.: The beet tops.

Volmer: The beet tops. And twisting off the beet tops and turning the cattle over to Hellers over there in Alvarado. In [inaudible], I think.

Donald P.: Yes, that's right.

Family Quarreling over Alaskan Mines

Donald P.: Can you think of any track that we haven't pursued? How did all of this group get into mining? When the hell did that start?

Volmer: Well, you mean-- I think it started with Jim Whipple when he went up to Alaska.

Donald P.: I see. And, he went up on the, what, the Alaska-- Do you know?

Volmer: Well, I guess he was with the--yes, that was part of Alaska--and what was the name of that other mine, now?

Donald P.: Kensington.

Volmer: Kensington.

Donald P.: Was your father in on the Kensington--?

Volmer: No, he wasn't. No, my dad was never in on any of that stuff.

Donald P.: Oh, he wasn't? He was lucky.

Volmer: Yes. It was just your father and your uncle. Will and Henry Patterson. Now, maybe Fred Morris was mixed in there.

Donald P.: Yes, he was. And I wonder if it must have grown out of their college association, I think. Morris, you know, was a geologist.

Volmer: Yes, Fred Morris was a mining graduate. Fred Morris and Jim Whipple and your Uncle Henry Patterson all went to [the University of] California at the same time.

Donald P.: I've got a mass of correspondence and diaries and papers and so forth on those mining-- I think Dad must have kept a lot of the correspondence. It was a lot of fun. They had a lot of fun out of it.

Volmer: They had some trouble, too, if you remember. Do you want to bring that up?

Donald P.: They lost money on it. What trouble do you mean?

Volmer: Well, Jim Whipple died, you know, in 1914. And there was a lawsuit going on at that time. Don't you remember anything? Have you ever heard anything about--?

Donald P.: I probably--no, between whom?

Volmer: Well, between the Whipples and--Jim Whipple--and, I don't know, and Bart Thane was in on it.

Donald P.: Now, Bart Thane I know. They would never speak to him.

Volmer: Jim Whipple married Bart's sister, Laura Thane, you know that.

Donald P.: That's right, sure. Yes.

Volmer: And, it was my father that settled that claim. He went in and they all--it was really settled just before Jim Whipple died. And, of course, Jim Whipple died there in Niles--it was the same place. And I was going to school at that time at the university in Reno--University of Nevada. But, I've heard afterwards it was my dad that settled the thing. The lawyers couldn't settle it, and my father went up there and-- Now, whether it was his friendship with your father and your Uncle Henry--what happened, I really couldn't say.

Donald P.: There's nothing in the record.

Volmer: But, from then on, my dad wouldn't speak to Laura Thane, and I don't think that your Uncle Henry would neither. I think your father relented, finally.

Donald P.: Yes. But the real, the fellow that they were really mad at, was Bart Thane.

Volmer: Well, probably.

Donald P.: Because he was the big operator.

Volmer: Yes.

Donald P.: He was the fellow in the Kensington and Alaska gold. And, he's the fellow that went over to England. He was going back and forth, and he was the organizer-- No, I--that's all I know about.

Volmer: Yes, well I'm just quoting from what I've heard my father say. And I know my mother was very, very upset with my dad because he would have nothing to do with Laura Thane. If there was a family picnic, and Laura Thane was there, my dad wouldn't show up—he'd have an excuse.

Donald P.: I wonder why they were so bitter about Laura because I wouldn't think that she would have gotten into the business end of it at all. I suppose it was just--

Volmer: That I couldn't say. I don't know how much influence Laura had—I don't know. She was pretty sharp, like Bart Thane, too, you know.

Donald P.: I only knew her, of course, when she was very young.

Volmer: The last time I saw her, she was very, very old-- Well, that's about all I can tell you, Don, on that side of the family.

Donald P.: Well, now, tell me. The Ingalls--are there descendants of the Ingalls family left, now? In the area?

Volmer: Oh, I think so. I think there are some younger people. Elizabeth Ingalls is-- There were three Ingalls girls, I know that. Maybe the youngest one is still alive. I don't know, I could find out. One of the boys--one of the younger Ingalls--have you heard about that fight between your brother, Jack, and--?

Donald P.: Yes. [laughs]

Volmer: That was one of the Ingalls. That was quite a show. That was a family gathering. Your father and mother were there that day.

Donald P.: Yes, I missed that for some reason.

Volmer: Yes, I think you were away at school, or something.

Recalling Early Ranch Structures

Donald P.: You remember, as you go down to the Coyote Hills, you turn off Marsh Road and go down Coyote Hills, there where the dairy is on the left-hand side, and there was a little house on the right-hand side--

Volmer: A little white house, yes.

Donald P.: And that we always called the Parish house because the Parish family lived there. Did you ever know any of the Parishes?

Volmer: No.

Donald P.: That was before your time. You never heard any discussion of when that house was built?

Volmer: No.

Donald P.: We can't find out. It was built in the sixties. It's one of the very oldest houses in that whole area. The only house that's older is the [inaudible] place. And we can't establish when it was built, and there is none of the Parish family left. They went to Los Angeles, and then we lost the trail again. So, we're left--we just don't know. But, I'd like to know because about ten years ago--you remember Captain Thompson and Mrs. Thompson, who were the keepers for the Pheasant Club, there, remember?

Volmer: Yes, I do.

Donald P.: His wife was very energetic and she was an antique dealer before she went down there and retired. She took that house and completely restored it to its original condition and decorated it inside and everything. And, it's really a very good replica--not replica--it's the actual house with the furnishings that you would expect in the sixties and seventies. But, we can't establish when it was built.

Volmer: There's no record? Well, of course, that one would be part of the old Briggs ranch.

Donald P.: No. The old--well, I've forgotten the name, but I've checked the old maps of the sixties. The maps of the fifties don't show any house. The maps of the seventies show a house.

Who were the dairy people that were there, before Marchy?

Volmer: They also had a place up on the mountain, opposite the Masonic home--

Donald P.: I can't recall at this time.

Volmer: Well, yes. I was trying to think of that name when you were mentioning this country--it's a funny name--

Donald P.: That was very well operating as far back as you can remember. So, they must have come pretty early.

Volmer: Yes... Zwissig.

Donald P.: No, before the Zwissigs.

Volmer: Oh, before the Zwissigs.

Donald P.: Now, the Zwissigs took over from these people that I can just barely remember, and then they bought the place up at Decoto. Then they left, and then Marchy came right after. But there's one before that—

Volmer: No, I couldn't remember.

Donald P.: You don't remember? I guess you remember the little station, the Arden Station.

Volmer: Oh, yes, Arden Station.

Donald P.: You didn't go to the play, down there, did you, where it got its name--Midsummer Night's Dream? [As You Like It was the Skakespeare play which takes place in the forest of Arden. --Ed.]

Volmer: No, no, I think that was very early in your grandmother's time, wasn't it?

Donald P.: No, it would have been--because Dad was-- Yes, I guess it would have been--

Volmer: Yes, I've heard about that place.

Donald P.: Do you remember the deer park?

Volmer: Oh, very well, very well.

Donald P.: You heard the story about the--

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--up into the tree.

Volmer: Yes, yes. And I remember they used to go out and feed the deer. Yes, I remember the deer park.

Donald P.: Now, do you remember there used to be a bunkhouse and a kitchen where they fed the men? Do you remember that?

Volmer: Oh, yes. That was down by the stables, there, you know, where your stables were. Yes, yes, I remember that house. I know it wasn't a barn. It was a house there.

Donald P.: And wasn't there a low building that was the bunkhouse? There was some kind of a house there and then a--

Volmer: And then wasn't there a shed on one side of it, or something? I think where your dad used to keep his old Knox there, to cool a little. 1906. [laughter]

Donald P.: I don't know, you've got me there.

Volmer: Yes, I remember that Knox, you know, with the—you had a folding seat in front that folded down.

Donald P.: This I don't remember.

Volmer: You don't remember.

Donald P.: No, no.

Volmer: That was alongside of the bunkhouse.

[tape turned off temporarily]

Tracing More Hawley Cousins

Donald P.: Well, you take over, now.

Volmer: Well, no, you just ask me questions.

Donald P.: Well, now, let's see. Let's take the Meyer branch. Did they have the ranch and the lady just died and gave the ranch to the park, didn't she?

Volmer: No, that's the maid. Oh, now, wait a minute. Annie Meyer was my mother's sister. She married Fred Meyer. Annie Whipple--she married Fred Meyer. And they had that little piece of property up on Dry Creek, which, I think, Fred Meyer originally owned, and then he went broke or something. And the Pattersons--your grandmother, I guess--took it over and they rented that for years. You know that piece of property.

Donald P.: No, no, this is news to me.

Volmer: Well, it's Mission Boulevard, now. You know where you cross the bridge there? Well, you know where Dry Creek comes down.

Donald P.: Yes, sure.

Volmer: Well, do you know where the cemetery is?

Donald P.: Yes.

Volmer: Well, it would be, I guess, west of the cemetery, wouldn't it?

Donald P.: Yes.

Volmer: Well, there was a piece of land right around Dry Creek and ran as far as the railroad track. And it went down--the other boundary was Whipple Road.

Donald P.: Oh, yes, I know where that is, sure.

Volmer: You know the corner there? And Dry Creek went through the middle of it. Well, they lived there for years. That was another one of your grandmother's--

Donald P.: Well, now, is any of them left?

Volmer: Yes. There is, of my generation, there's one left: Harold.

Donald P.: Where does he live?

Volmer: He lives in Oakland.

Donald P.: Well, now, we've followed the Ingalls and we've followed the Meyers. Now--

Volmer: You want the Mays?

Donald P.: Yes. That was August May, wasn't it?

Volmer: No, no. This was Henry May. August May's brother married Clara Whipple. There's three of my generation left in the May family. There's Henry May, and Marjorie and Gertrude. Now, Gertrude married Kennedy, and had a ranch further towards Hayward on the same side of the road there. Oh, I guess you never knew the Kennedys.

Donald P.: No, I don't think so.

Volmer: Well, they were farmers, and then young Kennedy, he-- And they had also a ranch on the Bell ranch, down, I believe, Alameda Creek. Now, there's three of them left. There's Henry, Gertrude and Marjorie. And they're all around my age. I mean, Harold is a couple years older than I am--Harold Meyer. Gertrude Kennedy is Harold Meyer's age. Marjorie Kennedy is my age, and Henry is four years younger than myself. And they're still alive. And Henry lives on the old place out on Dry Creek.

Donald P.: He's still there?

Volmer: He's still there, yes. He was married a second time.

Donald P.: I didn't notice his name on this--

Volmer: No.

Donald P.: I wonder if he should be taped. I wonder if these folks should--

Volmer: Well, Henry is not too well. Gertrude lives in Hayward, and Marjorie lives up--she married a fellow by the name of King, who has got a ranch up on the-- You know Niles Canyon where Fernbrook Park is? And, you know the road that goes where you turn to the left and go on up to--the Palomares, isn't it the Palomares?

Donald P.: Palomares? Or is it now Stonybrook?

Volmer: Well, it's Stonybrook, but--yes--up Stonybrook. I think they call it the Palomares, something like that.

Donald P.: Well, I'm going to make a note of this--

Volmer: And her name is King, now.

Donald P.: Do you know her first--?

Volmer: Her first name was-- Well, her first name was Marjorie. Her maiden name--

Donald P.: Now, but who is the oldest of that group? You said--

Volmer: Mrs. Kennedy is the oldest.

Donald P.: Oh, she's the oldest, I see.

Volmer: Marjorie comes next. And Mrs. King comes next, and Henry May comes--he's the younger one.

Donald P.: Okay, now, you say Ed Hawley--did he have any descendants?

Volmer: Yes, he had--and I think he's still alive--Kenneth Hawley, who would be your cousin. He would be your second cousin. And I don't know where Kenneth is; I can find out. Now, there's another one that your, either your grandmother or your Uncle Henry, sent up to the University of Nevada. That's another one of the family. [laughs] Because, he came up there when, I think, I was either, let's see, I was a sophomore, and he was a-- They sent him up there for me to kind of look out after him. And he was a tough monkey to look after. [laughter]

Donald P.: A real job, huh?

Volmer: Well, you haven't covered the Beard family, which--

Donald P.: No, by golly, that's right.

Volmer: The Beard family--now, uh--

Donald P.: Elias Beard came in the forties, before the Gold Rush, and settled in Mission San Jose. That, I guess, was the original of the whole bunch, wasn't it?

Volmer: I imagine so.

Donald P.: Yes.

Volmer: Now, Aunt Elizabeth--which we called Aunt Lizzy--well, it was Elizabeth Hawley, she married this--I forget--this Beard. I forget his first name [John Lymon Beard]. I know, at one time, that he was a member of the California legislature, whether that means anything to you, or not, I don't know.

Donald P.: Now this, we'll be able to spot this on this genealogy.

Volmer: Oh, yes.

Donald P.: It'll show there.

Volmer: Oh, it shows up there.

Donald P.: Now, did they have children, and have they got relatives?

Volmer: Oh, yes, they had four [who lived], and I think they had two that passed away. And you'll find this on this family tree. Well, the oldest one was Jessie--she never married. And she became a nurse. And she did a lot of work. I think she even went to do her work in Bellevue in New York. Isn't that--they call it Bellevue--that hospital?

Donald P.: Yes.

Volmer: Oh, yes, John Beard, oh, yes. He was named after his father. This was John Beard that married Elizabeth Hawley. John Beard became a doctor, and he passed away about, it seemed to be a heart--they all had heart attacks--John Beard. And then there was Hawley Beard.

Donald P.: These names are all familiar to me, but I don't know--

Volmer: And he's passed away--passed away about, oh, in his thirties, sometime. John Beard passed away. And then, Clara Beard, who I think is still alive and married now (I don't know what her

Volmer: married name is), but she lives in Lone Pine, California, or she did. Now, John Beard had a son; he did have a son. Now, I don't know what happened to him. That's beyond me.

Donald P.: Then, as far as--you don't know any of that Beard group who live around here, then?

Volmer: No. Now, where John Beard's son is, I don't know. I think the last time I heard of John Beard--the father, now I'm talking about--he was practicing medicine in, I believe, Martinez. This younger Beard might be up there in Martinez. Now, whether Clara Beard has any offspring, I can't tell you.

Donald P.: Now, some of your family, then, are probably at the same cemetery--the family plot up there.

Volmer: Oh, yes. They're all up there.

Donald P.: All of them?

Volmer: Practically all of them, except my mother. She's not there. She's down in Colma, and my father isn't there. My brother isn't-- They're all--

Donald P.: I see.

Volmer: Yes. But all the rest of them are up there--most of them.

Donald P.: Do you know, were they in the same plot in that same--? Or did you have an area of your own?

Volmer: Well, there's a Whipple plot. And the Patterson plot.

Donald P.: They're doing quite a nice job up there. Have you been up there recently?

Volmer: Last time I was there was at Jack's funeral.

Donald P.: Oh, yes. They're taking good care of it.

Volmer: Like I told you before, I took Sally up there and had to explain--I pointed out all of her relatives. [laughter]

Andrew Patterson

Donald P.: This is going way back. You never heard any discussion of Andrew Patterson and his marriage, did you?

Volmer: No, no. I just knew of an Andrew Patterson, that's all I knew.

Donald P.: Because he's one of the most colorful figures in the whole bunch, you know, because, as the story that came down, he's the fellow whose women were too fast and his horses were not quite fast enough. [laughter] But he did marry. And his wife's grave is there, and a daughter--but it was not his daughter. Apparently, it was her daughter, and he married her--she must have been a widow.

Volmer: Well, is his grave there too? Andrew Patterson's grave?

Donald P.: Oh, yes. I haven't been able to find out when he came to California, either. And this ties in, as I say, with the history of the Livermore ranch, which is--I haven't been able to find very much about. I really don't-- Did you ever hear that my father, when he first got out of college, went up there to learn the cattle business?

Volmer: Just a little bit. I heard something of it, yes.

Donald P.: You think that's correct then?

Volmer: I think so.

Donald P.: Because I run across pictures of him, which apparently were taken up there--in their cowboy outfits. Well, let's see, can you think of anything now that--I'm beginning to run dry.

Volmer: Well, I think you've about covered everything, Don, that I can remember. There might be some small incidents--

Donald P.: Well, let's do this, then. We'll stop now, and maybe after we've thought about it, sometime we'll have another session.

Volmer: Fine.

[tape turned off and on again at some later time]

Pattersons and Hawleys: Mutual Assistance

Donald P.: We're talking about--

Volmer: The little ranch that Grandpa and Grandma Hawley lived on.

Donald P.: Oh, well, I know where that is because their house was there until a few years ago, and then it was--yes.

Volmer: Yes, that's right.

Donald P.: It was adjacent to our present property.

Volmer: Yes. Your property bordered it, say, property on the west.

Donald P.: Right. But, Bill, I was thinking of the wrong area. Now, let's go over this again, because I never knew this connection. In other words, that little piece, you say, was given by my grandmother--

Volmer: I don't know whether it was given by your-- But, after your Grandma Hawley died--and Aunt May wasn't married then, you know, May Hawley--it was arranged between your father and, I guess, your grandmother and your father and your uncle, that-- Now, whether they gave it to May Hawley I have--

Donald P.: I think so.

Volmer: I think they did.

Donald P.: Yes, I think so.

Volmer: And then she lived there till this Uncle Billy came along-- Uncle Billy Paterson.

Donald P.: Right.

Volmer: And now, what became of the property after that, I really don't know.

Donald P.: Well, now, did Uncle Billy live there?

Volmer: I don't think so.

Donald P.: No. Where did he live?

Volmer: They lived in Oakland.

Donald P.: Yes, that's right, you're right. They used to come down. Okay, well, then, that's good, because that gives me the history of that piece of property that I had always wondered about.

Volmer: After Uncle John Beard died, or John Beard died--the original Beard--the ranch was in trouble.

Donald P.: Which ranch?

Volmer: The Beard ranch.

Donald P.: Oh, yes.

Volmer: That was across the road from where the Hawleys lived, you know.

Donald P.: Oh, yes. I know where that is, yes.

Volmer: And your family helped Aunt Lizzy Beard out--to what extent, I don't know. Because I remember there was a lot of discussion in the family, and Aunt Lizzy was, well, she wasn't exactly strapped, but she was not in too good a shape.

Donald P.: This I didn't know.

Volmer: And it was through the goodness of your grandmother and your father and uncle that--took care of her. I don't know how they did or what they did, I don't know.

Donald P.: We're now talking about the acquisition of the Briggs ranch. I think it was in 1916, wasn't it?

Volmer: No, no, I think it was long after that, I'm pretty sure.

Donald P.: Well, whenever it was, go ahead.

Volmer: So your father and your uncle's kindness that helped my dad in 1903-- He was very proud that he was able to lend him the money, some amount of money, I forget which. It was close to fifty thousand dollars, I think, to buy the Briggs ranch.

Donald P.: No, that I didn't know.

[tape turned off and on again]

My grandfather was at least twenty years [thirty] older than my grandmother, and apparently my grandmother was a very lovely-looking young girl.

Volmer: That's right.

Donald P.: And her father was the contemporary of my grandfather. They came to San Francisco in 1849 and knew each other in 1850 in Mission San Jose. I think that the old fellow was a little bit ashamed of himself because in the first place, apparently, he married, he took her off to Sacramento, where they were married. And his friends didn't know what had happened until it was all over. This is just an inkling on my part that, from some of the notes and correspondence, what took place. But, beyond that, I don't know. But, as far as I know, it was a very happy marriage.

Volmer: Yes. Well, her father knew your grandfather very well and, I think, did quite a lot of business with him, too. I think they got along very well together.

Donald P.: Now, I've also heard the story that my grandfather, George Patterson, was a very hard, well, not hard, but a very--yes, I guess I'd say a hard man--that he had the reputation of being very business-like. And they say that he would follow the thresher around through the field, and if there was grain left on the ground where it shouldn't be, he'd make them go back and pick it up.

Volmer: Well, that's a typical Scot. [laughter]

Donald P.: Well, you can't blame him too much. You haven't heard anything else, though, since--

Volmer: Well, the only time I've ever heard--that my father always had a very high regard for this. I guess he went up there as a fairly young man--well, they got along well together. He spoke very well of him.

Donald P.: That's interesting. Well, that's about all--

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Hawley Family Gatherings

Donald P.: We are discussing some of the old pictures that we've found in the Patterson collection. I'm going to ask Mr. Volmer, now, to tell us about this picture of his family.

Volmer: Well, this picture taken on May 21, 1905, the sixtieth anniversary of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. James Hawley-- On the steps are the oldest representatives of the four generations. The first generation, Mr. and Mrs. Hawley, the second generation, Mrs. Emily Hawley Ingalls. Mrs. Ingalls was the oldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hawley. Mrs. Luella Volmer--the oldest of the third generation, the daughter of Charlotte Hawley. Miss Charlotte Meyer--the oldest generation of--the daughter of Annie Meyer, who was the daughter of Charlotte Hawley.

This photograph, taken about 1908, is a group picture of the first of the five generations of the family of Mr. and Mrs. James Hawley, taken at the tennis court of the George Patterson house.

Donald P.: Now, tell us a little bit about those gatherings. There used to be a lot of big family gatherings.

Volmer: This is one of the many family gatherings that had taken place during this period at different places, including the Beard residence which was across the street from the Hawley residence. And also, later on in the years, family gatherings [were] at the Ingalls' place down in Berryessa. Mrs. Ingalls was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Hawley. Does that sound all right?

Donald P.: Did you have plenty to eat? Did they have it out in the open?

Volmer: At these gatherings, generally, everybody brought something along, and there was ample food for everybody and most of the neighbors. [laughter]

Well, at most of these gatherings, and pretty well most all of them, no hard liquor was served. It was mostly coffee and milk and soda pop for the kids. Practically no liquor was served, to my knowledge.

Donald P.: Well, you should know because you were there. I think that's right. That's what I remember, too.

Volmer: Yes.

Donald P.: How long did they last? When did you get there, and when did you leave?

Volmer: Well, these affairs generally started a little before noon and probably lasted until about five or six, up to seven o'clock at night, all depending on the length of the day and the period of the year.

Donald P.: Now at that time, did you come in automobiles, or was it still buckboards and surreys and--?

Volmer: Well, in the early days--in the earlier pictures, I've described the first picture, here--generally, people arrived with horses and buggies. Later on, after World War I, and just prior to World War I, mostly everybody arrived by automobile.

Donald P.: Now, when they came with horses, what did they do with the horses while you were at the party? Did they unhitch them and put them in somebody's barn, or what happened?

Volmer: Well, the horses were always pretty well taken care of. Most of these places had ample places--large barns and so forth, and plenty of room. Generally the horses were unhitched. Sometimes, they were tied up to hitching posts--

Donald P.: --and left in the harness.

- Volmer: Yes. But, regardless of all that, everybody seemed to have a very fine time. [laughter]
- Donald P.: This was kind of a means of communication among the family people, I suppose.
- Volmer: Yes. Well, generally these gatherings were generally about once a year or once every two years, and were generally in the spring or the summer. Mostly, [they] were outdoors and the weather around the bay region was generally nice weather. Never too hot and never too cold.
- Donald P.: I remember the story they used to tell about--was it a codfish that your father got mixed up in at the duck club?
- Volmer: No, it was a finnan haddie. My dad wasn't a very good cook, but he prided himself for bringing this finnan haddie to the duck club for the early breakfast. After soaking this finnan haddie all night long, he decided that he'd have to throw the excess water away. Instead of taking the finnan haddie out of the pan, he walked out onto the porch, which overlooked a little slough, or ditch, full of water, and, hanging onto the pan with one hand and the tail of the finnan haddie in the other, he gave a swish to throw the water out, and he ended up with the pan and the tail of the finnan haddie, the rest of which sailed out into the ditch. [laughter] We ended up by having bacon and eggs for breakfast. [more laughter]

The Hunting Lodge and Deer Park

- Donald P.: This is the old duck club [looking at photograph], before it was moved up onto the Coyote Hills. I was only seven or eight years old at that time, and I wasn't invited down there very often, but when they were not shooting, Dad occasionally went down to see what was happening at the old building. So I remember it, and I remember particularly that there was an artesian well behind the little house, which ran continuously. This ran into a ditch, and down on into the marsh. As the pumping in the valley got heavier, water level dropped, and I would think that the artesian flow stopped sometime around, perhaps, 1915. These wells have never flowed since.

About 1921 or 1922, this hunting lodge was abandoned, and went up onto, what we called, Coyote Hills (which was the Briggs place and was bought at about that time). I'm sure that they took part of this building and moved it up onto the Coyote Hills and then, later on, it was added to to make the second shooting club, which would sleep about ten people, which was larger than the original club.

Donald P.: Bill, you remember the deer park, but it was a little bit before my time. I think I can just barely remember it. They had quite a few deer there at one time, didn't they?

Volmer: Yes, Don, they had quite a few deer.

Donald P.: Do you remember what--a dozen or so?

Volmer: Oh, I imagine close to it--all the way, maybe, from eight to twelve deer.

Donald P.: You never heard where the deer came from?

Volmer: No, that I never--

Donald P.: Do you remember how high was the fence? How did they keep them in?

Volmer: Well, I would say that the fence was at least fifteen feet in height.

Donald P.: They're great jumpers.

Volmer: Yes. But, to my knowledge, I have never heard of any deer escaping.

Donald P.: Yes, well that sounds about right. Did they feed them, or did they have natural food?

Volmer: Well, I think there was plenty of natural feed in there. But, as I recollect, they were fed every evening--I would say maybe about four to six o'clock, about that time. I can remember them bringing stuff in there. Now, whether they were fed every day, that, I can't say.

Donald P.: Were there any bucks among them?

Volmer: Well, there was one buck, in particular, that was supposed to be very mean, and outsiders weren't supposed to go in there. They were warned to keep out, especially us kids. [laughs]

Donald P.: Bill, I think that's right because I can remember the story my parents told about a Chinaman taking a shortcut through the park once. The buck ran him up a tree, and he was there all night. They had to get him out from the--

Volmer: Well, yes, Don, I think I heard that story, too. And I know that they're very particular to have outsiders kept out of there. Perhaps the deer, if they knew they were being fed, they were probably quite tame.

Donald P.: I wonder why my grandparents had that deer park. That wasn't usual at that time. Did you ever hear any reason why they had it?

Volmer: Well, I think it was more your grandmother's idea. She was a very remarkable woman and she loved the outdoors, she traveled a lot, and maybe she got this idea once with her travels in England, or something.

Donald P.: Yes, I'll bet that's it. I think that's a good suggestion.

[tape turned off, briefly]

We have a genealogy, here, on the back of a picture, which shows two generations back of Hettie Munn and James Hawley, who were my great grandfather and great grandmother. Bill Volmer is here, and he has a comment about this, which we're not sure of, but we'd like to get it into the record.

Volmer: Well, it's—I'm not quite sure of this, Don, but, somehow, in the back of my mind, the reason James Hawley left his family in New Jersey to come out to California was--there was a mortgage on the farm, and he evidently figured that he could come out here and make enough money during the Gold Rush to clear the mortgage. As I remember, in a letter that he had written back home, he tells of his arrival in San Francisco in 1849 (or thereabouts) and described his landing here and his first job as a carpenter in San Francisco in August of 1849. The daily wage at that time for a carpenter was between fifteen and twenty dollars a day.

Donald P.: And that was big money, then.

Volmer: That was supposedly big money, but it wasn't so big--barrel of flour cost twenty dollars, or so. So he was making fair wages.
[both laugh]

##

TAPE GUIDE -- William Velmer

Date of Interview: August 12, 1977

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Berkeley, California

THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

Jeanette Korstad and Marilyn Price

Hawley Family Memories

An Interview Conducted by
Ann Lage
in 1987



JEANETTE KORSTAD
in 1880s docent costume, Patterson House,
Ardenwood

1987

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INTERVIEW HISTORY — Jeanette Korstad and Marilyn Price

An interview with Jeanette Korstad was suggested to us by David Patterson, who knew of Mrs. Korstad's interest in Hawley family history. Mrs. Korstad is the granddaughter of Elizabeth Holt Hawley, the younger sister of Clara Hawley Patterson. To give us a fuller picture of the Hawley sisters, Mrs. Korstad invited to the interview session Marilyn Meyer Price, the great-granddaughter of Charlotte Hawley, Clara's oldest sister. Both women were steeped in Hawley family history, learned as children and young adults listening carefully at family gatherings: Mrs. Korstad tells of visiting her grandmother: "you just sat and listened, and you heard the family story any time you listened." Mrs. Price's grandmother, Annie Hawley Whipple Meyer, had traveled with Clara Hawley in the 1890s and shared some of those experiences with her granddaughter. (See the Hawley family tree on page 31.)

Together these two descendants of the Hawley family are able to give a picture of the women in Clara Hawley's generation: reserved, well-mannered, cultured, church-going, and precise, they "never tolerated anything but ladylike behavior and speech." Most of the Hawley sisters married into prominent families of Washington Township; Mrs. Korstad's grandmother married the son of E.L. Beard, the man who gave George Washington Patterson his start in farming in 1850.

Mrs. Korstad and Mrs. Price continue the Hawley family interest in their family history, evidenced by the geneological research Clara undertook in 1907. Mrs. Korstad serves as a docent at the Ardenwood Regional Preserve, where her knowledge of the family and of Washington Township and her skills as a retired teacher are put to good use.

The interview was held on April 8, 1987, at Mrs. Korstad's home in Castro Valley. Portions of our conversation which were not as pertinent to the project's interest in Patterson family and ranch history were not transcribed but are briefly summarized in the transcription. Mrs. Korstad returned her transcript with a very informative letter responding to some questions raised by the editor and expanding on several topics. This letter has been included as an appendix. The tapes of the interview are available at The Bancroft Library.

Ann Lage
Interviewer/Editor
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name Jeannette Lillian (Beard) Korstad

Date of birth May 22, 1917 Birthplace Martinez, Calif.

Father's full name John Lyman Beard, M.D.

Occupation Physician and Surgeon Birthplace Warm Springs, Calif.

Mother's full name Clarice Pearson Beard

Occupation Nurse Birthplace North Dakota

Your spouse Vernon Edward Korstad

Your children Kristen Korstad Robinson, John Edward Korstad, Ph.D.,
Charles Howard Korstad

Where did you grow up? Martinez, California

Present community Castro Valley, California

Education 3 years U.C. Berkeley, Cal State Hayward, B.S.

Occupation(s) Teacher (retired)

Areas of expertise minerals and gems

Other interests or activities docent - Patterson House, Ardenwood

Organizations in which you are active Mineral and Gem Society of
Castro Valley, Calif. Retired Teachers Association,
Amber Br. Children's Hospital, various historical
societies

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name Marilyn Frances Meyer Price
Date of birth Nov. 25, 1927 Birthplace Oakland, Calif
Father's full name Earl Whipple Meyer
Occupation Building Contractor Birthplace Decoto, Calif
Mother's full name Elizabeth Stivers Meyer
Occupation Registered Nurse Birthplace Conterville, Cal
Your spouse William E. Price
Your children Susan Price Lima - Telecomputing E
Melissa Price Fry - Registered Nurse
Where did you grow up? Oakland, Calif.
Present community Fremont Calif
Education Local public schools.
Two years college
Occupation(s) Research Asst. Univ. of Calif. 6 yrs.
Homemaker for last 30 years
Areas of expertise Business and investments

Other interests or activities Antique furniture
restoration Gardening

Organizations in which you are active Omega Psi Phi, Philanthropic
Society.

Hawley Family Connections

[Date of Interview: 4/8/87]##

Korstad: What we're doing is taking the family tree, which was compiled by Clara Hawley Layson. When Patterson passed away, she married a Presbyterian minister by the name of Layson, and then he passed away, and then she passed away five days after I was born. Anyway, Clara traced the family tree way, way back—to the Staffordshire Underhills in England.

Lage: Before we begin, I want you to give me your names and tell me what branches of the Hawley family you are descended from.*

Korstad: I am Jeannette Beard Korstad. I am the granddaughter of Elizabeth Hawley, who was often called Lizzie and who was the sister of Clara Hawley Patterson Layson. I am the daughter of John Beard, who became an M.D., and we lived in Martinez, California. I became interested in tracing the family history more or less at the urging of the family and meeting David Patterson recently—he spurred us on to finding out more about the Hawleys.

Lage: He is very interested in tracing his family.

Korstad: Yes. He knows a great deal about the Pattersons but very little about the Hawleys. The Hawleys seemed to intermarry with the southern Alameda County residents, including the Whipples and my father's side, E. L. Beard and John Beard, Sr.

The connection with E. L. Beard and George Patterson was that both came from Lafayette, Indiana. They must have known each other there. E. L. Beard came out in February 1849, and George came out by July or August. Of course he went immediately to the gold fields, but E. L. Beard was more interested in farming. He settled on the mission lands of Mission San Jose and established his home right in the mission buildings. After two years, George Patterson called it quits on looking for gold and came down to Mission San Jose and worked for E. L. Beard, who by that time had quite a bit of acreage. And so George Patterson encumbered himself to work for E. L. Beard, and he acquired his land from Beard at, I think it was, six dollars an acre. So that was the beginning of his land purchase.

This symbol indicates that a tape or segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes, see page 81.

* See Hawley family tree, page 31.

- Lage: Are these facts that you have searched out yourselves?
- Korstad: No, these are in other sources. This is what the story is at Ardenwood when we tell the story of George Patterson. Both he and Beard knew farming; it was only natural that they would become interested. So the shoe is on the other foot now; the Pattersons have the land and the money, and we have nothing. [laughter]
- Lage: Well, they kept theirs intact for a long time.
- Korstad: And the Stevensons, too. Stevenson was the ranch manager of the Beard ranch. Look at the Stevensons today.
- Lage: [to Price] Let's get your family history.
- Price: I am Marilyn Meyer Price. My father was Earl Whipple Meyer, the fourth of Annie Hawley Whipple Meyer's children. Her mother was Charlotte Hawley, who married Charles Whipple. Charlotte Hawley died after giving birth to her last child, Bertha, who was taken by the eldest child, Luella, to live with Grandma and Grandpa Hawley. They were parents of Clara Hawley Patterson Layson.
- Lage: And Bertha's daughter is still living in Alameda.
- Price: Yes, Bertha is the one I said had the pictures of the Hawleys and all. She was the baby that was taken and raised by James and Hettie Hawley. Her mother died a year after she was born so she was taken by the eldest to live with grandma. Then my grandmother was the next in age; she stayed on and raised the rest of the children. But baby and big sister went to live with James and Hettie. She's the one whose daughter, [Virginia Faulk Sargent], lives in Alameda and has the pictures and would be thrilled to death to talk with you.
- Lage: I would love to talk with her, but I am supposed to be sticking with the Patterson-Clara Hawley side of the family.
- Korstad: Well, they all tie together because Clara and her mother were very, very close, and her mother was over there all the time. I have some pictures here showing Clara with her two boys and her mother. They were a very close family, and we have kept in close contact up until Aunt May's death, I guess, most of us.

[Price shows maps from old books showing the various properties of the old families--from History of Washington Township. Discussion of Price's family and other old families in the area. The statue at the University of California at Berkeley commemorating the 1898 football team is of James Whipple and friend Bart Thane. Whipple married Bart's sister, Laura Thane, who was active in the community. She established the auxiliaries of the Children's Hospital. Thane's mother was a Tilden, and her uncle was the deaf

sculptor, Douglas Tilden, who did the football statue and the Mechanics statues in San Francisco. Edith Harmon Whipple's family donated Harmon gymnasium to Cal. Lots of intermarriage among old southern Alameda County families.]

Clara Hawley Patterson and Sisters

- Lage: Let's focus now on Clara. Neither of you knew Clara, but were there family stories?
- Korstad: We knew the family stories because my grandmother was very close to Clara.
- Lage: [to Price] Did you know this generation of Clara's sisters, too?
- Price: I knew Aunt May, the younger one, and I think I remember Edwin Hawley, Uncle Ed. Didn't he bicycle? I remember him as an old man bicycling along. He was sort of eccentric. Aunt May is the one I remember. She was a typical spinster-type aunt.
- Lage: Now, which one is Aunt May?
- Price: This one [points to a family tree]. She was my grandmother's aunt. She married at the age of fifty to a Paterson, with one "t", Uncle Billy.
- Lage: I understand that she was raised, in part, by Clara or came to live with her.
- Korstad: Yes, she did. And she helped raise my father and family. I guess wherever there were small babies, she took residence.
- Price: She was just a Norman Rockwell-maiden aunt-looking lady, erect, with skinny little legs.
- Lage: And you remember her?
- Korstad: Oh, yes. In fact, wasn't the last family picnic down at Dry Creek for her ninetieth birthday?
- Price: That's what it was for. It was after the war. Aunt May was a delight.
- Korstad: Yes, and very precise. I used to go over there when I was going to Cal and stay overnight. For breakfast, if I cut the butter wrong, she would reprimand me, "You cut the butter straight." And when she came up to Martinez, when our oldest daughter was born, Kirsten was crying and I let her cry. Aunt May bawled me out,

Korstad: "You never let a baby cry!" She had raised most of her nieces and nephews. I know that she lived with my grandmother when my father and his brother and sister were young.

Price: When I was first married I had a flat in my grandmother's home--Annie Hawley Whipple--in Oakland. She was a very modern, charming lady. She was telling me once that she went on a trip back East with her aunt, Clara Hawley Patterson Layson. They were supposed to go by way of Grand Canyon because the Fred Harveys always had good food and the family were always good eaters; they enjoyed good food. But, she said, "We couldn't go that route because that old Indian was on the warpath." I said, "What do you mean, Nana?" And she said, "Geronimo." And I looked at this lady that had been giving me marriage advice the moment before, and it was hard to realize that this charming lady had not been able to travel the southern route because Geronimo was on the warpath!

She went back East with Clara Hawley in the late 1890s, when Clara was a widow. They met the Lenox brothers, one of whom became quite enamored with Clara, and they had made presentation porcelain pitchers and gave one to my grandmother and one to Aunt Clara, but hers was very special. Nana had both of them, and my Aunt Charlotte got Aunt Clara's and I don't know who has it now.

I have a set of demitasse spoons Aunt May gave me as a wedding gift that she and Aunt Clara Layson got on a trip back East in 1896.

Korstad: Clara Patterson was a great one for liking spoons.

Proper Manners and Educated Women

Lage: You told me on the phone that that generation, Clara's sisters, were very proper. Could you tell more about what kind of a manner they had?

Korstad: They were raised very well. They were very cultured and very precise. My grandmother never tolerated anything but ladylike behavior and speech--you had to measure up.

Price: And always, tea was served correctly. You always addressed everybody "aunt" and "uncle." I once slipped and called Charles Whipples wife "Carrie"--I was about twenty-four--and she reared up and said, "Aunt Carrie." She was just lovely, but there were manners, and we always conducted ourselves in a mannerly way. [laughter]

Lage: What about education? Do you know where they were educated?

Korstad: I think some of them went on to San Jose Normal.

Lage: Even in Clara's generation?

Korstad: Perhaps it was Clara's nieces who went to San Jose Normal. My grandmother taught school for six years before she was married, and I know that Clara Hawley Patterson, I think, was going to business school at the time that she eloped with George Patterson, so the story goes.

Lage: Somehow that surprises me that they would be getting this practical education.

Korstad: I guess they went to Washington High School.

Price: There was a private academy. Anderson Academy was in Irvington. It was a private girl's academy, and my mother's aunts went there. So they did educate the women.

Lage: I found reference to Clara being educated somewhere in Oakland.

Korstad: That's what I thought. This is what I heard from being a decent. But they had a good education, and their manners and all were instilled by their parents. The Hawleys had very little money, but they had the proper English background. There was none of this folksy business. That's why I dislike this new guide to Ardenwood, which has Clara coming out and saying, "Howdy, folks." Why, she would never do that!

Price: No, I don't think so. My father was raised with one sister and all the rest boys, active men, and never was there any swearing, cursing, anything—never! Everyone was very proper, and I don't think that was that uncommon in that era.

Korstad: Why does Frank Jahns have that in the Ardenwood brochure? I told Frank, "This is not how Clara Patterson would have spoken at all because she would have been very proper. She would have welcomed people but in a formal manner." This "Howdy, folks" is out of character.

Price: There was always a great gathering of the clan, a very close and warm family. My memories are more of my grandmother and her sisters and the one brother who survived. The sisters would get together; they were great for having teas and playing bridge. Summer gatherings too, and all the family would make a great effort to attend and keep up with all the family gossip and information about who married whom.

Clara's Travels to Japan and Europe and Her Marriages

Korstad: We spoke about traveling. In 1911, Jessie, accompanied by Clara Patterson Layson, traveled to Japan. And this is her scrapbook. [Jessie was a niece of Clara's, and Korstad's aunt.] They visited with Hideo Nakagaki who had lived with the Beards and studied horticulture on the Beard ranch.*

##

At Ardenwood there was the Japanese pavilion. Most families had Chinese help, but Hideo had come over to learn viticulture, and then when he went back, he started his winery. Then Clara and Jessie Beard stayed with Hideo and his family. I have this booklet in Japanese that tells all about the winery. And here is a letter from Hideo. And this is one reason why I hope they can rebuild the teahouse and finish it, because I think this is what Clara would have liked to have had. She died in 1917. Shortly after the 1915 Exposition [The Panama-Pacific International Exposition] closed, she purchased this teahouse and had it brought over to the ranch at Ardenwood. She had it set up but never completed; it still had a dirt floor. It wasn't completed because she became ill and passed away before completion. I think this would be a great thing to have this rebuilt. They do know what it looked like, and they know where it was--they found the foundation. Perhaps the United Motors [a joint Toyota-General Motors company in Fremont] might be interested.

Lage: She seems to have had a cosmopolitanism that you wouldn't expect on a kind of isolated ranch.

Price: They had a private railroad car with a spur into the ranch so she was a well-traveled woman, but I didn't know about this Japanese trip.

[information about the life of Jessie, Korstad's aunt, who received the letter from Hideo in 1939. Korstad has the letter and many of Jessie's mementos.]

Lage: Were there any family stories about Clara's eloping with George Patterson, who was thirty-one years older than she?

* See Korstad letter following this interview for further information on Clara's interest in Japan.



Above:

Japanese tea house,
moved from the
Panama-Pacific
International
Exposition to the
Patterson Ranch,
ca. 1916



Left:

Clara Hawley Patterson
in kimono, ca. 1916

Korstad: We were told about that in our decent training, and I don't have any other information from the family. Evidently, George was very well received because he was very close to James Hawley. They lived right across the road, and George Patterson most likely knew all the sisters very well. [See Korstad letter following this interview]

[Korstad tells about her grandmother, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Hawley, who was especially close to Clara. When she was married to John L. Beard, Clara and George Patterson were the witnesses to the ceremony. And her grandmother traveled with Clara. Tells story of Lizzie's marriage at the deathbed of her father-in-law, E. L. Beard.]

Price: That famous ermine coat by Worth, who was the designer in Paris for all the debs and the ladies. That must have been made when Clara Patterson Layson was on a trip to Europe about 1904 or 1905. There was always an ermine coat in the family that had been Aunt Clara's. This is what's left of it; now it's brown. My Aunt Charlotte ended up with it and her last request was that Clara Talbot should get the Worth ermine. I think maybe Charlotte had it dyed. But it was made for Clara Patterson and she passed it on.

Korstad: And when Clara Talbot passed away, I received it.

Price: I wonder who went with her on that trip? When did Layson die?
[March 8, 1909]

Korstad: She could have gone with him because they were married about that time. [Clara and the Reverend William Layson were married January 1, 1900.]

Lage: Is that marriage something that was talked about on the Hawley side of the family? Apparently, the Pattersons never spoke about that marriage.

Price: When I was a youngster, she was always referred to as Aunt Clara Layson, and I finally got it straight that this was a second marriage. He was a minister.

Lage: Was he a local minister, or someone she met on a trip?

Price: I have had the impression that he was sort of a traveling minister. I really don't know.

Korstad: I think he was from Santa Barbara. I think she heard him speak or give sermons here. I'm not certain how they met or got together, but after her marriage to Layson, I know that she moved away from Ardenwood because Henry by that time was running the farm. By the time she passed away in 1917, Henry's three daughters were born. So Clara must have had her residence elsewhere. [See letter following interview.]

Korstad: [shows a picture of the burning of Will Patterson's house] Will's house was familiar to me because Clara and I went down to visit Will not too long before he passed away, and he had his rocking chair and sat on the porch, and we visited there.

Lage: How well did you know Will and Henry Patterson?

Korstad: Not very well because I lived in Martinez and it was only when my Aunt Clara would come up to the East Bay from Bishop once or twice a year, then she would sometimes take me along on her visits with the family.

And this is a Patterson wedding [showing scrapbook with pictures of a 1957 wedding, discussion of pictures of Pattersons in scrapbook]

[tape interruption]

Chinese Families in Washington Township

Lage: We were talking about the Chinese and some of the old family retainers when the tape was off.

Price: Well, this was in the thirties when my sister and I and my cousin would go down to the tomato field and have tomato fights. The Chinese farmers treated us royally. We would all get acquainted. Once my mother said, "Well, did you meet your namesake?" Apparently, the young Chinese brides would have their babies, and Dr. Grimmer and some of the old-time doctors out in Centerville would help the women deliver. They would give them a Chinese name and then say, "Now, we have to give them an American name." I think Dr. Grimmer had several sisters, and there are little Chinese children named after all of his sisters. Then they started naming them after my mother's children, and one was named Marilyn Lee. My mother then went to visit Lee; her children went to Cal and are teaching and are very prosperous. They have come a long way. Mother says she remembers Mrs. Lee coming as a picture bride and her mother teaching her how to cook because she didn't know how to cook or shop or anything.

This was very common. All the ranches had Chinese. They weren't often household help, although there were household hired help, but these were tenant-farmers. They had been there when my mother was a girl, because her younger brother had an old Chinese gentleman who was his best pal, Woo. My uncle would call Woo, and the old Chinese gentleman would come up and visit him.

- Korstad: Because of the Chinese Exclusion Act, at that time they could not buy property and they worked for the various families. My father was always very fond of the Chinese. It was just part of his growing up.
- Price: We went to Chinese funerals out in Irvington and the christenings. They were so elaborate it would practically impoverish them. A month after the baby is born they celebrate the baby's birth. This would be done in a very fancy San Francisco restaurant and for just poor farm folk it would be elaborate.
- Lage: How were the living conditions for the Chinese families?
- Price: The ones that I remember were not very great. They cooked in a charcoal brazier, inside, as I recall. It was kind of one-room-with-a-lean-to situation. A dirt floor, and they had kind of bunks.
- Lage: Would they be responsible for building their own house?
- Price: I don't know. It was kind of down in a hollow, and we would always go down and visit because they would usually be cooking and it tasted great. And they would give us something. They must have thought we were starving; we'd go down there and eat their food. But it was good. We'd sit and visit. They spoke terribly broken English, but we children seemed to understand them.
- Lage: What about the children?
- Price: Oh, we played with the children. They went to school out there. This would have been in the mid-thirties that I am remembering.
- Korstad: Martinez had their counterpart with the Japanese.

Hawley Family Roots in England: the Shakespeare Connection

- Lage: We were talking off the tape about the name, Ardenwood, and I wanted you to put those memories on tape. We've heard about the tie to Shakespeare's As You Like It [which takes place in the forest of Arden], but you also said that the Hawley family in England sold Newplace, a home, to Shakespeare in 1597.
- Korstad: That's where I think the name came from.
- Price: Clara Hawley Patterson had this researched when she was preparing the family tree in 1907. I'm sure that the researcher coming across that would have dwelt on it quite heavily. Now this may have been passed on in the family as rumor prior to that.

Korstad: She might have known about that before. Her father perhaps knew that. If the family was like my grandmother, you just sat and listened and you heard the family story anytime you listened. Whenever I visited my grandmother at the Hotel Somerton where she lived her last twenty years, she would sit in her little rocking chair and recite the family story. Of course, I kept both ears open.

Lage: Did the family stories go way back to England?

Korstad: She would talk about her early life, running the farm, or about the children, and about the Beards, the lineage and all. They were very determined that they pass on some of their stories, some of their history.

Lage: Did she talk about Clara?

Korstad: I knew that they were close and that they traveled together, but I don't have any...

Price: My father could tell the most interesting stories. We were without radio and television, and we would get reintroduced to the family and the family stories at these gatherings that we remember as youngsters, and this was much more common in our parent's generation. This was part of how you were raised—you heard this story about this one and that one and if you were a wise enough little child you listened.

Korstad: And if you asked too much, you were told very promptly to keep quiet.

##

Good Works and Church Membership

Lage: One thing that comes up again and again with Clara is sort of the tradition of good works--hospital work, and helping families on the farm, and all. Is that something that you--

Korstad: Well, this is generally what you did. You did your volunteer work; you gave to organizations; you helped sponsor--

Price: They were all church-going people.

Korstad: They were Presbyterians.

Lage: The Hawley family was Presbyterian?

Korstad: Right.

Price: I know my grandmother founded the church in Decoto; she was one of the signers, a Congregational church. My grandmother, Annie Hawley Whipple Meyer, was the signer to start the church there. So they all were active in the church at the time, which was part of the social mileau at the time. You attend church, and you attend family gatherings, and this was their social life. What is interesting to me is that they traveled daily quite a distance, several miles. As I say, in my grandmother's diary that she kept when she was fifteen or sixteen, she would go down to grandma's to see baby and come home and wallpaper the dining room and then go skating that night in Saltz's barn, or something. They were very active for the times.

[discussion about other Hawley family members--James's sister, their diaries, other artifacts, some given to Robert Fisher. Discussion about one-hundredth anniversary of the Congregational Church in area.]

The Ardenwood Docent Program

Lage: [to Korstad] How do you like being a docent? What does that entail?

Korstad: I love it. You take tour groups through the house.

Lage: How often do you do it?

Korstad: You are supposed to put in eight hours a month. We all wear costumes of the 1887 time. You provide your own costumes, which are supposed to be as authentic as possible. I was recommended to a seamstress who makes costumes, and she fashioned a jacket and skirt to be of the 1887 style, with a bustle and all. So all of us are trying to be as close to the period as possible.

Lage: And what kind of training do they give you?

Korstad: We had ten sessions. We had different speakers. Dr. Fisher showed slides one time. One of the Pattersons, I think it was Abigail, came one time. Someone came up from San Jose from the historical society in Kelly Park and told us about their program. Another one from the docents who is into fashion design showed us pictures of the 1887 clothes, and from that we tried to choose patterns that could be modified to look like that period.

Lage: Do they focus in your training, and in what they want you to tell, on the family or on the 1880s?

Korstad: Well, you greet them in front of the house, and you tell about George Washington Patterson coming out here, how he came, and going up to the gold fields, and then, after two years of being disappointed with gold, he decided he was a farmer and settled down here.

Lage: So you have a set speech that you are supposed to give?

Korstad: I think each docent has her own little way of talking, but you are given guidelines and what to point out in the house, the nature motif all around and the different types of wood that were used, the doorknobs.

Lage: The architecture of the home.

Korstad: Right, the Queen Anne style, and the furnishings in the different rooms. I have all of this training material here, and each time we are given a few sheets to read and memorize. So we have about the same patter, but I notice that each of us seems to go in a slightly different direction as we go through.

I like to take children through and ask them, "No television, no radio, what did they do?" [more on tours for children]

Price: Children nowadays don't have an opportunity to go to grandma's and grandpa's and feed the chickens and so forth... We took it for granted--everybody had a ranch to go to.

Korstad: This is one of the best things that could have ever happened--to preserve Ardenwood as a historic preserve because those children just romp around and jump in the hay and they can see the blacksmith at work there, and they can see the barrelmaker making barrels.

Price: Of course, all the farms had a blacksmith. They were an important item for self-maintaining, repairing hubs and so forth. The farmers were often jacks-of-all-trades in wheel repair and taking care of animals.

[some discussion of Marjorie Patterson and her running the ranch for a time. Discussion of docent material and of Ardenwood farm brochure. Talk about gift given to Price's relative when she was an attendant in a Patterson wedding in the early 1900s--all the bridesmaids were given a fitted leather traveling case from Shreve's.]

Lage: Did the Pattersons stay in touch with the Hawley family? Did either one of the brothers have a closer tie?

Korstad: I think Will was always more friendly than Henry.

Lage: We need to wind up now. I have taken too much of your time. Are there any other Patterson-related memories that you can share?

Korstad: Most of these pictures of [Hawley family] picnics were taken at Berryessa. I don't believe I have pictures of any at the Patterson house. [shows pictures of May Paterson and Uncle Billy and other Hawleys. Discussion of Hawley family reunions. Last picnic was Aunt May's 90th birthday, 1951 or 1952.]

##

Transcriber: Ann Lage
Final Typist: Shannon Page

TAPE GUIDE -- Jeanette Korstad and Marilyn Price

Date of Interview: April 8, 1987

tape 1, side A

66

tape 1, side B

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tape 2, side A

75

17917 Beardsley Street
 Castro Valley, CA 94546
 January 17, 1988

Dear Ms. Lage:

Thank you for sending the transcript of the Oral History of the Hawley family. I pencilled in some comments and corrections; otherwise, it is all right as stated.

On page 7 I added the note about Clara Patterson Layson taking her niece, Miss Jessie Beard (my aunt) on a trip to Japan in 1912. In checking the scrapbook, they sailed on the S.S. Manchuria on March 12, 1912, for Yokohama, Japan. While there they were guests of Hideo Takagaki, who had lived with the Beards on their ranch near the Pattersons in the early 1900's. He had come from Japan to study viticulture and upon his return to Japan started his own winery. The Beards had an early-day winery, called Marciana (?) and Hideo learned winemaking there. According to records, Hideo's winery was very successful. Also, while in Japan, these women (and I imagine the tour group, but I have no record) were invited to a Cherry Blossom Garden Party by the Emperor Meiji and the Empress. The invitation (in the scrapbook) reads April 26, 1912, at 2:30 p.m. Likewise, Jessie mentions dinner with friends, including the Rev. and Mrs. John Mills, a Presbyterian missionary. (It might be noted that Clara's second husband, the Rev. William Layson, was a Presbyterian minister. He passed away in 1909.)

At the close of the Pan-Pacific Exposition in 1915, Clara Layson had a Japanese tea house dismantled and brought over to Ardenwood where it was rebuilt near the Patterson House. I believe that it was destroyed by fire shortly before the outbreak of WW II. I remember the tea house - it had a pagoda-type roof. I was told that it had a dirt floor and was never finished. Something most interesting happened this summer. Dr. Robert Fisher discovered a set of blueprints - architectural drawings by Julia Morgan - for a Japanese-type house commissioned by Clara Patterson Layson in 1917, shortly before her death. She wanted a Japanese-type house to be built adjoining the tea house. I am not too surprised that she was interested in Oriental arts. Her sister, Lizzie, my grandmother, had Oriental objects around. Also, Clara must have wanted to return to the ranch and have a smaller house of her own. Will and Henry both lived there and had their homes and families, so it was only natural - She must have been sixty-four years of age in 1917. I do not know the cause of her death, but it must have been unexpected. Do check with Dr. Fisher about the architectural drawings.

The mention of Chinese help brought back the memory of my grandmother having a Chinese houseboy when she lived in an apartment on Washington St., San Francisco. I remember some of the tales my father told about the Chinese help. There was always a good rapport with the Chinese. One of the stories we docents tell is that George Patterson's favorite tennis partner was his Chinese cook. The tennis court was next to the house and the asphalt remains. We always point this out on our house tours.

On page 8 - the story of the elopement of Clara and George. In our docent notebook, there are some pink sheets telling the history of Ardenwood and the Patterson family. Included are two letters written by George to Clara telling her to "disguise her handwriting so as to deceive them there" (referring to Centerville). Clara was living in Oakland (with relatives, I believe) and attending business school and these letters were addressed to her there. If you can get a copy of these docent notes, it will shed some interesting light on George and Clara, and also the newspaper articles on her marriage to Layson.

Marilyn was at my home on Friday and we went over the notes and made a few corrections. We laughed about the ermine cape that Clara bought in Paris and has passed on down in the family - first to Clara's niece Charlotte, who when she passed away asked that it be given to her cousin, Clara Talbott, my aunt. And, when my Aunt Clara passed away I received the cape. Believe it or not, it is still in excellent condition. I have worn it with my costume at Ardenwood - and on other occasions. Clara Beard Talbott was the niece and namesake of Clara Patterson. Clara Talbott lived in Bishop, California, and made several trips to the Bay Area each year. I accompanied her several times on visits to Will Patterson.

After her marriage to the Rev. Layson, Clara Patterson went by the name Clara Hawley Layson, or Mrs. C. H. Layson (as it appears on the S.S. Manchuria passenger list). I could check her headstone at the Chapel of Chimes Cemetery where she is buried in the Patterson plot - I think there her name appears as Clara Patterson. (This is in answer to the last question on page 8.) The Patterson family has a big plot in the pioneer section of this cemetery on Mission Boulevard in south Hayward (Decoto)

On page 9, the question "Was he (Layton) a local minister..." The copy of the newspaper article about the marriage states

"Mr. Layson, who is a few years Mrs. Patterson's junior, is a graduate of the San Anselmo Theological Seminary. His first charge was at Newark, in this county, and it was while preaching there that he met Mrs. Patterson. Later he removed to Santa Ana, where he is now pastor of the Presbyterian church." I assume that they made their home in Santa Ana. (I really do not know)

I mentioned that Clara and my grandmother, Lizzie Beard, were very close in age as well as being together. George Patterson had been a close friend of E. L. Beard (my grandmother's father-in-law). Both came from Lafayette, Indiana, in 1849. Beard settled in Mission San Jose and owned considerable farming land when George Patterson quit his mining venture and went to work for Beard. He then acquired his first land holdings from Beard at \$6.00 an acre (This was the beginning of his holdings at Ardenwood.) It was E. L. Beard's request that Lizzie Hawley and his son, John Beard, get married before his death. It was a small wedding with only close relatives present. George and Clara Patterson signed the marriage certificate as witnesses. (I have a copy).

James Hawley, the father of Clara and Lizzie, was also a close friend of George Patterson in the early days before George married his daughter. James and George were exactly the same age (born in 1822). James was a carpenter and built the original farm house for George. I do not know whether James Hawley helped with the Queen Anne addition.

You might be interested that John L. Beard was graduated from the College of California (forerunner of U.C.) in 1868 and later was the first alumnus to be appointed a regent of the University of California. He was a State Senator, was instrumental in establishing the State Agricultural Fair (forerunner of the State Fair), a farmer, vintner (some prize wines - Chicago 1892, and Calif. State Fair), member of the Bohemian Club, and traveler. His father, E. L. Beard, was one of the earliest farmers in Southern Alameda County and had extensive holdings (which he lost in later life) His first home was in the mission buildings (Mission San Jose) which was later taken back by the Catholic Church. He then built a lovely home across the road, which he called Palmdale. He was a friend of John C. Fremont, and with him built the fortification in St. Louis during the Civil War (cause of claim against the U.S.) - I could go on, but this has nothing to do with Patterson.

Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library

University of California
Berkeley, California

THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

Sally Patterson Adams

Growing Up at Ardenwood

An Interview Conducted by
Knox Mellon
in 1986

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INTERVIEW HISTORY -- Sally Patterson Adams

The interview with Sally Patterson Adams was conducted by Dr. Knox Mellon on July 2, 1986, in Mrs. Adams's home in Piedmont, California. Mrs. Adams is the daughter of Henry and Sarah Patterson. She lived in the George Washington Patterson house on the Patterson Ranch from her birth in 1913 to age eight or ten, when the family moved to Piedmont to put their children in Piedmont schools. Henry Patterson continued to work at the ranch daily, and the family lived there during summer vacations.

Mrs. Adams's interview gives a picture of growing up at Ardenwood (which was not called Ardenwood during her youth), of childhood pastimes on the ranch, and relationships with the William Patterson side of the family. Mrs. Adams reviewed her transcript for accuracy and clarity and responded to additional inquiries of the editor. The interview tape is on deposit at The Bancroft Library.

Ann Lage
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please print or write clearly)

Your full name Sally Patterson Adams

Date of birth Dec. 2, 1913 Place of birth Oakland, CA.

^{Mother's}
~~Father's~~ full name Sarah Morgan Patterson

Birthplace Los Angeles CA

Occupation housewife

^{Father's}
~~Mother's~~ full name Henry Hawley Patterson

Birthplace Newark - Ardenwood

Occupation farmer

Where did you grow up? Ardenwood

Present community Piedmont CA.

Education Miss Ransoms School, Univ Calif. Berkeley

Occupation(s) _____

Special interests or activities Garden Club, Art,
Travel

Schooling, Family, and Friends

[Date of Interview: July 2, 1986]##

- Mellon: Mrs. Adams, could you tell me something about your early life, where you were born, where you grew up?
- S. Adams: I was born in Oakland, California at the Fabiola Hospital, on December 2, 1913.
- Mellon: How long did you live in the George Washington Patterson house?
- S. Adams: Since right after I was born, until I was married.
- Mellon: Why did you leave, was one of the questions, and you left when you got married.
- S. Adams: Right. But before that the family moved here to Piedmont, and I received part of my education here.
- Mellon: That would be your father, Henry Patterson, and your mother, Sarah. They moved to Piedmont; when would that have been, roughly?
- S. Adams: But they still had the ranch. My father went out every day to the ranch, but we lived in Piedmont, just for us to go to school.
- Mellon: When would that have been, roughly, when they moved to Piedmont?
- S. Adams: I guess I was eight or ten years old.
- Mellon: So in the early twenties. Can you tell me about your early education as a child and as a teenager? Where did you go to school?
- S. Adams: I went to public school in Newark. There were eight grades in one room.

This symbol indicates that a tape or a segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes see page 105.

Mellon: One-room school house. After you finished that, where did you--?

S. Adams: I only went there for two years. Then the family decided they better move--that wasn't adequate.

Mellon: That's when you moved to Piedmont.

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Did you then enter the Piedmont school system?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: And did you stay in the Piedmont school system through high school?

S. Adams: No, I went to private school--Miss Ransom's school. Miss Ransom's Bridges School here in Piedmont.

Mellon: Did you graduate from there?

S. Adams: Yes, I graduated.

Mellon: Then did you go on?

S. Adams: I went to the University of California for two years.

Mellon: Do you recall your grandmother, Clara Hawley Patterson, at all?

S. Adams: Yes, just vaguely. I can remember--probably one of my first memories--I sat on a swing with her on the porch there at the ranch. That was where she was living. She used to come over, I was told. I have a faint memory of her.

Mellon: In your grandmother's letters, she comes across as a lady of wide interests--in culture, the arts, music, current events, women's suffrage, travel, friends, etc. Even though you didn't know her well, was this the kind of image handed down of her by your mother, Sarah? In other words, how was Clara Hawley Patterson projected in the Patterson family tradition? How did they talk about her, or how did they describe her? Or did they?

S. Adams: I don't think they did, not to my memory.

Mellon: There's not much reference in the archives to your mother, Sarah. Could you tell me something about her, where she was born, where she grew up?

S. Adams: She was born in Los Angeles, and when she married my father--she was married there--they came up to the ranch.

- Mellon: Do you know how she met your father, Henry?
- S. Adams: At a party when she was going to the University of California. One of the neighbors at the ranch had a party, and he met her there. They met twice and then they were married.
- Mellon: Did your mother have interests beyond the home? She belonged to the Garden Club of America, Childrens Hospital of the East Bay, Book Club, played golf, and took extension courses at U.C. Berkeley. Did she take any role, for example, in the running of the ranch?
- S. Adams: No.
- Mellon: You had two sisters--Georgia and Marjorie. Were you the eldest?
- S. Adams: Yes.
- Mellon: Did you and your sisters all attend the same schools?
- S. Adams: Yes.
- Mellon: By the turn of the century, the Pattersons were probably the most important family in southern Alameda County. Do you think this affected you at all as a child? Do you think you had a normal kind of childhood?
- S. Adams: Oh yes. I didn't even know that they were that important. I don't think they were.
- Mellon: Were there other children on the ranch?
- S. Adams: Just cousins, that's the William Patterson family.
- Mellon: Did you play with them?
- S. Adams: Yes.
- Mellon: Where did the children play, all over the ranch?
- S. Adams: Oh yes, in the barns.
- Mellon: What types of play and games did you engage in, do you recall?
- S. Adams: King of the mountain. Hide-and-go-seek. You know, children's games.
- Mellon: Were reading and music part of your upbringing?
- S. Adams: Reading was.

- Mellon: What kind of relationship did you have with your cousins--the children of William Patterson: Don, Jack, and Dave.
- S. Adams: Well, Donald was older so he didn't play. He was always off at school. Jack was just like a brother. David was younger; we used to tease him.
- Mellon: Your father, Henry, is described by some as being reserved and rather taciturn. Is this accurate?
- S. Adams: Yes.
- Mellon: What was he like?
- S. Adams: I would say he was shy.
- Mellon: The letters and photographs of your Uncle William depict him as an outdoor type who loved sailing, camping, hunting, ranching, mining and oil ventures, and travel. Did your father share any of these interests?
- S. Adams: I'd like to come back to that.
- Mellon: Did your father talk much about his mother or father? Did he relate stories about them?
- S. Adams: No.
- Mellon: Was there a sense of pride in the achievements of George W. Patterson, even by his own sons who were only second generation--has that feeling of pride continued down to the present time.
- S. Adams: No. We almost call him a scalawag. They'll love that, won't they?
- Mellon: The Pattersons were well-to-do, and their success was based in large measure on the hard work of your grandfather and his sons. Was there a work ethic among the Pattersons that included the children as well?
- S. Adams: No.
- Mellon: Was thrift stressed in the family?
- S. Adams: Oh yes.
- Mellon: Could you say something about the political and religious views of your mother and father? Was politics ever discussed much in the family gatherings?

- S. Adams: Oh yes. Quite a bit. They were both strong Republicans, as farmers were. My mother was maybe a little on the fence.
- Mellon: What about church affiliations?
- S. Adams: None whatsoever. I never went to Sunday school or church.
- Mellon: Can you describe your mother and father physically--were they large, small, tall, short?
- S. Adams: My mother was tall, and she was a large woman, I'd call her.
- Mellon: What about your father?
- S. Adams: They were supposedly the same height.
- Mellon: Were you an athletic family? There was a tennis court at the George Washington Patterson house. Was it used a lot?
- S. Adams: We used to use it when we were young. My mother and father both played with us as children. It was built, of course, by my mother and father when we were young.
- Mellon: Someone reported that Helen Wills Moody was a friend of the Pattersons--is that accurate?
- S. Adams: Yes. Dr. Wills was a friend of my father's, and he lived out there in Newark or Centerville--in the vicinity. And his daughter, of course, was Helen Wills. He used to bring her over, and I can remember bringing us tennis rackets that were autographed to us as presents.
- Mellon: Did she ever play on the court?
- S. Adams: Oh, she used to hit a ball back and forth to us.
- Mellon: There appears in the records to be an almost continual push by your grandfather and his two sons to improve the soil of the ranch by the removal of salt water and other impurities. Do you recall discussions by your father or uncle on this subject?
- S. Adams: My father, I remember, was always concerned about salt in the wells, but I don't know any more than that.
- Mellon: In a letter to your grandmother in June, 1897, her son, William Patterson, talks about making ice cream and root beer and gathering blackberries. Do you remember doing these things as a child?
- S. Adams: No. I remember making apple cider and ice cream.

- Mellon: Dorothy Patterson and her husband Don talked about cider parties. Do you remember these and can you describe what took place?
- S. Adams: Yes. They just made cider.
- Mellon: They came in the morning, and they made it--
- S. Adams: And then they drank it, obviously. They took some home. It was their friends who did this--Donald and Dorothy.
- Mellon: Was alcohol consumed at all at the ranch in the early days?
- S. Adams: No, never. Not my early days.
- Mellon: Was the deer park still functioning when you were growing up at the ranch?
- S. Adams: I have a faint remembrance of the deer park, but it wasn't used as a deer park. I just remember where it was, and it was fenced in.
- Mellon: In letters to their mother, both Henry and William Patterson seemed close to, and concerned with, one another. Did this sentiment continue in later life?
- S. Adams: Yes.
- Mellon: How did they share the job of running the ranch? What was the division of labor?
- S. Adams: It was more management than labor. I believe my father, when he was alive, did all the management, though my uncle was interested in the water.
- Mellon: Yes, I remember he did a lot of work in the early days at the water district.
- S. Adams: I think he was one of the founders of the water district out there.
- Mellon: Clara Hawley Patterson left \$5,000 in her will to Lottie Whipple. Do you know who she was?
- S. Adams: Was it Laura Whipple?
- Mellon: Lottie, I believe. Was there a Laura Whipple?
- S. Adams: Yes. It could have been. She was a cousin.

Mellon: Because there was a wedding held at Ardenwood, at the ranch, and I think it was a May Whipple who was married there right after the turn of the century. It may have been a cousin.

S. Adams: I think that was probably Laura. I don't recall any Lottie.

Mellon: According to a newspaper article at the time, Clara Hawley Patterson's marriage to the Reverend W. H. Layson in 1900 "stirred Washington Township to its depth." Was there ever any discussion of Mr. Layson by the family in subsequent years?

S. Adams: Oh my, yes. My mother never knew him. He died before she arrived.

Mellon: He died 1909.

S. Adams: Mother didn't arrive until 1913. It was with great trial and tribulation--my father, I think, didn't even speak to him.

Remembering the House and Gardens

Mellon: Was the George Washington Patterson house a site for any family weddings that you recall?

S. Adams: John and I were married there.

Mellon: Were they indoor or outdoor?

S. Adams: Outdoors. The indoors is sort of cut-up so it wouldn't be--. And Sue, our daughter, was married there.

Mellon: Is this Abby's sister?

S. Adams: Abby's older sister.

Mellon: Were they large weddings?

S. Adams: Three hundred.

Mellon: Did your father or uncle take an active role at all in local politics or state politics?

S. Adams: No.

Mellon: Did any of the Patterson women get involved in civic or political affairs?

S. Adams: No.

Mellon: Did the furniture in the George Washington Patterson house remain fairly consistent during the period that you lived there, or were new pieces added?

S. Adams: Oh yes. It was always done over.

Mellon: A number of photos show lots of flowers around the house in your grandmother's day. Was this the case when you were growing up, too?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: There were a lot of exterior plants.

S. Adams: Right.

Mellon: Your father and uncle seemed, in the letters at least that remained, quite interested in horticulture, planting, eucalyptus trees, things of this nature.

S. Adams: My father had a vegetable garden. He liked that. Mother had her flower garden.

Mellon: A number of photos show a piano. Was it played by the family?

S. Adams: The rosewood piano, you mean, in the parlor?

Mellon: In the parlor.

S. Adams: Yes. We took piano lessons, but my mother's sister used to play the piano for us on that piano. She sang and played the piano to entertain us.

Mellon: So music did play a role.

S. Adams: Slight, yes.

Mellon: When you were a child, were there certain rooms in the house that were more or less off-limits to the children?

S. Adams: No.

Mellon: You had a free run of the house?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: In photographs, the downstairs rooms of the house always looked spotlessly clean--was this always the case?

S. Adams: Yes. They always had help.

Mellon: That's my next question. Did your grandmother or mother have much help?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: How many servants did it take to run the house in their day?

S. Adams: Well, a couple, and an upstairs maid. When we were little I can always remember a nursemaid.

Mellon: Can you identify any of the servants by name?

S. Adams: Ellen Logan was--. I remember her. How far back do you want to go?

Mellon: As far as you can remember.

S. Adams: Always a Chinese cook.

Mellon: I was going to ask you about nationalities. So you had Chinese--

S. Adams: And Japanese and Portuguese.

Mellon: There were a lot of Portuguese in that area so some of the maids may have been Portuguese.

S. Adams: Joe Brown was one--of course, he changed his name from something Rodriguez or something Portuguese. He had a daughter and she used to work for the family. My mother became intrigued with her and sent her through the University of California.

Mellon: Was this Inez?

S. Adams: Yes. Do you know anything about her life?

Mellon: No.

S. Adams: She married a colonel whom she met in the ROTC at the university at that time.

Mellon: Was the attic always used as a playroom for children?

S. Adams: No.

Mellon: How far back in time does the bowling go?

S. Adams: It was way before my time. I don't remember any bowling up there.

Mellon: Did you play up there as a child?

S. Adams: Hide-and-go-seek, or spooks, or something.

Mellon: There's some story that circulates in the family that you climbed out on the roof.

S. Adams: Yes, I did. I can remember. But I couldn't get back because I was scared.

Mellon: Do you recall ongoing maintenance on the grounds surrounding the house--were there gardeners regularly working?

S. Adams: Oh yes. And extras when it was needed; during the summers especially with irrigating, the watering. They used to use irrigation pipes.

Mellon: Do you remember when the pool was installed?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Was it there in your day?

S. Adams: Oh my, yes. My mother and father installed that. I must have been fifteen years old.

Mellon: Did you use it a lot?

S. Adams: Lots. We always went there in the summer.

Mellon: Even when you were living in Piedmont?

S. Adams: Oh yes. They closed the house here in Piedmont during summers.

Mellon: As a youngster growing up, did you and your sisters play a lot in the fields surrounding the house?

S. Adams: No, not too much.

Mellon: How far away were you from neighbors who had children? Did you play with any of the neighbors' children?

S. Adams: No, they were miles away.

Mellon: They were too far away. So it wasn't easy to get back and forth from the ranch to some other house?

S. Adams: The closest place we ever played--and it was a treat--was to go to the Shinns. I remember playing little girls' games.

Mellon: The Shinn house--that's a historic structure now, you know.

Sunday Parties, Outings, Holidays

Mellon: Do you recall your mother holding large family gatherings or other social functions?

S. Adams: No. We used to go to family gatherings way back at the Hawley place, which was...I don't know where.

Mellon: Your grandmother's family.

S. Adams: Yes. But the Sunday parties--there were lots of those, practically every Sunday. But that was when I was in college, or in high school, I guess.

Mellon: Were those luncheons?

S. Adams: Luncheons.

Mellon: Would there be family and friends?

S. Adams: Family and friends and their children. It would be an all-day family affair.

Mellon: Could you describe--the children would obviously be playing, and the adults would be talking back and forth. Was there lots of food?

S. Adams: Loads of food. There would be tennis tournaments, that sort of thing.

Mellon: Was there any croquet?

S. Adams: Croquet tournaments. And they used to pick the corn, and dig a great pit, and cook the corn.

Mellon: Bury it on coals. Did they barbeque?

S. Adams: No. My father didn't like barbeque.

Mellon: The food was done in the kitchen and then brought out?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Was most of your travel--local travel--to Oakland and San Francisco by car or train?

S. Adams: Train.

Mellon: Did you use the Arden Station?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Was the trip to San Francisco considered a special outing?

S. Adams: Oh, very special.

Mellon: How long did it take?

S. Adams: It was a full day. Sometimes we'd spend the night in San Francisco and come back the next day. There was a regular train that left something like 9:30 in the morning and got back at 5:30, but it would take at least two hours.

Mellon: You'd take the train up to Oakland and then catch the ferry across?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Did you spend most holidays at the ranch?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Were there family gatherings at Christmas or Thanksgiving down there, or were they pretty much up to the individual family members to have their own?

S. Adams: They had their own. But we spent ours at the ranch.

Mellon: Was the house decorated in any special way for these gatherings?

S. Adams: No. Just the Christmas tree. It was always done in those days the night before. You didn't see it until the next morning.

Mellon: That was the way, when I was growing up. I rather liked it.

Did your father conduct business in the house, or was it only used for family living purposes?

S. Adams: He had an office. That was one place we were not allowed to go or play in.

Mellon: As a child, do you recall guests staying often at the house?

S. Adams: Not often, but occasionally, yes.

Mellon: Did you have children friends stay with you?

S. Adams: Oh yes. We'd bring our school chums.

Mellon: Were you aware of the house requiring much maintenance in terms of repairs, painting, etc., inside and out?

S. Adams: No, just normal.

Mellon: Were there any additions that you recall being made, while you were there?

S. Adams: Not while I was there.

Mellon: What was the nearest town when you were growing up?

S. Adams: I guess Centerville.

Mellon: Did you ever feel isolated as a child on the ranch?

S. Adams: No.

Mellon: What was the mailing address of the ranch?

S. Adams: Box 46 R.D., Newark. The telephone was Centerville, the mail was Newark. I remember the mailman. He drove a funny little old Ford--his name was Mr. Lax. He got a present from the ranch--a sack of walnuts every year. I always wondered how he ever got through a gunny sack of walnuts in a year.

Mellon: When you were born, were there telephones in the house? Or did they come later?

S. Adams: I don't remember the house ever without a telephone. I can remember the first use of the telephone--somebody called my father, and we were going to bed. It was a friend of his in Centerville to tell him that Harding had been shot--was he shot?

Mellon: Harding, I believe, died of poisoning over here in San Francisco at a party at the Palace Hotel.

S. Adams: I know that was the first.

Mellon: Do you remember the phone number? Sometimes those numbers were quite short.

S. Adams: Centerville 673.

Mellon: Was there a sleeping porch upstairs in the house?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Did you and your sisters use it?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Do you recall discussions about your Uncle William's Alaska trips and mining adventures?

S. Adams: Not really.

Mellon: There are a number of photos of your father hunting. Was this something he took pleasure in most of his life?

S. Adams: Yes, he always liked it.

Mellon: Did you or your sisters ever get to go on a hunting trip?

S. Adams: Just duck hunting, or deer hunting up in Livermore.

Mellon: Do you recall family visits to Ben Loman in Santa Cruz County?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Could you describe a little bit?

S. Adams: My grandmother had a house near Ben Loman, but I don't remember it.

Mellon: That's how I came across the reference--reading through your grandmother's diaries and correspondence.

S. Adams: I can remember taking the train at Ardenwood, and riding to Santa Cruz. And who met us and how we got to Ben Loman, I don't remember.

Mellon: Where did you take vacations, do you recall?

S. Adams: We used to drive around the country, like to Yosemite, Tahoe.

Mellon: This would be with your mother and father?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Did you go abroad with them at all?

S. Adams: Not until I was in college.

Mellon: Your Uncle William appears to have been interested in camping, travelling and trips. He was also a yachtsman. Was your father interested in sailing?

S. Adams: No, and I wouldn't call Uncle Bill a yachtsman. He used to have a little rowboat, maybe, and he did have a boat that Donald sank for him, with my father's guns on it.

Mellon: I was thinking of the Starlight. There are pictures in the archives of that boat sailing across the San Francisco Bay. That was about an eighteen to twenty foot sailboat. He also had a power cruiser in the twenties--did you ever go out on that?

S. Adams: I was never invited.

Mellon: Your Uncle William appears to have been active in the Bohemian Club. Was your father interested in that?

S. Adams: He was not a bit interested in it.

Mellon: Was your father a joiner of fraternal groups?

S. Adams: No.

Mellon: Did you ever spend much time at the cattle ranch in Livermore.

S. Adams: Yes. On summer vacations, I can remember my mother used to take us up there.

##

S. Adams: We would go with another woman--Mrs. Whipple--with her family, and the husbands would come maybe every other day to bring food or to see how we were doing.

Mellon: Was Mrs. Whipple a cousin?

S. Adams: No.

Mellon: Could you describe your relationship with May Patterson.

S. Adams: Which May Patterson?

Mellon: This would be Uncle Will's wife?

S. Adams: There was also a May Paterson who was May Hawley, and she married a Paterson with one "t." That was my grandmother's young sister. She used to come out to the ranch.

Mellon: Did you know Mrs. Louise Koons, who took a trip to Seagross Island with your Uncle William's wife? She is referred to as Aunt Louise Koons. Now she may have been an aunt of May Patterson's.

S. Adams: She must have been.

Mellon: Did you play a lot as a child in the deer park area?

S. Adams: Yes. In the eucalyptus grove it was.

Mellon: You remember those trees quite well?

S. Adams: Oh yes.

- Mellon: Did you ever go out to the old duck club by Indian Mound Pond?
- S. Adams: I don't think so, not by Indian Mound Pond. There was an old duck club there, but I was too young then.
- Mellon: Do you recall if your mother ever went up to Eagle River Mine in Alaska, or your father?
- S. Adams: I can remember my father took us all up to Alaska, but I don't know the name of the mine. He was going up looking at mines.
- Mellon: Apparently, reading through the sources, your Uncle William engaged in a lot of oil ventures and mining ventures.
- S. Adams: Yes, fly-by-night things.
- Mellon: According to his son, Donald, none of them very successful.
- S. Adams: Very unsuccessful.
- Mellon: Did your father do that kind of thing?
- S. Adams: No he didn't, except my uncle got him interested in oil wells in Wichita Falls, Texas.

The Ranch Grounds and Outbuildings

- Mellon: Were there always eucalyptus trees around the ranch as long as you can remember?
- S. Adams: Yes.
- Mellon: Do you remember the water pump for the George W. Patterson house?
- S. Adams: No.
- Mellon: When you were growing up in the house, was it illuminated by electricity?
- S. Adams: Yes.
- Mellon: Did the house keep warm or cool? In winter or summer?
- S. Adams: Yes. We had all open fireplaces or stoves for heating.
- Mellon: In photographs, your father Henry appears different in looks and physique from his brother William. Is this accurate?

S. Adams: Later on, I think it was. He was heavier, my father was. But, I think, when they were young they were about the same physique.

Mellon: A number of photographs show Patterson family women and others on bicycles. Was this a popular sport with the family?

S. Adams: I wouldn't know.

Mellon: There's one, for example, with your grandmother, Clara Hawley Patterson.

S. Adams: I don't remember.

Mellon: What outbuildings do you remember that surrounded the ranch house? There was a barn, wasn't there?

S. Adams: Blacksmith shop, the granary, carriage house, garages, stables, also where the help stayed--the cook.

Mellon: Was he the only live-in help?

S. Adams: No, it used to be couples. Then the big barn.

Mellon: Do you remember the old Arden railroad station?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: Was it used a lot?

S. Adams: Not too much. It was used by the family and a few neighboring people. They would park their cars there.

Mellon: Would the train automatically stop, or would you have to signal to it?

S. Adams: You'd just walk up and it'd see you. Or you'd signal.

Mellon: Were there always cats and dogs at the ranch?

S. Adams: Oh my, yes.

Mellon: Do you remember some of their names?

S. Adams: Hiram.

Mellon: Was that a cat or a dog?

S. Adams: Dog.

Mellon: Did you have much contact with the William D. Patterson house? Did you visit there regularly?

S. Adams: We used to go over, yes.

Mellon: Could you describe that house a little bit? How would you contrast it or compare it with the house in which you grew up?

S. Adams: It was built much later, and there was a porch all the way around.

Mellon: Was it impressive?

S. Adams: No, it was dark. It was sort of depressive.

Mellon: Did the Depression in the 1930s have an adverse effects on the family ranching operations?

S. Adams: No.

Mellon: Your grandmother took an interest, as I indicated earlier, as shown in her diary, in the women's suffrage movement in the 1890s and the first decade of the twentieth century. Was your mother interested in this at all?

S. Adams: Not to my knowledge.

Mellon: Do you remember Chinese workers on the ranch, either indoors or out?

S. Adams: Yes.

Mellon: The Patterson ranch remained in agriculture when property around it was being subdivided and developed. Was there division in the family toward development, as opposed to remaining in agriculture?

S. Adams: Oh, I think so, yes.

Mellon: Do you recall if you did any other taped interview, beside the one with Dave Lewton, which didn't turn out? Some people said that they thought that perhaps a young woman named Susan Simpson may have talked to you at one time.

S. Adams: No.

Mellon: So this, then, may be the only tape that we have. Do you feel that there was a close relationship between your father, Henry, and his brother, William?

S. Adams: They were very close..

Mellon: It seems to come through that they were close. There was at one point, when I was talking to Mrs. Dorothy Patterson, when she said in the late fifties her husband Don felt that the time had come when his father and his uncle--your father--probably needed some assistance. That's when he gave up the job with the bearing company and came back and took over the management of the ranch. It's the intention of Leon, and obviously with the consent and cooperation of you people, he would like to bring the oral history interviews down to the present when the company became a corporation and was making the transistion from purely agriculture to subdivision and things of this nature. Talk a little about this transition. This would be from 1960 to the 1980's.

S. Adams: I think John is the one to talk to about this.

Mellon: I appreciate very much your talking with me today. [interruption]

Mrs. Adams is going to add a couple of things that she remembers.

S. Adams: The old ranch house, where the ranch hands stayed, and they used to live there during the week. They had a Chinese cook there, also, who cooked for the ranch hands. Then when Manuel Martin and Joe Brown came, the house was cut in half, and one moved to the house and the other one down at the corner, where they lived and got married and raised their families. But the ranch house--has anyone told you about that? We were never allowed to go there because of the men--that was their place. I can remember, though, the old Chinaman used to come out and bring us cookies.

Mellon: Stories are really important on these tapes.

S. Adams: Well, I'll have to think about them for a while before I can--.

Editor: Was the ranch called Ardenwood during your youth?

S. Adams: No. But the station was called Arden.

Transcriber: Maria Wolf

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Tape Guide - Sally Patterson Adams

Date of Interview: July 2, 1986

tape 1, side a

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tape 1, side b

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THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

John E. Adams

A Son-in-Law Remembers Henry Patterson
and Assesses Ranch Development

An Interview Conducted by
Knox Mellon
in 1986

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INTERVIEW HISTORY — John E. Adams

As the husband of Sally Patterson Adams, the son-in-law of Henry and Sarah Patterson, and a member of the board of directors of the Patterson Properties management corporation, John Adams has been in a position to observe the transitions in the management of the Patterson Ranch since the 1930s. Although a practicing physician whose career centered at the medical facility of the University of California in San Francisco, Dr. Adams visited the ranch frequently, was close to both Henry and Sarah Patterson, and was involved in decisions regarding ranch management over the years.

His interview, conducted at his home in Piedmont, California, by Dr. Knox Mellon on July 14, 1986, contributes a fresh perspective to the series of family memoirs. He includes sympathetic portraits of Henry as a ranch manager with a great deal of foresight and of Sarah as a woman with a keen intellect, an open and inquisitive mind, and a somewhat irreverently humorous attitude toward the family past.

Dr. Adams recalls discussions of ranch development dating back to the 1940s, the opposition of Henry and Sarah to development at that time, and Henry's plan, as early as 1937, to divide the ranch between the two branches of the family, presumably because he foresaw the diverging interests between his and his brother's families. Dr. Adams places these first discussions of ranch development earlier than any of the other interviewees in the series. During his review of the transcript, he clarified dates and elaborated on these important early discussions. His comments have been integrated into the interview transcript.

Dr. Adams is an environmentalist voice in Patterson Property management. He is concerned about preservation of farm lands and open space around the heavily urbanized Bay Area and considers the loss of Patterson agricultural lands a "disaster." His perspective is a vital one for this series of interviews on the Patterson family and management of their ranch lands in southern Alameda County.

Ann Lage
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please print or write clearly)

Your full name John F. Lewis

Date of birth April 10 - 1917 Place of birth Bakersfield, Calif.

Father's full name George Lewis

Birthplace Bakersfield, Calif.

Occupation Farmer

Mother's full name Martha Lewis

Birthplace Bakersfield, Calif.

Occupation Homemaker

Where did you grow up? Bakersfield, Calif.

Present community Bakersfield, Calif.

Education High School Graduate

1937 Bakersfield High School

Occupation(s) Farmer

Special interests or activities Reading, Gardening

Making the Rounds of the Ranch with Henry Patterson, 1930s

[Date of Interview: July 14, 1986]##

Mellon: Dr. Adams, could you tell me when you first became involved with the Patterson family and under what circumstances?

J. Adams: It was when I met Sally, Mrs. Adams, and that was when we were both in college. The year was 1932.

Mellon: Where were you in college?

J. Adams: At the University of California, Berkeley. We were in the same class.

Mellon: Prior to meeting your wife, had you known about the Patterson family?

J. Adams: No.

Mellon: Could you tell me something about Henry Patterson--what he was like, and something of your relationship with him?

J. Adams: I got to know Henry very well over the years. He wasn't an easy person to know, but as one saw more of him he became more outgoing and more communicative. We had, ultimately, a very close relationship. His essential characteristic, I think, was one of reserve, to the point, at times, of shyness when one first initially met him, but fundamentally he was an extremely warm, open person.

After Sally and I were married, and I was in medical school--the first two summers we came out here and stayed on the ranch. I would go around the ranch with him every morning. He had an old car, and he would drive around to inspect the ranch. It was his custom, as we would call it in medicine, to make rounds, where he would visit all of his tenants and farmers, look at the water situation, that is, who was using the water. We

##This symbol indicates that a tape or a segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes see page 125.

- J. Adams: would often meet fellow farmers from adjacent farms. We would have lots of long talks. So it was a very enjoyable, warm relationship.
- Mellon: Henry Patterson has been described as less of a social mixer than his brother William. Is this assessment accurate?
- J. Adams: Yes. Henry, although he enjoyed friendships with many close friends, was not what you'd describe as a joiner. He enjoyed social events, but he was not given to going to such things as the Bohemian Club. He did not belong to any clubs to my knowledge. If he did, he certainly did not go to any meetings.

Early Discussions of Developing the Ranch

- Mellon: Did you continue to see much of Henry Patterson through the years? Were those relationships both social and business? Did you discuss operation of the ranches in southern Alameda County and Livermore with him?
- J. Adams: Yes, many times, as I've indicated, we would discuss the whole farming operation. I made a good many trips up to Livermore with him, when he would go up to see what was going on up in the hill ranch.

As I say, we would discuss the farming operation below, in Fremont. particularly the problems of salt intrusion in the water table and the possible future of the ranch. I can recall one in particular: the last summer that we came out, which would have been 1937. It was that summer the possibility of development began to rear its head. The Will Patterson family was interested in the development, and at the same time Henry Patterson developed a proposal to change the whole format and structure of the ranch from that of what it had been--namely an undivided half interest--to actually dividing the ranch between the two families and he had maps drawn to accomplish this.
[interruption]

I was mentioning the fact, in answer to your question about business operations, that Henry had thought for a long time that it would be better, if agreeable with the other family, to actually divide the ranch into separate ownerships, because of the diverging interests between the two families. As I've indicated, he thought about it a great deal. He had several maps made about what he thought would be suitable, equitable division. This was then broached to the other family. The Livermore ranch was to be kept as it was--namely an undivided half interest--but this represented the lower southern Alameda County ranch.

We discussed this a great deal. This was not acceptable to the other family, so it was dropped. In retrospect now, I think that many of our present problems would have been avoided if this had gone through. I don't know, and I never did know, what the reasons were which the other family gave for their failure to accede to this. But that was quite an undertaking.

Editor: Are you sure of this 1937 date? No one else has placed discussions to divide the ranch so early.

J. Adams: Yes. The discussion to divide the ranch did run in 1937.

The second relationship, businesswise, was of interest, and it was in the summer of 1947, right after the war, when the other family began to express an interest in developing the ranch. A developer who later on became very prominent in development, namely Mr. Wayne Valley, came out after, I'm sure, getting an appointment. I can remember spending a whole Sunday in the living room with Henry, and I think Sarah was there--in and out--and Mr. Valley was talking about the possibilities of developing agricultural land in general and, specifically, portions of the ranch. He showed us maps, brochures of all the development that was taking place in Houston, Texas, which was one of the earliest places to be developed, apparently. He was trying to persuade similar developments to take place on the southern Alameda County Patterson properties.

I think, although this is somewhat of a guess, that he had talked previously to Will and to Donald. Although it was not known to me at the time, he had a partner named Jack Brooks, who subsequently has been very intimately involved with the Patterson family in the development of the land. Again, I did not meet Jack Brooks at that time, but it's apparent now that he was involved also from the start.

In any event during that summer, Henry asked me what I thought of it, and we had many discussions, and actually Valley gave us a proposal--a very informal "contract." I went over it in detail. We discussed it, and both Henry and I reached the conclusion, and I'm sure that Sarah, his wife, shared in this, that at that point we felt that development was a great mistake for the ranch and it should remain in agriculture.

Editor: Can you recall any more specifically what Henry Patterson's objections to developing the ranch were at that point? Did he wish to keep farming? Did he think farming would be viable for some time? Was he concerned about the fate of his tenant farmers? Who did he think would take over the running of the ranch after his death? What were your own and Sally's specific objections to development at that point?

J. Adams: Henry certainly wanted to keep the entire ranch operation in agriculture during his lifetime, and always looked out for the interests of his tenant farmers. These discussions did take

- J. Adams: place in 1947 after the war. I presume that Uncle Will would have been his choice to run the ranch after his death, although he did ask me several times if I could give up medicine and become part of the ranch. Sally and I really did not consider the advisability of development then, as we were too involved in our own (medical, etc.) affairs. However, we did deliberately turn down the development of her portion of the "big field" (which had been deeded to her by her father sometime in the late thirties). The other family went ahead and developed their half of the big field (with Jack Brooks, I believe, but am not sure).
- Mellon: How would you describe Henry Patterson as a businessman? Did he really run the ranching operations or was it a shared responsibility with his brother William?
- J. Adams: Well, I think that since the Pattersons were sort of a traditional family in terms of their structure, that the concept of primogeniture was very much in evidence, and the management of the ranch passed down to the older son, namely Henry. He actually did run the ranch in every respect. I described the rounds he would make. I don't think there were any real written agreements with the farming tenants; it was all done by word of mouth and by a handshake. But he made the decisions, although there's no question that he and Will consulted and agreed upon everything, and it was a mutual decision. To put it another way, I don't think Henry would have ever made a decision contrary to the wishes of Will, in terms of ranch management, because theirs was a very close relationship also.
- Mellon: In reading through the records that exist in the Society of California Pioneers, for example, I find that William Patterson travelled a great deal. Was this true of Henry Patterson as well, or did Henry tend to remain pretty much on the ranch?
- J. Adams: No, Henry, by the time I knew him, did very little travelling. He had done travelling in his earlier days when he was in college. He went to Alaska, and I've seen letters that he wrote to his mother. But by the time I'd met him, he stayed pretty much at home. He would go to San Francisco occasionally. He made a weekly trip to San Jose, where he had a concrete pipe manufacturing plant, which of course was in great use in those days, for it represented the irrigated pipe that they buried. I think it did well, and he was the sole owner and sole manager of that plant; Will was not involved in this at all. Henry usually would make a weekly journey to San Jose. I went with him a couple of times, but I don't know much about that business.
- Mellon: Is that business still in the family?
- J. Adams: No, it was sold after both Henry and Sarah's death.

Henry, Sarah, and the Family Heritage

Mellon: Do you recall Henry talking much about the achievements of his father, George Washington Patterson?

J. Adams: Not a great deal. Henry really didn't have a great deal to say about his father, at least I cannot recall much that was said about George Patterson. I think most of what I recall is that Sarah used to talk about George. She would joke about him, primarily. He was the object of a good many jokes in the family, most of which emanated from Sarah. And Henry would just sort of giggle and laugh after Sarah would joke about him.

Mellon: Did Henry Patterson ever convey that he saw himself as somebody special, because after all "he was a Patterson."?

J. Adams: Not in the slightest. That would be the last way I would characterize Henry. He was a very modest person--very quiet. I think he had a tremendous sense of pride in the ranch. He loved the land and it was certainly his life much more so than I think it was Will's. But I don't think he had any sense of ancestral heritage at all.

Mellon: What about William?

J. Adams: I think William had more, but again, I really don't recall ever hearing discussions about their ancestry other than the fact that they came from somewhere in the Midwest--Indiana. That's about the extent of my knowledge of it.

Mellon: What was your relationship with Sarah Patterson? Can you describe her? What was she like? What were some of her particular interests?

J. Adams: Well, Sarah was a very interesting woman. She had a very keen intellect. I don't know if you know, but she actually got a master's degree in astronomy at Berkeley and wrote a thesis, if I recall, a mathematical analysis of the orbits of asteroids. She had a fine intellect. My relationship was a close one with her also. I was very fond of her.

As an aside, we used to have a lot of political discussions. This was during the days of the Depression, and Franklin Roosevelt had been elected. Henry had no use for Franklin Roosevelt because he was very conservative politically, and I was a great supporter of Franklin Roosevelt. So we used to have interesting discussions--never acrimonious--and I would essentially support the concepts of the New Deal, and Henry was opposed to them. But Sarah often sided with me. She was much more, what we would call today, liberal than Henry was. She had

- J. Adams: a very free mind, an open mind, and an inquisitive mind. She loved her garden and spent a great deal of time in her garden. It was an exquisite, beautiful garden that she nurtured.
- Mellon: Did she read a good deal?
- J. Adams: She read a great deal.
- Mellon: Do you recall Henry Patterson talking much about his mother, Clara Hawley Patterson?
- J. Adams: Again, I don't recall him talking about his mother, but Sarah once again talked a great deal about his mother. She would often, again, make little jokes, and he would appreciate them and laugh about them. But she talked a great deal about Clara.
- Mellon: I had the feeling, in reading through the records, that Clara was a very bright lady too.
- J. Adams: I guess so. I really cannot say anything about that in terms of what I've heard from either Sarah or Henry. What I recall about the remarks about Clara were just sort of passing remarks. They weren't anything in depth at all.
- Mellon: Do you recall any mention ever being made of Clara Hawley Patterson's marriage to the Reverend Layson?
- J. Adams: Oh, yes. That was the subject often, again, of discussion, and it was always in a humorous way. Sarah would make jokes about Clara's second husband. At times, she would do this just to tease Henry, and he would accept it gracefully, because he had no use for Mr. Layson.

Relations with the William Patterson Family

- Mellon: Did you have much contact with William Patterson over the years? How did William contrast with his brother Henry?
- J. Adams: It was only during the two summers when I was out there -- after 1937 I was so involved in medicine that I could not spend any time at the ranch and did not to any degree--that I used to see Will several times a week because Henry and I would bump into Will during our morning rounds around the ranch. And I also used to see Will occasionally when he would come out to shoot ducks, and I happened to be out shooting ducks on the Hill Pond.
- Mellon: Was there a duck club out there? Did they have a club house?

J. Adams: Yes. The pond was on the site where the present park [Coyote Hills Regional Park] is, and they had a very nice little club house halfway up the hill toward the summit. This had been there for a long time--I don't know when they first started out there--it was many years before I knew anything about it. Henry, and there was a regular duck club, mostly of Piedmont businessmen: Mr. Volkman, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Stuart Rawlings; Earl Warren used to come out and shoot ducks; Mr. Allen Chickering who was a lawyer for the Southern Pacific Railroad. I guess there were eight or ten of them. They would get out there Friday night, have dinner, quite a few drinks, and they'd shoot ducks in the morning. Usually they didn't stay over, they just shot that one Saturday morning. Sometimes I would go out Sunday and shoot with Sally, or sometimes during the week. I would often bump into Uncle Will because he would be out there shooting. Uncle Will was also a member of the duck club.

Editor: Were these Henry or Will's friends, or both?

J. Adams: Both, but more Henry's because of the Piedmont house, etc.

Mellon: Were there any other of the Patterson women, in addition to Sally, who shot?

J. Adams: Marjorie occasionally shot--Sally's sister--and no others.

Mellon: Henry and William Patterson worked together on business matters during the period when you knew them. Did they mix together much socially?

J. Adams: Not a great deal, surprisingly, and I suspect this is because of the relationships of their respective wives. Henry and Sarah would have frequent Sunday lunches. They would bring out a long table from the attic--I usually had to help carry it out. Then they would have a lot of their friends. They would have a wonderful lunch of cold corned beef, all local produce, vegetables from Henry's garden. But I don't remember ever seeing the Will Pattersons at those lunches. Because most of Will Patterson's friends were over in Palo Alto and in that area. Most of the Henry Patterson friends were in the East Bay and Piedmont or Berkeley.

Mellon: Was any alcohol served at these lunches?

J. Adams: Oh yes, indeed.

Mellon: There was no heavy temperance feeling among the Pattersons?

J. Adams: No, I don't think either family had any feelings about the "evils" of alcohol.

Mellon: It's been stated by some observers that the William and Henry Patterson sides of the family were not always close, especially as new generations arrived on the scene. Are the two sides of the family different, and if so, how?

J. Adams: I think anything I might have to say about this has to be viewed as representing a certain amount of bias in terms of these relationships. Yes, I think they were close in some respects and not close in other respects. All I might give you are some examples. Certainly Sarah and Aunt May--Will's wife--were not at all close, and, I don't think, really liked each other very much. They were cordial, but there was no warmth in their relationship at all.

As far as the next generation is concerned, the relationship between Sally and her cousins, namely Donald, Jack, and David, were not at all close, except--at least in my observation when I got to know them, they were in their early twenties. The relationship between Donald and Sally was not close. Donald was a very difficult person. He was secretive. Henry used to say this many times: Donald's left hand doesn't know what his right hand was doing, and that was just exactly the best way to characterize Donald, in my opinion.

Jack, on the other hand, was very warm and outgoing. Sally was extremely fond of Jack, as I was. Although Donald got along with Jack, I think Donald disapproved of Jack in many ways. And David was just too small. Although when David was in college and when I came out in the summers, I would play tennis with David occasionally. But I don't think Sally really saw anything of David--again from the time I knew the family.

Mellon: Don Patterson, on the tapes he did in the sixties, refers to his brother Jack as being somewhat of a high liver.

J. Adams: That's an unfair characterization. Jack liked to drink, but I never saw him in any way not handling alcohol very well. I think one of the occasions for this might have been the fact that Jack did have lady friends. For instance, one summer he had a young woman he lived with up on the hill ranch. But Will accepted this quite well, although I think it bothered Will, but I suppose Donald disapproved of it--knowing Donald.

Mellon: The Pattersons were well-to-do and their success was based in large measure on the early efforts of George Washington Patterson and his two sons. Did you ever observe a particular work ethic among the Pattersons, including the children? Was thrift stressed in the family?

J. Adams: I cannot answer that insofar as the Will Patterson family is concerned. I think Jack spent money freely. I don't think he spent it recklessly, but I don't think he pinched pennies in any way. But I think Donald probably was sort of a penny pincher from what I could observe. I can't tell you anything about David. As far as the Henry Patterson side of the family, I think thrift is not the proper expression. Both Sarah and Henry--of course when I knew them, this was during the Depression and things weren't all that favorable--but they did not withhold spending money. But they didn't throw it around by any manner or means. But I think management would be a better term than thrift.

Mellon: Did you have much contact with William's wife May? What was she like?

J. Adams: I saw very little of May. All the times that I was at the ranch, living there, both prior to my marriage and after my marriage, I don't think I ever saw May Patterson come to the George Patterson house where Henry and Sarah were living. So the only times I ever saw May was when I went to the William Patterson house for one reason or other--to see Jack. I went there maybe twenty-five to thirty times. I would see May then and then just briefly discover that she was a very sort of, she was a hypochondriac, I think. Many things, physically, she would complain about. She was sort of like Donald. She wouldn't say very much. And Donald was very much like May, on the basis of a casual observation. That's the best way I can characterize it.

Mellon: Did your children have much contact with the children of Don, Jack and Dave?

Adams: No, none at all. Our children--when we were out there, they were little. [Sue, b.d. October 12, 1936; Abby, b.d. October 18, 1940; Henry, b.d. May 30, 1946.] Then by the time we got back after the war, when we would go out to the ranch occasionally on weekends, they were all spread around. So they really never saw each other.

Mellon: Do you recall spending time at the ranch for festive, social occasions? Were these usually held at the Henry Patterson house? Did the William Pattersons give social gatherings that everyone in the family attended?

J. Adams: No, I don't recall any social occasions. Maybe they've slipped my memory but I can't recall any social occasions where the two families participated together. There were many social occasions, as I've described, at the Henry Patterson house, but I can't recall the William Patterson family as a whole participating.

Mellon: Do you have any feeling about the George W. Patterson house as being imposing or ornate? What are your impressions of it?

J. Adams: Well, I think it's a perfectly beautiful house. I've always loved it. It's an extremely well built, solidly Victorian house. The wood inside is perfectly beautiful wood--it was brought around the horn. As far as I know, I don't think an architect was responsible for building the house, but I consider it perfectly set in the garden. It fits in beautifully with the landscape. So I have great fondness for the house, and I think it is a lovely building.

Mellon: Did Henry Patterson or Sarah Patterson comment from time to time on the house?

J. Adams: Yes, they did comment. I do remember them talking about the house, but it was just their home. I don't think I ever heard them say anything about what it represented in terms of historical significance--it was just their home.

Mellon: What were your impressions of the William Patterson house? Do you remember the circumstances surrounding its destruction by fire?

J. Adams: I don't remember because we were not there.

##

J. Adams: I don't know if it was before Henry died, or after he died, I think it was before, that we were discussing what the future might hold for the ranch and the houses and so forth. I remember Sarah saying that Will had either put in his will, or said definitely that after he and May died, he wanted to have the house burned. Then I remember very well--I wasn't there--a picture in the newspaper of Sarah sitting in a chair watching the house burn when they did it. It was in the Oakland Tribune I think.

Donald Patterson's Management of the Ranch

Mellon: In the mid-to-late 1950s, Don Patterson began to take over leadership in running the ranch. Did you have much contact with him then?

J. Adams: No, I had essentially no contact or minimal contact with him then for several reasons. The first reason, I was very busy with my own medical affairs at the university. I rarely got out to the ranch. Donald, I would say, true to character, ran things

- J. Adams: completely with little communication--certainly with us, and I think probably also with other members of the family, which by that time was Jack and David. So Donald really ran the ranch single-handedly. He would call us up and tell us about a decision that had been made, particularly if it required a signature in terms of a negotiation of some sort or other.
- Mellon: You're answering part of the question I was going to ask, and that is, how would you characterize the years of his stewardship of the Patterson properties?
- J. Adams: Well, it's just as I've described. Donald did, and wanted to, control things pretty much the way he saw it. I can remember, as a matter of fact, I think Donald visualized--and this is from discussions with him later, a little bit later--the development of the ranch. I think he wanted to see a good part of the ranch developed, though I never discussed the pros and cons of it because the decisions were made. Donald worked very closely with Jack Brooks, who I mentioned before, and all these plans for the subsequent development and subdivision of the ranch were made by Donald and Jack Brooks, to the exclusion of the rest of the family, certainly to the exclusion of us. In retrospect, I have regrets about this. If I had really thought about it at the time or had been more involved, I would have liked to have been a part of that, and objected to it.

Loss of Patterson Agricultural Lands--A Disaster

- Mellon: That leads in to my next question. You've been described by some as being the most ecologically and conservation-minded member of the family. Is this accurate? Have you been supportive of the movement by the company toward development?
- J. Adams: I'm pleased to think that they think of me as conservation-minded. I have strong interests in conservation, particularly not only of open space, wilderness, but also, specifically, I have strong feelings about the need to preserve agricultural lands in the area. I might just put in a plug in this regard--there've been good studies done. Something like three dollars out of every ten dollars that is accrued by agricultural efforts in this country, is accrued by agricultural lands very close to urban lands, so that the lands around large cities--still in agriculture--are very important. They should be maintained, and I considered the loss of the Patterson agricultural lands, as far as I'm concerned, an ecological disaster--not ecological, but in a sense a disaster, although I'm sure it's inevitable.

- J. Adams: Certainly by the time the zoning had been done by the city and Brooks, who had at that time access to the city council and planning commission in Fremont, which was very pro-development and very pro-growth--these things were all done. At the time I became aware of it, it was too late. Yes, I think the development on the whole was too bad.
- Mellon: There has been an effort, I understand, on the part of Patterson Properties, to retain for a fairly protracted length of time some land that will remain purely in agriculture, with one of the families that has worked for the family for many years.
- J. Adams: Yes, the western-most portion, which unfortunately is also the poorest portion from an agricultural standpoint, 450 acres are still in agriculture. They have been labeled by the city planning commission as "urban reserve," which connotes an ominous tone, as far as I'm concerned. But I think it's the intent of the family, at the present time, to maintain this in agriculture as long as it can be done.

The Family Corporation in the Eighties

- Mellon: George W. Patterson built the ranch and his two sons ran it down until the late 1950s. Can you describe briefly the changes in leadership that occurred after Henry and William's death, and what new directions came along with new leadership? Who followed, for example, Don Patterson's leadership years?
- J. Adams: Don, as I've indicated, when he was living, ran the ranch single-handedly. I don't know how much David had to do--but I think David had little or nothing to do with running the ranch and was also excluded. Jack, of course, was dead by this time. Sally and Marjorie were not involved at all other than the placement of signatures on documents.

When Donald died, which happened very quickly, then David assumed direction. By this time, of course, the development was getting started, and shortly thereafter the plans at least were developed very rapidly, with Jack Brooks dominating that. We would have family meetings at this house, our own house, most of them. They would be comprised of David, Jack Brooks, Sally, myself, and the attorney that was representing Marjorie. These meetings primarily had to do with the development of what was going to be done and where it was going to be done. We didn't really discuss much about the running of the agriculture itself. Wilcox was also at these meetings--Donald's oldest son--representing his family.

J. Adams: The actual management of the ranch at that time was--Wilcox would spend some time dealing with the Livermore tenant, the cattle people in Livermore, the Bankes. He and David sort of cooperated. Then ultimately--I think at the instigation of Brooks to some extent--but David was the driving force then to form a family corporation, which was done.

Mellon: Are you supportive of the direction the company is taking at the present time?

J. Adams: Well, I think I've expressed myself clearly on that -- although it's too late, I think. The family corporation now is being managed by my son-in-law, Leon Campbell, and David's son-in-law, Robert Buck. The ultimate responsibility rests with the board of directors on which I sit, with David, Wilcox and Jack's son, Bruce. On the whole I think the management is being well done. There are differences of opinion, as you might expect, but everything seems to be managed well, so I really have no thoughts beyond that.

Jack Brooks and Donald Patterson--Working Hand and Glove

Mellon: Could you say anything further about Jack Brooks's relationship to the Patterson family and Patterson properties? What kind of person is Jack Brooks?

J. Adams: Jack Brooks is a very shrewd, very smart, essentially developer. I remember when he first started to develop the ranch. I don't know whether Wayne Valley was involved or not, but I know Jack Brooks did a development with Donald and David--what was the "big field"--and that was the first development on the ranch [in the early 1950s]. I can remember him then as a younger man. Just as a curiosity, which I don't remember, but Jack Brooks has told me that, right after the war, I operated on him in the Veterans' Hospital in San Francisco--took a little tumor off his skull. But I don't remember it.

But Jack is an extremely shrewd and very successful developer. He, I think, for a long time really ran the city council and planning commission in Fremont. He could do pretty much anything that he wanted to do, which from the standpoint of ranch development, obviously, was advantageous if you were interested in developing the ranch. He and Donald, I think, worked hand and glove. I can remember, for instance, going out there on a weekend one time after the war--it was after both Henry and Will died, probably late sixties or early seventies.

J. Adams: Sally and I drove around with Donald. Donald said, now this is all going to be houses, and this is going to be industry. This was the first I knew of that. By that time it was too late.

Mellon: Following up a little on something you said a week or so ago when I was interviewing Mrs. Adams, looking at it in retrospect and knowing a lot about the Patterson family, why do you suppose George Washington Patterson succeeded as well as he did in building a small empire in southern Alameda County?

J. Adams: This has to be pure speculation, obviously. From the history of the area, from what I have heard or in terms of what Sarah and Henry might have said, I suspect George Patterson came out, and like so many other people--you might say white Americans--they were adventurers, fortune seekers. They came out and acquired land from the native Californians, namely the Spaniards. This has happened over and over again. I suspect George Patterson was shrewd. He acquired this land by some means or other. I don't think dishonestly, but he drove a hard bargain every time. Then he was industrious, and the time was ripe for the raising of wheat and the markets for wheat back East. Then subsequently he raised produce. I'm sure it was well managed--it was extremely well managed when I saw it under Henry, and this was during the Depression, but it was functioning, and well done.

Mellon: Thank you very much Dr. Adams. I appreciate very much the opportunity to interview you.

Transcriber: Maria Wolf
Final Typist: Maria Wolf and Catherine Winter

TAPE GUIDE - Dr. John Adams

Date of Interview: July 14, 1986

tape 1, side a

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tape 1, side b

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THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

David G. Patterson

Overseeing the Transition from Ranching
to Property Management

An Interview Conducted by
Knox Mellon
in 1986



DAVID G. PATTERSON

1988

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INTERVIEW HISTORY -- David G. Patterson

The following interview with David Patterson was conducted by Dr. Knox Mellon at Mr. Patterson's home in Alamo, California, on November 3, 1986. As the youngest son of William Patterson, David Patterson brings his own unique recollections of life on the ranch and of his father and his uncle, Henry. Educated at Stanford University, with a master's degree in business administration, he was well prepared to assume a leadership role in Patterson family business upon the death of his elder brother, Donald, in 1980. Development of the ranch lands was underway, and pressures for further development were intense. David Patterson was instrumental in the family's subsequent incorporation, which allowed an orderly management of properties and led to development guided by a master plan.

In his interview, as well as in his role as Patterson family advisor, David Patterson stresses the family's commitment to seeking a balance in the development of ranch lands. He notes that a significant portion of the lands have been dedicated to public use, at Ardenwood Regional Preserve, Coyote Hills Regional Park, the Alameda Creek flood control channel, and, in Livermore, at Del Valle Regional Park. Other lands are to remain in agriculture as long as possible.

David Patterson and his wife, Joan, have a keen interest in Patterson family history. They have traced the family in East Berlin, Pennsylvania, where George Washington Patterson was born, and Lafayette, Indiana, where he grew up. We are grateful to them for their support of this oral history project and their assistance in locating family photographs to include in the interview volumes.

Ann Lage
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please print or write clearly)

Your full name David George Patterson

Date of birth August 13, 1920 Place of birth Oakland, Calif.

Father's full name William Donald Patterson

Birthplace Alameda County, Calif.

Occupation Rancher

Mother's full name May Bird Patterson

Birthplace Yreka, Calif.

Occupation Housewife

Where did you grow up ? Southern Alameda County, Calif.

Present community Alamo, Calif.

Education B.A.-Engineering(Stanford Univ.):MBA (Stanford Univ.)

Occupation(s) Approx 12 years in engineering and production management;
Approx 25 years in business management(investments; real
estate;as individual and as Trustee)

Special interests or activities (currently):

Community service: leadership positions, financial and hands-on support of U.S. Air Force Veteran's Memorial library & support organization, and of local emergency communications services; substantial financial support of local and national charities, Business: active in business management of family assets and trusts; Recreation: active pilot/airplane owner; active tennis player, skier, hiker/mountain recreation activities, boating/water skiing(have small boat); Home: married, have 7 children/stepchildren(all now adults, some with children of their own). Wife Joan and I enjoy above recreational activities, plus travel and social activities connected with local community and organizations.



Above: David and Joan Patterson, 1987.

Below: Left to right, David Patterson, age 8; May Bird Patterson, mother; and John Patterson, older brother, age 17, in 1928.



I A VIEW OF THE FAMILY AND RANCH

Education in Palo Alto and Centerville

[Date of Interview: November 3, 1986] ##

Mellon: Mr. Patterson, could you tell me something about your early life; where you were born and where you grew up?

David P: I was born in Oakland August 13, 1920, at Fabiolo [now Kaiser] Hosiptal, and for the first two years of my life I lived in Piedmont in a rental house. Then we moved to the house at the Patterson Ranch, the W. D. Patterson house. That would have been about 1922. I lived there until my college years, when in 1938 I started my studies at Stanford University.

Mellon: Could you tell me a little bit about your early education, prior to entering Stanford?

David P: Yes. When I was still pre-school, my father spent quite a bit of time each day in the evening teaching me to read and write. This started when I was probably four or five years old. After that I went to a Palo Alto school [Castilleja] for my first two grades, and then the Peninsula School in Palo Alto for the third and fourth grades. During this time, my family rented a house in Palo Alto, so that during the school year we lived in Palo Alto, and during the rest of the year we lived at the ranch. My father, of course, went back and forth daily.

Then I went to public school in Palo Alto for the fifth grade [Walter Hays School], and the sixth grade [Addison School]. In the sixth grade, which would have been about 1932, I contracted--I think it was scarlet fever--anyhow, it led to a serious illness and subsequently to a critical mastoid operation. I was quite

This symbol indicates that a tape or segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes, see page 158.

David P: ill. I spent my time of illness at the ranch, then, and because of that my parents wanted me at a school close to home. So, the seventh and eighth grades were spent in the Centerville Grammar School, and I lived at the ranch. Then, from there, I went to Palo Alto High School for four years, and then Stanford for four years after that, prior to the war.

Mellon: When you lived at the ranch and went to school, how did you go? Were there buses--did you take a bus, or did you walk, or ride a bike?

David P: In the beginning, at high school, the first two years of high school, I took the local Peerless Stage Bus, which traveled fairly close, on Jarvis Road, and my parents would take me out to the road and then I would pick up the bus, and it would take me to Palo Alto. And then in my junior year, they got me a little car, and from then on I commuted from the ranch.

Mellon: Why don't you finish up on your education?

David P: The balance of my education--I was at Stanford from '38 until '42. My graduating class should have been 1942; however, I needed a few units to finish up in engineering school when World War II started. So in the early part of 1942 I went into the service, and I served until the end of the war. When I returned, I was given credit by Stanford for having gone through flying school and with the army air corps to finish up my engineering credits that I needed. My engineering [B.A.] diploma was awarded me in 1945.

So then I started the Graduate School of Business at Stanford--that would have been in 1946 and 1947--and earned an MBA degree from Stanford in 1948. Prior to that time, I had attended UCLA one summer school to make up some credits, and that was in 1939, I believe. But that consisted basically of my education.

After that time I was employed at U.S. Steel, and, in the early sixties, I went to the University of California [at Berkeley] to their evening school certificate program in real estate, and finished a two-year program there, earning their Certificate of Real Estate. That pretty well wrapped up my educational experience.

Service in the Air Force in World War II

Mellon: Could you comment just briefly about your service during World War II in the air force?

David P: Yes. I went into active duty in June of '42. I was commissioned in army ordnance through the ROTC program at Stanford. There was a tremendous need for Signal Corps personnel, as the Signal Corps was expanding rapidly in 1942. So they transferred me immediately into the Signal Corps, and I went to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey [the eastern Signal Corps School] for three months of retraining. From Fort Monmouth, I went to Desert Training Center, out in the area east of Indio, and worked maneuvers with the 4th Armored Corps. That would have been the late summer and fall of '42 and the spring of '43. Just prior, General Patton and the 2nd Armored Corps had been training at Desert Training Center. He went on to Africa with his corps, but our unit wasn't trained soon enough and well enough, so we stayed back. Thereafter we would have gone overseas with the 4th Armored Corps, but the African campaign started to wind down. Our desert training was tailored to service in the African desert, so our 4th Corps desert training was no longer needed.

A bunch of us young fellows were very eager to get into the fray and decided we wanted to get into something more exciting. One time when we had some days off, ten of us went into San Bernardino to the army air base there. It was called the San Bernardino Army Air Base, I guess, in those days; it's now Norton Air Force Base. We processed the paperwork and passed the physicals and applied and were eventually accepted for air corps training. I went through pilot training. Class 44f was my class, and I graduated from advanced twin engine pilot school at Pampa, Texas, June 1944. After that, I went through flying transition schools--ended up flying B-24 Liberator bombers in combat with the 8th Air Force, 445th Bomb Group, based in England. I stayed with them and flew a number of missions over Germany. I was shot down once (on a mission over Berlin) and was rescued by the Russians and got back to my base. I flew a few more missions, and then the war was over in Europe. During this period of combat flying over Europe I was awarded the air medal, three battle stars, and my group received a unit citation.

We were scheduled to transfer into B-29 training and go to the Pacific theater [Japan]. However, first we came back to the U.S. and were given a month of leave, and then by this time--this would have been July and August of '45--we got back to our new training bases and got ready for training. Why, fortunately, the Japanese war ended suddenly with the dropping of the atomic bomb, which saved an awful lot of us from any further possible destruction.

So at that time (later 1945), I got out of the active service as soon as I could, because I did have this strong desire to go back to school and finish my education.

Patterson Family Traditions

Mellon: The Pattersons were certainly one of the most prominent and affluent families in southern Alameda County. When you were growing up, did the realization that you were a Patterson have any special effect on you?

David P: No. My parents were very much two feet on the ground, and were very much part of the community. I didn't personally have any feeling that I was any different from anybody else. I guess, at the time, I didn't realize that I was getting education in better schools in Palo Alto. I played with kids locally--although, being isolated, raised on a farm as I was, it was difficult to find playmates. That is one of the main reasons why my parents had me in the Palo Alto schools and moved there during the school year into a community where there were neighbors nearby, where I did have kids to play with. I think this was very important in their reasoning, that I needed to have friends that were nearby to play with. But I never felt any distinction. It was just that it was more fun after school, to be able to play in a vacant lot nearby with a bunch of kids, play baseball or football, as against being out on the farm and being lonesome and by myself.

Mellon: Of course, the Pattersons were well-to-do, and their success was based in large measure on the hard work of your grandfather and his two sons. Was there ever a work ethic among the Pattersons that included the children as well? Was thrift stressed in the family?

David P: Absolutely. My father set up a pattern of hard work. I knew, as I grew up, that every day he was managing the ranch properties. Typically, he would leave in the morning to make his rounds of the farming and direct the various operations along with my uncle. Many times, as a youngster, my father would take me along after school or on weekends, and we'd first stop at my uncle's house. My uncle had an office (which was the sun porch at the G. W. Patterson house), and my father and I would go in and I would sit down in the corner, and my father and my uncle would discuss the current problems on the farm. Then we would continue to make the "rounds" of the farm lands. I was very definitely raised with the idea that work was the way to go. My mother was very busy running the home, and that was the whole context.

There was no question in my mind that I was going to go on to higher education. It didn't even enter my mind that I would do anything except continue on and get a degree and learn some profession. My father and my mother always pointed out to me that I should have a prime profession, which steered me towards engineering, even though the other, ranch property management, was there in the background. They felt that I should have a separate profession, as a safety valve.

The Two Family Homes

Mellon: What are your first remembrances of the G. W. Patterson house? Were you a regular visitor to the house your grandfather built? Who lived there at the time?

David P: From the age of two, I grew up in my father's home nearby to the G. W. Patterson house. My father's house was about a quarter of a mile away from the G. W. Patterson house, which was occupied by my uncle and aunt and cousins. In those days, it was typical that the older brother occupied the family home, and the younger brother built a home for himself. So my uncle, being older than my father, took over my grandfather's house when my grandparents died.

My early recollections of the house were very fuzzy. You must remember that I was youngest of the six children in the two families. My brother Jack, who was closest to me in age, was six years older than I was. My oldest brother, Don, was some fifteen years older than I, and cousins Sally and Marjorie were of that same vintage. The younger daughter, Georgia, I really didn't ever know. She was killed when she was fairly young.

So I was kind of the "little kid on the block." I did go over to their house occasionally--they had a swimming pool that we were all invited to use and used quite often. I would join swimming parties with my cousins and my older brothers, but again, I was the little kid. I was kind of there because there was no other place to put me, I suppose. But I did enjoy the swimming pool. (We did not have one at our house.)

In my two years when I was living at the ranch and attending school in Centerville, in the seventh and eighth grade years, I got quite involved in playing tennis. They had a tennis court at my uncle's house, and we didn't. My aunt and uncle invited me to use the court anytime, and that is where I really learned a sport that I'm still playing, at my age of 66, and I'm very thankful to have had that wonderful opportunity to start. My father started with me, showing me how to play. My brother Don, when he was down from college or work, would play with me. We had a gardener and cook on the premises at our house almost all the time I could remember; and the gardener (several of the gardeners) really loved to get out and exercise after work, and they would play tennis with me. So that's where my tennis got started. It's been a wonderful thing for me. It has helped me maintain excellent health and a sound physical condition throughout the years. (Many of these gardeners eventually owned their own homes and businesses and enjoyed tennis in their later years too.)

Mellon: Some of the sources describe the William Patterson house as being almost the equal of the G. W. Patterson house--very fine construction and a lovely home. Is this your recollection?

David P: Oh, I loved it. It was huge by today's standards. Again, in those days, a farm house was typically where a family lived and worked together. It was a different world than it is now. It was roomy; each of my brothers, even though they weren't there all the time, had rooms; I had my own bedroom. And baths--oh, I forget how many baths now.

But I remember the two floors, plus a basement and an attic. All had facilities. It was just a very comfortable house. I can remember as a child in the wintertime, for instance, going up into the attic, which was big but unfinished, and there were storage trunks and all kinds of things like that that you read about in stories, where little kids go up and play during the rainy days. I remember doing the same thing. All in all, my home was just a very comfortable place to live and grow up.

Remembering Father Will and Uncle Henry

Mellon: What kind of contacts did you have with your father, William Patterson? What were your early impressions of him?

David P: I knew my father as a very kind person who loved people--little people as well as big people. He was very gregarious; he was very well-liked. As I said earlier, when I was very, very small--pre-school--I can still remember after dinner looking forward in the evening to running into the front room and getting out my reading book and sitting down on the couch. My dad would come in and sit down, and he'd teach me to read. I still remember that as a wonderful experience. He taught me basic writing and arithmetic too--the "3 Rs".

As I got older, why, he spent time with me in teaching me not only school work, but to camp, to fish, to hunt. He took me on backpacking trips, he taught me to ski. He was a great outdoorsman. He loved the outdoors. He taught me--and, I'm sure, before me he taught my brothers too. I know my brother Jack was young enough so that he would accompany us on skiing trips and that type of thing.

So my dad was my teacher and was my companion in many ways through the early years. He was very active in community affairs himself, too, and in the managing of the ranch.

Mellon: Did your father discuss the operation of the ranch with you; and if so, when did he begin to do this?

David P: I believe right from the beginning. I said earlier that whenever I was off from school he would take me in his car and drive around and point out the various things to me. His attitude was always that I should understand and learn but that I should always look forward to another profession, and I believe that had a lot to do with the fact that I was the littlest kid and there were a lot of older ones that would come before me regarding management of the family's ranch businesses. I think that they (my father and my uncle) were operating under the old philosophy of family management wherein the oldest was the first in line, and I, of course, was the youngest.

Mellon: Did you have much contact with your uncle, Henry Patterson? What were your impressions of him--what kind of a man was he, what kind of an uncle?

David P: Well, Uncle Henry was a very quiet person but a very kind person, as I remember him. He and my father would chat about business; as I mentioned earlier, we'd go over to the ranch office, which was in my uncle's house--the G. W. Patterson house. He was always kind to me and always pleasant--a man of few words but a comfortable person to be around. His kindness, for instance, showed in one specific example. When I came back from the war, after the end of the war, I had a little airplane. I was still flying out of Hamilton Field with the U.S. Army Air Corps Reserve, and I had a small plane of my own that I would fly over to Hamilton Field, land, and spend my weekend tour, and then come back.

My uncle, unbeknownst to me, had an airstrip--just a dirt airstrip, but a useful landing strip--graded out back of the ranch houses in a field that was used as a roadway. Lo and behold, he let me know one time that "we have an airstrip for you; anytime you want to use it and anytime you want to come down, you just go ahead." And I thought that was a wonderful thing--so thoughtful. It was a kind thing--he was a man of not many words but nice thoughts. And that was a really nice thought, and I did use that airstrip from time to time.

Mellon: In the written records, your father comes through as more of a gregarious, out-going person, and your Uncle Henry as more taciturn and reserved. Is this accurate?

David P: I would say yes. I would say that the two complemented each other. Uncle Henry and my father were both, in my estimation, very kind people and very compassionate people. Uncle Henry showed it in a different way. As I've explained, my father was more outgoing, more of a joiner. When I really knew them, of

David P: course, they were along in years, as Uncle Henry was born in 1878, and my father was born in 1880 and by the time I was fifteen (that would have been 1935) they were already in their mid-fifties.

My father put aside one day a week (when business allowed him the time) wherein he would join his men friends at the Bohemian Club in San Francisco. The Bohemian Club was a highly regarded men-only club, much like the exclusive men's clubs found in England. This was a regular thing. He went each Thursday afternoon, when the club had special programs. I remember my mom always said, with approval, "Well, Father's going to the Bohemian Club for their weekly get-together." He also attended the Bohemian Club's annual one-week "retreat" at the Bohemian Grove, where the club invited well-known opera and stage stars to perform. (I believe the great singer Enrico Caruso performed there, for instance.) This was just the way he was, whereas I really don't know about Uncle Henry because I wasn't as close to him, but I don't believe he was as active socially.

My father also was very active in community affairs. For instance, he was on the Alameda County Water District Board of Directors for, oh, more than forty years, and he was president for almost that period of time. As these were elected offices, it reflected the fact that a lot of people in the community knew him and respected him and obviously voted for him.

The Bohemian Club people--I know they and other people he knew would often gather at the ranch. We had two flooded ponds that we used for duck-hunting. We had a duck shack--hunting lodge--and he would have quite a few of his friends down for weekend duck shoots regularly during duck hunting season.

And Uncle Henry was included and shot and socialized with them, but I feel that it was more my father's acquaintances that my uncle enjoyed than truly just my uncle's acquaintances.

Mother May and Aunt Sarah

Mellon: What was your relationship with your mother, May Patterson? What kind of a person was she? Do you recall her taking any role in the running of the ranch?

David P: Well, my mother was not involved in the business itself. Again, at my age, she was already--by the time I knew what was happening businesswise, she was already in her fifties. But I remember my feeling that she was very good with household budgets and a very thrifty person. I know that she watched over the household's finances, but not the business finances.

David P: Again, I felt she was gregarious. She had a lot of friends in the Centerville and in the Palo Alto areas. She was quite a bit involved in charities such as the Children's Hospital of the East Bay, the Episcopal Church at Centerville, the Garden Club in Washington Township. But basically, she was a homemaker and a family person, and she did those things that a homemaker-wife would do in the community and in the home to make for a well-balanced home, I'd say. She was a wonderful mother to me.

Mellon: Did you have much contact with your aunt, Sarah Patterson? What were your impressions of her?

David P: Aunt Sarah I don't remember too well. I saw Uncle Henry because he was involved in the ranch business, but Aunt Sarah--as I remember, she was involved in helping with the ranch books, but I wasn't involved in that part of it, so I don't really know--again, she was kind enough to invite me to use the tennis court and the swimming pool, and she was always kind to me and pleasant. But I didn't have a close relationship with her, personally, outside of that.

She had her own kids to raise, and I guess like my mother, she was concentrating on raising her family. Her children were much older than I was, though. I didn't really have a close relationship with Aunt Sarah.

Will Patterson's Interests in the Outdoors, Sports, Travel,
And Agronomy

Mellon: The written records depict your father as being interested in the outdoors, in hunting and camping and travel. Is this accurate, and did you participate with him in these activities?

David P: I'd say that was very accurate. He, as we were talking about before, took me hunting and fishing and taught me skiing. Again, before my time, I heard about the fact that he made quite a few trips up into the Yukon and the Peace River area of Canada, and into Alaska, the Lake Bennett area. Much of it was the excitement of going into areas that were wilderness, on his own or with a guide. For instance, he had great aspirations to be the first person to ever climb Mount Whitney in the wintertime. He and a fellow named Dennis Jones, who was an alternate on the American Olympic Ski Team back in the thirties, prepared one summer with caches of food that they placed on the trail up to the top of Whitney. I suppose this would have been in the early thirties; I can't remember now really. But they were going to be the first people to ever climb Mount Whitney in the wintertime.

David P: As it turned out, they got part way up, and Dennis Jones had been a ski jumper, and he had a bad ankle, and his ankle went bad and they had to turn around and come back. But this illustrates the type of person my father was. He loved the wilderness; he wanted to do things that were unusual, that tested his skill, I suppose, for survival in the wilderness, and just to enjoy the beauty of the wilderness, too. This was his type of thing.

In addition to that, in 1928 he took our family to Europe. He (and my mother) felt that my brother Jack and I should have the educational advantages of such an experience. We were in Europe for, I would say, almost a year. We attended Swiss schools and spent time touring and sightseeing in England, France, Italy, Switzerland. One of the main reasons that I believe he wanted to go was also because he wanted to ski in the Alps--which he did do extensively and taught Jack and me how to ski. Mountaineering, skiing, and outside activities were important recreational activities for my father. He continued to ski and enjoy the wildernesses and mountains well into his sixties, which for that generation was very unusual. I still ski and enjoy backpacking in the mountains, but our generation's a little different.

Mellon: Would you describe your father as an environmentalist; and if so, would you describe some examples of this? ##

David P: I believe he was more of an agronomist rather than an environmentalist. He was a person whose business life was dedicated to agriculture. He was always experimenting with trying to raise something new. We had in our back yard a large farm area that was dedicated just to raising small amounts of many different types of crops. We also had an orchard in which he experimented with grafting of various types of fruits. He was intensely interested in improving the agriculture as it pertained to the ranch agricultural business. He had exotic trees that he tried--for instance there was a papaw tree that he tried to raise from seeds from Mexico--it didn't work well. He had oranges and lemons, and grapefruit, which in those days, in our cold climate, was quite unusual. But I would say that his major thrust was agriculture. He enjoyed gardening too, as a hobby--which of course is related to agriculture. He also was involved in the water district, because that had to do with agriculture, and the preservation of water for agriculture was very important to him.

Mellon: Did your father keep in close contact with his college classmates after graduation? Did he take an active interest in Stanford?

David P: Again, by the time I became aware of his activities, he was in his fifties. I understood that he was active in his class at Stanford, was a fraternity man and a good athlete. He played football at Stanford and earned his freshman numeral in his class of 1904. He prided himself (when I knew him) that he never missed

David P: a Stanford-Cal football game all through the years. In fact, as I remember, he didn't come over to Europe until right after the Big Game, just to keep his record perfect. [laughter]

He taught football as a volunteer after he got out of Stanford. He was a volunteer football coach for the local Centerville high school--it was called Washington Union High School. He was a fraternity man at Stanford (I can't recall right now the fraternity), but as far as keeping in contact with his Stanford classmates, I couldn't tell you about it. It could very well be that a lot of these people that were duck hunting with him and that were at the Bohemian Club in San Francisco could have been Stanford people, but I don't really know.

Brothers Don and Jack

Mellon: Your brother Don has been called the historian of the Patterson family. Is this accurate?

David P: No. I think custodian is a better word than historian. Don was an entomologist by hobby, a good one. He had a moth named after him that he discovered. He collected data from the ranch business, historical data, and he took it to the Pioneer Society [the Society of California Pioneers in San Francisco], and it was just put there. He did some taping of some of the events, but it was more of a custodial function--taking the data and putting it in custody for future reference rather than actually developing a history of the family.

My wife and I have done more of the true family history in the last few years. We have been to East Berlin, Pennsylvania, where my grandfather, G. W. Patterson, was born and his parents and grandparents lived. We've been to Lafayette, Indiana, where he and his sisters and brothers grew up. I remember years ago when we mentioned East Berlin, Don said, "Well, no use going there, you wouldn't find anything." In contrast, we did find much of Patterson history there. So what that is saying is that Don was collecting data and storing it so that it wouldn't be destroyed, but actually, as far as developing a history, no, I don't believe that he did that, outside of just the data that he had at his fingertips.

Mellon: What kind of relationship did you have with your brother Jack? What was he like? Did you have much contact with him through the years?

David P: Jack was six years older than I, which is quite a bit of age difference when you're little. So my contact with Jack in the earlier years wasn't much. But as time went by, we became closer and closer. Jack was definitely not a scholastic person. He did not do well in school whatsoever. But on the other side of the coin, he was unusually good at what he liked to do. For instance, he studied history and French, and I can remember when he was in high school and I was in grammar school, he would sit at home and read French history books, French novels, and French magazines instead of doing his homework in school. He just wasn't interested in following the school curriculum.

He was a very gregarious person. He was very much like my father. People liked him; he got around socially a lot; he had a lot of friends. But he didn't pay attention to his school work. Where he really shone was in what he enjoyed doing. When World War II started, he displayed a very, very strong loyalty to his country. He was the kind of person that just believed in America; he believed in our way of life; he believed that he and all of us should be supporting that. So he went into the military service, he volunteered, and he excelled in his duties in the service. He had been doing some work on the cattle ranch prior to the war--not very well, but he loved horses--and he had tried his hand at cattle ranching and hadn't done very well. But he did like horses, so when he volunteered for army service when the war started, he went into the cavalry. He worked hard and eventually became an officer.

Then he went into paratrooper school and became a paratrooper. Then he went to commando school and became a commando, and he ended up in Europe in the OSS, which was an undercover unit of the U.S. Army, in which he was very outstanding. Among his awards, he earned a silver star, which is one of the highest awards that the United States gives for gallantry in action--bravery in action. He also earned many battle stars. He did an outstanding job in that field and, again, I would say that he was intensely patriotic. I felt also that he was a devoted family man. He was married to Joan Meek before he went overseas. When he was serving overseas, I met him at one time when I got back from being shot down. I met him in Paris (he was on a rest leave from the front lines) and we spent two or three days together, and he was always talking about his family at home. He just was that kind of guy; just really a nice person.

But the academic life, the mundane life of an ordinary business person, as a farmer or a rancher, wasn't exciting enough for him, I'd say. And yet he had a good business mind. He had good common sense when it came to business.

Mellon: Did your brother Jack ever take an active role in the running of the ranch? What kind of relationship did your brother Jack have with Don Patterson?

David P: Jack tried his hand at cattle ranching on part of the Patterson Ranch. That was in the late 1930s. He was not a manager for the family but was on his own. He didn't do very well at it. He also tried farming on Patterson lands, on his own, and he didn't do very well at it either. I feel one of the problems that Jack had was that Don was a very domineering person, and Don was the oldest in the family. I believe Don was raised to be the leader of the families, in the old feudal system where the oldest son of the family is the one that is supposed to carry on the family business.

I do believe that was instilled in Don. I remember my mother, when I was a kid, always pointing out that Don was, you know, the person to follow, and so forth. I was so young that there was no competition between me and Don, but Jack was close enough in age so I think that he felt it, and I think that Don's domineering--whether it was because of Don's nature or because he was forced into the spot--caused Jack to back away. They always had good relationships, but I think that Jack was subdued by Don's position, really, and that indirectly affected his performance.

Mellon: Some people have asserted that the Henry and William sides of the Patterson family were polite and communicative, but never close. Is this true?

David P: I have in recent years heard this, and I have stated to Sally [Henry's daughter] and John [Dr. Adams, her husband] that that could have been, but it surely isn't any more. Whatever happened, I didn't know anything about it. I remember, as I said earlier, going over to Sally's house, Uncle Henry's house, to use the pool and use the tennis court which were open to me to use anytime. I didn't see the alleged differences, and yet I've heard of this allegation. But I wasn't involved in it, nor did I ever see evidence of it. Maybe I was too little, you know. Maybe I was fortunate--but they certainly were communicative; they certainly were polite and very nice to me. I saw my brothers and my cousins playing together. As they grew older, they grew apart, but that's understandable; everyone has their own direction.

II SEEKING A BALANCE ON THE RANCH LANDS

Sales and Development in the 1950s

Mellon: Mr. Patterson, what was the date of the first Singer purchase of Patterson Ranch acreage? Were there two purchases--one in 1965 and one in 1972?

David P: Well, let's go back. In the 1950s, some big changes took place in what is now the Fremont area in the location of the Patterson Ranch. The Nimitz freeway was constructed through the ranch property. The cities of Fremont, Newark, and Union City incorporated. Master plans were designed by these cities, showing plans for industrial, commercial, and residential areas in the agricultural lands. The whole area started to change its image from a strictly rural farm area to a potential urban/suburban area. Seeing the potential changes in planned land uses, our side of the family in the 1950s made a sale of about 300 acres to a developer. That was followed very shortly, in the early sixties, by my Uncle Henry's side of the family, with a sale of about the same amount of acres. So, really, both sides of the family made similar moves, both recognizing the land-use trends that would eventually affect farming.

Moreover, in 1955, I remember that my father and my uncle were very desirous of dividing up the rest of the lands and selling more for development. These first 600 acres that had been sold had already been divided (they were on the northeast side of Jarvis Road). Then, continuing in the 1950s, my father and uncle began a program of dividing other portions of the ranch into two-family ownerships. The beginning tracts are what we now call the K tracts.

About this time, in the mid-fifties, Wayne Valley and John [Jack] Brooks, principals in a very successful development company called Besco, approached my father and uncle about a sale of some additional 350 acres of our tract O, which included much of the lands surrounding the two family homes. I know from listening to

David P: my father and visiting with my uncle that they were on the verge of making that sale then. My uncle died suddenly, and that shut down the whole process, and nothing more was done at that time. Eventually, in 1971, the same property was sold to Singer Housing Company, a division of the Singer Company of sewing machine fame, for residential development.

In the meantime, in the 1950s, the city of Fremont was organized. Our property became part of Fremont, with a small part in Newark. Fremont commenced master-planning the whole area, as I stated before, changing the whole land-use concept from agriculture to eventual suburban/urban uses. I felt my father and uncle, although basically agriculturalists, were good businessmen and wise enough to recognize these trends and align their business actions to suit the inevitable changes.

Burning of the Family Home

Mellon: What was your reaction, and the family reaction, to the burning of the W. D. Patterson house? Could anything have been done to delay or avoid it?

David P: My father's will stated that any of the three boys, myself, or Don, or Jack--could have the house if we would live in it and maintain it. Otherwise, my father wanted it destroyed because he was well aware of the potential problems of vandalism. This was a huge house by today's standards, a huge farm house, that had had quite a bit of years of use. It was built around 1905, so the plumbing was on its last legs, really. The roof needed repair, the wiring was the old style single-wire, rather than romex cable, and its safety was questionable. It was just, for our generation, impossible to afford to keep in repair to live in or to own. So we opted not to try and live in it. It would have been too much of a financial and physical burden for any of us.

In the meantime, while we were settling his estate, for the few months that that took, disposing of his personal things and so forth, the house was left during the evenings and time when we weren't there, and even though it was locked, it was broken into several times. Fixtures were torn off the walls leaving exposed wires. The walls were destroyed, just by wanton vandalism. Cans of paint were splattered throughout the interior. Certain wall, floor, and ceiling areas were torn out. Even bricks from the patio and fireplaces were removed, and big piles of debris left. It was an awful thing for us, who had grown up in this home, to see.

David P: So finally, we--my brother Don was in charge--arranged with the Newark Fire Department to have them use the house for fire drill practice. So the fire department used it for that purpose. They would light it, and then they would have their fellows training to put the fire out, and then they would light it again, and so forth, as I remember the story, until it was finally all burnt down.

The only attempts at preserving it would have come from anyone who could have afforded to keep that size of home, and it was way outside of our ability financially. There were people who called and said, "Can't we preserve it?" The answer was, "Well, do you have the money to do it?" The bottom line became, "No, the expense is too great." And in the meantime, the vandalism was going on. So, in my estimation, it was a godsend that it was burned down because vandalism was destroying not only the physical structure, but tearing at our feelings concerning our home.

Mellon: Was there ever any talk of tearing down the G. W. Patterson house?

David P: I don't ever remember of anything like that. It was sold to Singer in 1971, and the contractual agreement was that it would be preserved and someday it would become, hopefully, a historical building. There were other buildings in Fremont--there's one close to the hub and there's the Shinn house--which have been preserved in that way, and that was our hope, and that was our understanding with Singer. The fact that all during the years that Singer (and later Citation Homes) owned the property and they were having a dispute with the city, they maintained it, they kept a caretaker there at the property to preserve it, to make sure that it wasn't vandalized, I think points up the fact that there was no feeling that it should or would be destroyed.

Management by Eldest Son and by Trustee Committee

Mellon: When did you begin to take a role in managing the family ranching business? What had been your business relationship with Don? Had he kept you informed, and did he seek your advice about decisions?

David P: My father died in 1961, my uncle died in 1955, and my Aunt Sarah died in 1965. My father's health started deteriorating in the late 1950s, and it was pretty obvious that there had to be somebody to step in to take care of the affairs. Don was the one who stepped in to do it, again, he being the oldest son. After my father died, he worked with my Aunt Sarah, who kept the books, and eventually, because she was getting along in years, the ranch books were turned over to a CPA organization. Don ran the day-to-

David P: day ranch management himself. He talked periodically to brother Jack and myself. I don't believe he asked our opinion so much as he used us as a sounding board.

Don liked to run things his own way. He did a good job of it; he kept things running well. But he was pretty much a one-man show. The rest of us felt that this was his way of working. I attempted to get involved, and I did some small projects under his direction. For instance, we had a horse-boarding operation for a short period of time, and under his direction I did some work on that. I did a few other small jobs. But Don was in charge, and there was no question that he was in charge. That was it.

Mellon: Did you take over after Don's death?

David P: After Don died, which was in 1980, we had by that time--due to the programs of gifting of properties by my father and my uncle--we had, oh, some eighteen to twenty separate owners of undivided ownerships in some thirty-five parcels, including both ranches. These were all tenants-in-common, and they all had a right to dictate to anybody else, regardless of their percentage of ownership, what they wanted to do with any particular parcel. When Don died, we had a "rudderless ship." I immediately wrote to my cousin Sally, who was the eldest member of the Henry Patterson side of the family, and said, "We have to get together and do something."

So we got together, as trustees, because the majority ownerships were in two trusts, one administered chiefly by Sally and the other by myself and Wilcox Patterson. We formed a trustee committee to do the management. For the first time since my father's and uncle's deaths, we had agendas for meetings, and we met regularly and kept meeting minutes. The committee consisted of representatives of the major owners: Sally and Dr. Adams, her husband; an attorney [Dick Rahl] representing Marjorie Patterson, Sally's sister; Wil Patterson; and myself. We asked Jack Brooks to come in as a consultant because he had worked with the family since the early 1950s.

So we worked as a committee. I was chairman of the committee, but I was not manager per se. We were managing the property jointly. And this was a new breath of fresh air for the family because instead of one person running it pretty much, why, now it was a group action, representing the owners.

Mellon: It is said that Wayne Valley came to the Pattersons in the 1930s, with talk about land development on the ranch. What was the earliest discussion of development that you remember, with whom, and what was the outcome?

David P: Wayne Valley could not have come in the 1930s because he isn't much older than I am and he would have only been a teenager then. I think that maybe that should have been the 1950s, and that goes back to what I referred to before, around the mid-fifties, just before Uncle Henry's death, wherein Uncle Henry and my father had discussions with Wayne Valley and Jack Brooks together--they were, I believe, principals in the Besco Company at that time--about a purchase of some 350 acres of what we called Tract O. As I said earlier, this fell through because of the fact that my uncle Henry died. They had a final contract drawn up, they were on the verge of signing it, and Uncle Henry died suddenly. Otherwise, as I remember, it was a foregone conclusion; it was all worked out and ready to go.

Mellon: Have there been differences between the two branches of the family over development decisions, and if so, how have they been resolved?

David P: From what I've said about Uncle Henry and my father, they seemed to be in unison in their feelings. I think that in our generation we have a good balance in our ownership, in the fact that we have some who are very conservation-minded and want no development; then we have some who are conservationists, but very much realists too, and recognize that we need to preserve a balance between open space and development; and we have some of the younger fellows in the family who might want to see "wall-to-wall" development. But I don't think the division is between the two families. I think it's division among the various members that are owners and are representatives.

And I think it's great to have a balance. I think it would be terrible if we were all developer-minded or all conservation-minded, because, as an example, a sole position of conservation would be great if, for instance, our lands were rural, remote, with no population growth of consequence in the foreseeable future (as with our Livermore ranch range lands). But in Fremont our property is surrounded by ever-increasing urban growth, and we must yield to the needs of a population which requires places to work, to shop, to live.

The Agricultural Operation and Open-Space Uses

Mellon: Did you deal with tenant farmers on the ranch? Who were they, and what did they grow, and what kind of business arrangements did you have or do you have with them?

David P: Well, starting when my uncle and my father became older and declined in health (that would have been in late 1940s and in the 1950s) the hands-on farming that they did through their own crews

David P: gave way to renting the property out. The Livermore property was rented out to what is now the W. P. Cattle Company. Later, in the sixties, the herd of cattle were sold to them, so we are now basically just lessors in that area.

In the Fremont area the same thing happened, with a transition from the time when I was growing up, when my father and uncle managed the farming of large crops of grain, tomatoes, and peas and sugarbeets, etc. As time progressed, this property was progressively rented out to others, and now there is basically one company, the Alameda Company, that rents from us, and their main crops are cauliflower, lettuce, some cucumbers, etc. As far as the relationship with these people, it has been as part of our committee, our organization, representing the family interests with these people. The Fremont people, the Alameda Company, are on a year-to-year lease, which we renegotiate each year, and the Livermore people are on a four-year lease, which is renegotiated every four years. ##

Mellon: Is it currently the intent of the family to maintain agricultural operations on the ranch, and how extensive?

David P: Yes. There, again, we believe in a balance. Of course, in Livermore, the cattle business is progressing, even though these are tough times for cattle. Nevertheless, we have operators up there that are doing a good job and want to continue operating a cattle ranch, and will, as far as we know. If they were to drop out, we would definitely find other cattle people to operate that ranch.

As far as Fremont is concerned, when the city of Fremont started their intense program in the late 1970s to rezone the north plain of which the Patterson Ranch is part, they had some twelve or fourteen various plans presented for review, all the way from 100 percent open space to 100 percent development. We were able, through brilliant work by our consultant, Jack Brooks, to convince the city of Fremont planners to strike a happy medium wherein the property was divided into two parts, half of which would be developed—and is now under development—and the other half of which would remain in agriculture. I think we were very fortunate because many of the real estate and business people in Fremont and the pro-growth city council wanted to see everything developed, and we felt that balance was the best for the community.

So, out of that (we had eleven hundred acres by that time), approximately 450 to 500 acres will remain in agriculture for as long as we possibly can maintain it. Again, we are in Fremont, and the Fremont area--the Bay Area--is going to be eventually urban, and we can't help it, but we will hold agriculture as long as we can.

David P: I would like to point out that, in all the Patterson's property, which included lands in Livermore and Fremont, approximately two-thirds of all that property has already gone into open-space uses. Up in Livermore, the Del Valle Reservoir and park, which is some thirty-five hundred acres and was part of the Patterson lands, is open space and used for a green belt. And in Fremont are the Ardenwood Park and the Coyote Hills Parks, both of which were, at one time Patterson Ranch property. In addition, much of the Alameda Creek flood control lands with their hiking trails were also part of the Fremont Patterson Ranch.

So overall, taking the entire thirty-five hundred acres that was owned by my father and my uncle back in the 1940s before the big change occurred in the Bay Area land uses, almost two-thirds of it is going to remain in open space. Of this, as I say, about four or five hundred is in agriculture; we will keep in agriculture as long as it's possible. But I'm afraid that that part is subject to the pressures of population growth in the Bay Area.

Mellon: Were the open-space areas acquired from the Pattersons by purchase?

David P: By purchase and condemnation for the most part; but much was also by dedication.

Jack Brooks, Consultant to the Family

Mellon: What has Jack Brooks's role been in relation to the Patterson Ranch business? When did he come into the picture? What plans did he present? How did the family receive his ideas?

David P: Mr. Brooks came into the picture in the early 1950s, when the Fremont area started to change from agriculture to urban/suburban uses. He was a World War II navy engineer, started after the war in real estate, and got his contractor's license, and got into building. He started with very meager means and built himself up through the years, through his abilities. During this time he also earned a law degree and an engineering degree while he was working.

He got involved with us in the 1950s. He has worked with the family all through the years. He is presently a partner in ownership in some of our Fremont properties. He was a consultant for my father and for my uncle and for Donald. Before I got into the picture, he was a close consultant with Sally and Dr. Adams. He met with them many times at their home to discuss what was going on in Fremont, and so forth. He is no longer a developer or involved directly in the real estate business, having retired from

David P: these active businesses. He is strictly a consultant, and we still heed his advice as far as things in Fremont are concerned. He really has been almost "Mr. Fremont", in the development work that has gone on to build Fremont as it is today: housing, shopping centers, industrial complexes.

Mellon: How did you view the long lawsuit involving ranch development and the settlement process in the mid-1970s?* Did the family take a political role in influencing city decisions?

David P: No, the family took no role whatsoever. We stayed strictly out of it, and I would say that the family position would have been that we don't care, either way is fine. I think we were very fortunate that way. I, personally, don't recall any feelings. The lawsuit involved the city of Fremont versus Singer Housing Company, over development of Singer lands.

Mellon: How did the land exchange following settlement of the lawsuit work out? Was land owned by the family as a group, or were there individual plots owned by individual family members?

David P: Singer and the city of Fremont settled their court case on the basis that Singer gift to the city the G. W. Patterson homesites, with surrounding acreage, for a park--now Ardenwood Park. (Of course, we and Singer had already planned for this in their purchase contract with us.) The agreement also specified that Singer could then build a residential development on certain adjacent lands, more to the city's liking, which belonged to the Pattersons, if the Pattersons were willing to exchange with Singer, to continue the Pattersons' farming operation. The exchange lands we were to receive were much higher quality, and in addition, Singer offered in trade more acres than we were to give up. This proposal was very beneficial to us, and we proceeded to consummate the transaction.

At that time [the Singer-Fremont lawsuit was settled in 1978] the land was owned by some eighteen to twenty individual owners, owning a small percentage as tenants-in-common in many different plots. However, most of these owners were children or grandchildren of the principals, who were my father and my uncle, and these peripheral owners were still young enough so that they really didn't have any business thrust of their own. Their desires were pretty well taken care of by the older generation pointing out that this is the best way to go, and there was no problem as far as getting them to join together.

* Singer Housing Company sued the city of Fremont when, after Singer purchased Tract O of the Patterson Ranch, Fremont rezoned the northern plain area to exclude residential development. See interview with Jack Brooks in this series.

Ranch Lands for Coyote Hills Park and Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel

Mellon: Were you involved in the process by which the East Bay Park District bought land for Coyote Hills Regional Park?

David P: I wasn't, no. Again, my brother Don pretty well dominated the management process, and the rest of us because we were owners or trustees, were told about it--maybe even asked our opinion--but the answers were already made for us.

Mellon: In the Coyote Hills purchase, there was apparently disagreement over pricing. What was your view?

David P: I think that, generally speaking, the family members always felt that our property for farming was worth more than what the government agencies wanted to give. I guess I've always felt that this is a negotiating process; that any buyer comes in low and any seller wants more, and I think it's just a natural process that, when you grow up on land that you work and farm and own, you feel it's worth more than some outside concern coming in and wanting to use it and take it from you.

Mellon: Could you discuss the relationship between the Alameda County Flood Control District and the development of Patterson land?

David P: Yes. In the old days, when we were strictly in agriculture, much of our land flooded periodically. That was a real advantage for agriculture because it brought silt into the lands. It brought in new soil, but it also impeded the process of around-the-year farming.

In the old days, they only raised one crop and that would be during the drier season. As time went along, we got more and more involved in winter crops as well as summer crops and fall crops. The flooding then became a detriment rather than a plus. So when the Alameda County Flood Control Project was started, they condemned lands of ours, as well as lands of other people, to run the flood control channel to harness the Alameda Creek waters so they no longer would flood. That then brought our land out of the flood plain and made it not only better for winter crops but also, potentially, would then make it more likely to be a target for development in the future.

Family Incorporation and Professional Management

Mellon: Did the Kaiser sale play a role in the decision to incorporate? When was the decision to master plan the property made?

David P: The Kaiser transaction had nothing to do with the incorporation of the family. The incorporation of the family really was triggered in 1980 with my brother's death, when we started a family management instead of a one-person management. We recognized the fact that, with all these individual, undivided owners in many, many tracts, any one person could have a dictatorial power over everyone else, even if he only had a small percentage interest. Under tenants-in-common law, with undivided interests, even a one- or two-percent owner could say, "No, I don't want that crop planted on that property," or, "I want to do something different with it," and he had the right to do that.

We recognized that this would be disruptive. We had owners, for instance, who lived and worked nowhere near the property. As an example, one of the owners lives in Idaho. She hasn't seen the property for ten or fifteen years; really cared less about what the property is doing; and yet, because of her minority interests, she could have written a letter and said, "Don't do that to that property. Don't put that well in, don't plant that crop," and so forth. This was the way the family was. Many lived out of the area, and even though they had ownerships, they had no knowledge of the property.

We recognized that we had to do something in the way of making a viable management, so we got together, and through attorneys and a lot of work, we put together a corporate form with limited partnerships. This gave us good strong, centralized management, and it provided a legally regulated business structure that everybody could understand, including the business community. It increased the values of the properties because now we had unified management and we had unified control by majority vote, instead of by the whim of any one minority owner. We also then had the provision through the corporate form of limited liability, and continuity and orderliness of the management team.

Also, the other thing that triggered this was we did have two minority owners whose ownership in total was somewhere around two percent, and only in certain tracts, who hired the Melvin Belli law firm to disrupt the rest of the family's ownership interests and management. They were my son, Scott Patterson, and Don's youngest daughter, Eden--neither of whom had worked on or for the properties; both lived out of the area. It was an attempt to disrupt and try to squeeze more than their share from the other owners. I had to personally go to court against them, and we put them down. The court ruled in our favor and put an injunction

David P: against what they were doing. But we recognized that if one or two could do that, others out there could, too, unless we all got together. So, we did just that; we got together to provide unity.

Mellon: Are there still divisions on the board of directors?

David P: What do you mean by divisions?

Mellon: Disagreements, and—

David P: Oh, I think that we have a very good board of directors. We now have eight. We have representatives from the younger generation and my generation. We have differences of philosophy, which I think is wonderful. We have people who believe in conservation completely, and we have people who, particularly in the younger generation, are gung ho for development. I think in a board like this, we come out with a great answer because we find compromises that satisfy not everybody's hundred percent wishes, but enough so that we come out with a good end product.

I have never seen any arguments, any lost tempers. I've seen strong presentations, which I believe we all admire and take into account. I've always had the feeling, and have expressed it, that if we have a strong difference of opinion, really strong, we'll back away, and we won't just have a vote, a majority vote. But we'll back away and work to find a compromise. We'll restudy--we'll find a compromise so that everybody gives a little and nobody loses a lot, but everybody comes out with something that they can live with. That is the way it has always worked out since we began in the early 1980s.

Mellon: Has the Patterson ranching operation made any use of the Williamson Act? Has it been beneficial to their interests at all?

David P: Yes. Starting about 1965, the taxes, the property taxes, went up, up, up. And we were actually running seriously in the red. We didn't have plans for converting out of agriculture, but we knew it was going to happen eventually. Agriculture was our only business in 1969 when the act was enacted, so we put practically all of our property--Livermore and Fremont--under the Williamson Act because agriculture was what we were doing and what we expected to do for the foreseeable future. Of course, it brought our tax bills down into line so that agriculture became profitable, instead of running in the red as it had been for several years by that time.

Mellon: Were you influential in bringing Bob Buck and Leon Campbell into the running of the ranching operation? What changes, if any, have they made in the direction the corporation is taking?

David P: Our board of directors appointed a subcommittee to study the idea of bringing in a full-time staff from within the family. On that subcommittee were Dr. Adams, myself, and Stuart Engs, who is one of Dr. Adams' sons-in-law. We recognized that the properties were all going to go to the younger generation at our deaths, and we wanted to make sure that this generation in the family understood the property and would get experience in managing the property, which would someday be theirs. Also we wanted to develop a strong family management team that would gain experience in the local area, the local politics, and in the business world, too. And also would be able to handle the problems of the minority partners who, again, had ownerships through partnership-ownerships but not the knowledge of the land itself or of the local problems.

Out of that, we felt that the best people that we had in the family, and who were available, were Leon Campbell, who was one of Dr. Adams' sons-in-law, and Bob Buck, my son-in-law, who was a practicing attorney. Leon had had a number of years of experience as a professor and had proven himself to be intelligent and hard-working and a good businessman--with no experience in real estate, however. Bob Buck had proven himself through the years as a fine attorney, but again with very little experience in real estate. We also had available Wil Patterson, who had a business career; he could not devote much time to Patterson business, but he contributes as a member of our board of directors.

We determined that these people, if they were available, would carry forward the needs of the family to get the younger generation involved and knowledgeable. So I was one of those who was involved in this determination.

Current Role Overseeing Policy Decisions

Mellon: Mr. Patterson, what is your current role in the running of the ranch?

David P: My current role is as a cochairman of the board of directors, along with Dr. Adams. Our management position is one of overseeing the overall policy decisions of the people who are doing the day-to-day work--Leon Campbell, and Bob Buck, and Leon's wife Abby, who is Dr. and Mrs. Adams' daughter. We also have a part-time secretary at the office. My job, then, is really to oversee the general philosophy of management and the directions they're going, along with John. In addition, we direct our special attention to significantly large management problems that may occur from time to time.

David P: For instance, now we have before us a sizable problem that we're working on. The local improvement district that was formed by the city of Fremont to put in the major streets, the Paseo Padre Parkway extension, and the Newark Boulevard extension has resulted in an assessment against our property of several million dollars. That is a debt that we owe. We are quite concerned about the size of the debt because the Pattersons through the years have always kept the property as free and clear as they could, so that they could weather the ups and downs of the business cycle. We are concerned about funding that and paying that down to a manageable level, and are working with the board and the staff to design a financial plan to reduce this debt to manageable size.

Another item of sizable proportions that we are working on is a method of distributing, by deeds, the various properties that we are obtaining through exchanges of the ranch properties as the ranch properties are disposed of to developers. The partnership is in the process of making exchanges and as those occur, the individual owners then, as partners, obtain title to exchange properties. We would like to follow the philosophy that my uncle and my father started, back in the fifties, of then separating the ownerships to the individuals so that we don't have this mish-mash of ownership, so that each person can have his own property, in his own name. But we do want to continue the ranch management, so when the properties are dispersed we are trying to work some kind of a method of management contract or agreement, so that the ranch office--the Bob-Leon combination--will continue to manage properties even if they are no longer directly owned by the partnership and the corporation.

So these are examples of the overall types of policy problems that we as board members get involved in, but as far as the details of the day-to-day work, we don't get into those, unless--I guess it's management by exception. If something unusual that affects the well-being of the owners comes up, we will do in-depth study, review, and recommendation.

Mellon: What does the future hold for the Patterson family business operations?

David P: The future will lie in management: first in managing some five thousand acres of Livermore property, with a park in its midst, which someday will have to also, as in most California properties, go from cattle ranch range land into something of higher and more intensive uses. Second, in Fremont, a diverse management: we are in the process now of exchanging some three hundred acres with a developer for other properties, which latter properties will need management. We still have some four to five hundred acres of farm land in Fremont that will require farm management. We have some fifty-five acres zoned for shopping center and apartment development. Management is going to be required because we are in

the midst, in Fremont, of rapid development, from Union City, Newark, the Fremont area itself. We have to eventually face up to the fact that on the remaining property changes in land uses will be inevitable. Our family management team must be involved in watching trends, influencing them where they can, to preserve property uses and values.

So, in the end result, I see the Patterson Ranch management handling present properties for a number of years, and eventually then those properties that are exchanged for these--which may be warehouses or shopping centers, here and there--managing those.

TAPE GUIDE -- David Patterson

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THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

Robert Buck

Patterson Property Management, 1970s-1980s

An Interview Conducted by
Ann Lage
in 1986

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INTERVIEW HISTORY — Robert Buck

Robert Buck is one of the younger generation of Patterson family members who has taken an active role in the management of Patterson properties. As a lawyer with a background in the management of Buck family agricultural properties in Kern County, Buck was a natural advisor to his father-in-law, David Patterson, as the Patterson family began to grapple with the pressures of development and the problems of a disparate family ownership of ranch lands in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1984, when the family decided to hire family members as a professional management team, Buck's experience and previous involvement in the family business made him a logical choice. At the time of this interview, he divided his time between his law practice in Carmel, California, and the Patterson Properties office in Fremont.

In this interview, recorded on October 6, 1986, at the Patterson Properties office in Fremont, Buck discusses the incorporation of the family and the transition to professional management of ranch lands. His account reveals the subtle influences of family interrelationships and differing philosophical outlooks on decision making within the family group. It gives a clear account of the master-planning process, the marketing of ranch lands, and the role of Jack Brooks as consultant to the family.

Bob Buck reviewed the interview transcript, making minimal changes. Tapes of the interview are available in The Bancroft Library.

Ann Lage
Interviewer/Editor
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please print or write clearly)

Your full name ROBERT B. BUCK

Date of birth July 4, 1945 Place of birth Berkeley, California

Father's full name Frank H. Buck III

Birthplace San Francisco, California

Occupation Investment Counselor

Mother's full name Corinne Hellier Buck

Birthplace Virginia City, Nevada

Occupation housewife and mother

Where did you grow up ? Alamo, California

Present community Carmel, California

Education B.A. Dartmouth College 1967; J.D. Hastings

College of Law 1970

Occupation(s) Attorney

Special interests or activities _____



PFM BOARD OF DIRECTORS- Left to Right: Bob Buck, Stu Engs,
Abby Campbell, Wil Patterson, Sally Adams, Leon Campbell,
Dave Patterson.



PTLM BOARD OF DIRECTORS-Left to Right: Bob Buck, Stu Engs,
Abby Campbell, Wil Patterson, John Adams, Leon Campbell,
Dave Patterson.

I TRANSITION YEARS FOR PATTERSON PROPERTIES

[Interview 1: October 6, 1986]##

Family, Education, and Legal Training

Lage: We are going to start with some brief personal background about yourself and how you became involved with Patterson Properties.

Buck: I was born in 1945 in Berkeley and grew up in the East Bay out in Alamo. My father was, and still is, a licensed investment counselor.

Lage: When did your family move out to Alamo?

Buck: Before I was born. I was just dropped off in Berkeley but raised in Alamo. After living in Alamo and going to San Ramon High School in Danville, I went to Dartmouth College in New Hampshire and graduated from there in 1967 with a bachelor's degree, history major, cum laude, various other blue and gold ribbons, and so forth. Then I came back to the West Coast to go to law school at Hastings Law School in San Francisco.

Lage: Why Hastings?

Buck: At that point, I knew I wanted to go to law school, and since it appeared I was going to be practicing law or working with my family in California, it would behoove me to go to law school here rather than Yale or Michigan or Harvard, where I had thought about going. I was somewhat bored with school at the time so I chose Hastings because you could go to school half a day and work half a day.

##This symbol indicates that a tape or a segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes see page 198.

Buck: That's what I did for three years; I worked for various law firms part time. I worked for Joe Alioto's firm first; that was before he became mayor of San Francisco. He was an antitrust lawyer at the time. Then I worked for an Oakland law firm, part time, run by Clayton Orr. In my third year of law school, I went to work for Crosby, Heafey, Roach, and May in Oakland as a law clerk. After I took the bar and passed it in 1970, I went to work there as an attorney, an associate attorney.

Management of Buck Family Business in Kern County

Buck: I stayed there until 1974 when I left that firm, and we moved to Bakersfield because over the period from 1970 to 1974 I became more and more involved in managing the Buck family business operations in Kern County. Commuting back and forth by car and by air was just not working out, so I wound up moving to Kern County in 1974. I was in the farming business and the oil business there until 1979.

Lage: What kind of farming business was it?

Buck: We grew cotton, alfalfa, mostly row crop farming, although through a family company we also had tree crops.

Lage: Did you lease land like the Pattersons did here?

Buck: No, we farmed everything that we had directly. We started doing that in 1972. I farmed directly about a thousand acres. The family operation had about twenty-four thousand acres, I think, by the time we developed everything the family had. That was in addition to the oil business that we were running at the time.

So I stayed in Bakersfield long enough to know better. The climate is not the best, but it was an interesting place to be, and I certainly learned a lot. I did some legal work while I was there but not too much. Then in 1978 it became apparent that the Buck family was going to sell about everything it had down there, so I decided I didn't want to stay in Bakersfield. We looked around for a place to move and decided to move to Carmel. I've been in the Carmel-Pebble Beach area, since.

Lage: Are you in a law firm there?

Buck: I have a law firm in Carmel, very small and really not very active anymore because I'm not there very much now, but from '78 until '82 or so I was there quite a bit. It was a slow transition out of Kern County and into other areas.

Buck: In 1972 I got married to Leslie Patterson, the oldest daughter of David Patterson. She was an employee of the Crosby law firm when we met. We married in '72, and we have three children: Jeremy, who is now thirteen; Alex, who is ten; and Lindsay, who is eight. That about brings us up to date.

Lage: Up to the time of your involvement with managing the Patterson properties.

Buck: That was another gradual thing. Over the years, both Dave Patterson and Don Patterson would chat with me about what they were doing. One time they came down to Kern County to see what we were doing down there.

Changing City Plans for the Patterson Ranch Lands, 1979-1980

Buck: In 1979 or 1980, after I had relocated to the Monterey area, a couple of things had happened in Fremont which changed the rules.

The first thing that happened was that the city decided to do a new general plan, I think for the city as a whole, but one of the things they were going to look at was the North Plain in Fremont, which included the Patterson Ranch properties. As part of that process, various people had various agendas for that area. Some people wanted all farming forever. Some people wanted all wetlands and open space forever, and other people wanted wall-to-wall houses. Some people wanted a mix of the two. I think there could have been as many as ten or twelve different scenarios drawn up by various participants in the process. The Fremont Chamber of Commerce had their version, and the Sierra Club people had their version, and the debate went on and on and on.

But the bottom line to Don Patterson and to Dave Patterson, who were sort of running the family operation, was that the city was going to change the rules. They were going to insist that that area be developed. It was going to be master planned for that, and they probably were going to cancel the Williamson Act on the property, which could result in an immediate tax increase.*

*The Williamson Act [California Land Conservation Act, 1965] keeps taxes lower for land owners who contract with their local government to keep their land in agricultural use for at least ten years. Lands under this provision are assessed on their value for agricultural use rather than their development potential--ed.

Buck: At the time, that would have made it impossible for the Pattersons to continue holding the land because the taxes would have far exceeded the income, and at the time, the family was really what we call land poor. They had a lot of land out there, but nobody really had any cash. Of course, the family trusts and some of the major family members had cash, but they weren't favorably inclined to write a check back to the family operation.

This was a small operation. It was a very simple farm. It was all leased. The family did nothing at all active other than collect the rent check, and it grossed maybe \$100,000 a year. So on the scale of things it was a pretty small operation, fairly simple to manage. The asset base was very large, but that didn't appear anywhere on the books or in terms of income tax reports or cash flow or anything.

Anyway, the city decided to change the rules so the Pattersons sort of had to get their act together and decide to master plan their own property or participate in the process; otherwise it was going to be done for them. So they, through Don Patterson and with some of Dave Patterson's input. . .

Lage: When did Don Patterson die?

Buck: I think it was 1979 or 1980. Somewhere in that process he passed away. Dave then sort of became the family leader, and he much more actively consulted with me about what to do and how to do it after Don passed away. Before Don passed away, Dave wasn't very actively involved. Don pretty much ran everything by himself.

Land Sale to Singer Housing: Suit, Court Decision, and Settlement Agreements, 1970-1979

Lage: Now, there was the big decision made in 1974 to sell the four hundred acres to Singer Housing.

Buck: That was in 1971, I believe, because the closing of that was in 1972. That decision was made primarily because that land that was sold to Singer was not under the Williamson Act. That land was for some reason left out of the Williamson Act, and the taxes were going up, and it wasn't economic to hold that land, so a deal was made to sell that land to Singer. I can't recall the price. At any event that occurred, and the sale closed in 1972.

Lage: And then there was a lot of trouble with the city about developing that portion of the land.

Buck: Yes, after that closed there was a no-growth city council that came into power. I think that before the election of that city council, Singer had gone down to the city and gotten a building permit or a zoning approval or something to allow them to build houses out there adjacent to where the eucalyptus groves are now. I think the eucalyptus trees were always going to be put into a park. And the home was going to be put into a park. But Singer bought the whole thing, including the land that is now the park.

Singer had approval from the city, and then when the election occurred and the city council changed its mind and decided that this approval was going to be rescinded, there was Singer Housing having closed basically for cash, having had a permit, and ready to go, and all of a sudden the city council changed its mind and said they couldn't.

The president of Singer Housing at the time happened to be a fellow named Jack Brooks who the family had used before as a buyer of property. This was only the latest in a long series of sales. The family had been selling property out there for years and years and years. The first one I was aware of was '72, but long before I came along every time someone needed money or they had a buyer for something, they would sell some off.

Lage: In kind of an unplanned fashion.

Buck: Yes, it was sort of a haphazard thing, usually dictated by somebody else coming along and indicating they wanted to buy the property, or the taxes getting to the point where they exceeded the income from farming. There didn't seem to be much organization or much long-range planning in these decisions.

And you had to have the agreement of everybody to make any decisions then. I don't know how many owners they had then, probably ten or twelve, but unless everybody agreed, nobody could do anything.

Lage: Is that a standard way for a family trust to operate?

Buck: It often happens that way due to lack of planning, because when somebody dies owning a hundred acres, and in their will they split it up to three children, the three children end up with an undivided one-third interest in the hundred acres. And unless you do something else, that's the way it happens, and it happens a lot, unfortunately.

So we come up to '72, and the latest in the series of sales was this four hundred acres. Brooks, as president of Singer, decided that Singer was going to sue the city and not put up with their changing the zoning rules. He also was instrumental in getting some legislation passed in Sacramento which authorized these things called development agreements, where cities can agree with real

Buck: estate developers that certain things shall happen and certain things shall not happen, and as long as everybody performs their contract, a later city council cannot come along and change its mind.

In fact, the court decision in the Fremont case with Singer Housing was lost by the city. The court decided that because the city had already approved whatever it was that Singer had planned, they could not come along and just change their mind because there was an election and a different city council came down the road. So the city of Fremont lost the decision, state law changed, and that all wrapped up probably in '76, maybe, or '77. It took three or four years for the dust to settle.

Then the family traded with Singer, which, I think, by that time had decided it didn't like the housing business and lost a lot of money in it. Singer sold its residential construction business to a company called Citation Homes. That was basically Wayne Valley and some of his former associates.

Because of the way development was working out there and where the sewers were and where the roads were, it became obvious to Valley and Citation that the logical place for them to build housing, if they were going to do so, was not at the south end of that open space along the Nimitz Freeway near the eucalyptus trees, but at the north end up by the Alvarado overcrossing. So the family traded land it held by the Alvarado overcrossing in the northeast portion of the ranch for the land that Singer had originally acquired from them in 1972. So the Pattersons wound up reacquiring ownership around the park.

Lage: In land that wasn't protected by the Williamson Act?

Buck: There were some interesting maneuvers made there, fortunately for the family; the Williamson Act contract was transferred with the exchange from the land at the northeastern end of the property to the land which had never had the Williamson Act on it at the southern portion of the property. So we wound up with the acreage surrounding the eucalyptus grove and the eucalyptus grove itself as Williamson Act property, and the development began up at the northeastern corner and began to work south. That's where Citation, I think, built 1660 homes or thereabouts, north of the Deep Creek flood control channel.

Lage: Did the family get involved in all this maneuvering?

Buck: No, the family had absolutely nothing to do with any of that. Once the deal closed in 1972, they were spectators. They had no say in it at all.

Lage: Even though so much of it affected their interests?

Buck: They took no active role at all, as far as I knew. I think Don kept himself informed of what was happening, but they just continued to rent the properties that they had left and let things happen.

Lage: Jack Brooks or somebody must have been looking out for things.

Buck: Well, Jack was looking out for Singer, and later in the seventies when the trade occurred there were some logical decisions that were made and carried out by Brooks at no expense to the Pattersons. You have to keep in mind that at no time during those years were the Pattersons spending any money on future planning or on future development of their property. First of all, they didn't have any cash. Second of all, they didn't have support of the family for doing that because that involved real estate development activity, which was not popular among most of the family members. They wanted to be farmers, not real estate developers.

But certain things did occur, mostly road planning, sewer planning, capacity planning, water planning. Jack Brooks did most of those things, I think pretty much on his own account. He talked to David, and he talked to Don, and just went ahead and did them. There was no formal understanding at all, but if those things had not occurred during those intervening years this project that you see out here now probably would not have been possible. You might not have had adequate sewer capacity, or street capacity, or water supply.

Lage: But Brooks wasn't retained by the family at that time?

Buck: Not then, not until--actually it was probably late 1980 before a formal agreement was reached with Brooks.

Lage: He was planning ahead.

Buck: He planned ahead, and he did it, I don't suppose, out of altruism but he was actively involved in the area as a developer, and I think clearly he saw what was going to happen out there in the future. I think because of the long tradition of cooperation between Brooks and the family--he had bought a lot of land from the family over many, many years, and he worked well with Don and other family members--I think he just felt that it was something he needed to do, and if he hadn't done it nobody would have. That's pretty clear to me.

So that would bring us up to 1979 now, when Fremont came along and decided to master plan this area.

Lage: I had asked if you had any knowledge of William or Henry Patterson, but I see you came along well after their deaths.

Buck: No, I didn't even know the Pattersons until 1971. The old William Patterson house was gone by then; even my wife has very little knowledge of them. She remembers her grandfather, but she was very small when he died.

Lage: Did the family, do you know, have much interest in saving the George Washington Patterson house? They sold it to Singer Housing.

Buck: I don't think there was a lot of interest on the family's part in preserving that house, at least from what I could tell. I think that was the Henry Patterson home, and they may have been more interested on the Henry Patterson side of the family than on William's side of the family. With Dave's family and Don, it never seemed to be a big issue.

Lage: But the house wasn't owned only by the Henry Patterson family?

Buck: No, it was owned by everybody together. I can't tell you just what percentage because those weren't constant across the property. You had different tracts owned by different people in different percentages, and there was no unity among any group or any tract. It was different in nearly every one. How that happened I don't know, except, I guess, when they laid the land out years ago they would follow creeks and natural gullies and tree lines and whatever, and you would wind up with tract X owned by four people, and then tract Y next to it with six acres would be owned by eight people. It was a real hodgepodge. But the old Henry house that is now preserved was owned by everyone together, I think.

II THE MASTER-PLANNING PROCESS

Consulting Agreement with Jack Brooks

Lage: Let's get into the master-planning aspect. You said that the city was going to master plan the area. What made the family get more active?

Buck: Well, they were scared because it would appear that if the Williamson Act got cancelled, they couldn't afford to hold the land at all, and of course, if the city master planned it for open space, that would have a big financial effect on the family. So that concerned some family members. Other family members were concerned because they did not want to see any development and wanted to stay in farming forever.

So the family got quite agitated. Don, I believe, began the process with Brooks by asking Jack to take a more active role on the family's behalf to protect its interests through this master-planning process. An agreement was signed, I believe, in December of 1980 after Don passed away, between Brooks and the family. It took months and months and months to negotiate. It had to be signed by each and every family member who had an ownership interest in the property.

Lage: This was simply a contract to have him as an advisor and master planner? Did it commit the family to anything?

Buck: The deal was really pretty simple, but it took about eighteen months to negotiate because you had so many people to deal with, so many people who either hadn't been following what was happening and thought it wasn't necessary or had been and were concerned about small and large problems that they saw in the deal. Although I wasn't active in negotiating it, I remember being asked by Dave in particular, frequently, to give him my input as to what I thought should be done.

Buck: But the deal with Brooks was really pretty straightforward. He would do the planning work for the family, represent the family with all the city agencies that were involved, see to it that an environmental impact report got performed, do the site planning that was necessary so that you would have not just a general plan for the area but a precise development plan for the property that could be followed in the future. It would have a development agreement attached to it so that the city politics wouldn't cause a change.

He was going to advance all the hard-dollar costs out of his own pocket for doing that--a fairly expensive piece of work, with the environmental impact report, traffic studies, other consultants, and so forth. You are looking at several hundred thousand dollars, which the family could not, and/or would not, advance. So Brooks said he would put that money up, and the family would pay it back under different scenarios--either out of sales, if there were any, or if there weren't any sales there was a provision as to how he would be paid and when, over quite a long period of time.

He also was to be compensated by being given a fee in the amount of five percent of any sales that occurred. If there weren't any sales, he wasn't going to get paid. So that was the deal in essence.

Lage: Would he present alternative plans to the family?

Buck: He would consult with the family and present various alternatives, which the family could approve or disapprove. Of course, the city had the ultimate say over what the plan was going to be in any event.

The key provision in the whole contract, which took the longest to negotiate and was the hardest stumbling block, was that there was a provision inserted that if eighty-five percent of the ownership in the property agreed on something, that would carry the day as to all matters, including sales. That was a very significant departure from what you had before because before, if you didn't have 100 percent agreement on everything, nothing happened. You couldn't sell anything, you couldn't borrow any money, you couldn't develop any property, you couldn't even lease the property to a farmer without 100 percent agreement from everybody.

Lage: Maybe that's why the Pattersons stayed in farming for so long.

Buck: That's probably one of the reasons--you couldn't get everyone to agree on everything. Anyway, the only way Brooks would do this would be to have some provision for majority, or even supramajority, rule. He felt concerned at the time, as I recall, that an undivided owner with 1/2 percent interest could hold up the entire project just because he didn't like it. It might have been different if the

Buck: fellow had a valid objection, but what he was concerned about was the invalid objection or the frivolous objection from a real tiny owner, giving that one tiny owner a disproportionate say in what was going on.

I think they settled on eighty-five percent, and the deal finally got signed by everybody, and the master-planning process went forward. After Don died, they instituted a series of family meetings, which had never occurred before. The family would try to get together once in a while, usually at one family's house or another, and have a business meeting to discuss what was going on.

Lage: How many generations would get together?

Buck: Initially, it was just Dave and John or Sally Adams. I would show up. Wilcox Patterson would show up. Marjorie Patterson's lawyer would show up. Sometimes Jack Brooks would show up, and that was about it. There was no formal structure because there was no structure, no legal entity. They called them trustee meetings, so basically the trustees of the key trusts of the family would get together.

Lots and lots of decisions were made during this process. It took all of '81 and '82 to do the planning.

Family Differences Complicate Planning

Lage: Were there lines of cleavage in the family that could be identified--points of view that divided among generations or branches of the family?

Buck: At that time, I think, you had a philosophical difference between John Adams, being basically an environmentalist, and Dave Patterson, who was basically looking out for the bottom line as a businessman. So you have that division, and those two fellows were really the dominant people in the family. John Adams didn't really control anything; his wife, Sally, did, but he had a major say over what happened on the 50 percent interest that the Henry Patterson branch had. The W.D. [William] side of the family was much more splintered. There were lots and lots of people involved, with little ownerships. But Dave pretty much had his input heard on that side of the family.

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Buck: One of the things that occurred during this time was the petition to cancel the Williamson Act. It was filed with the city, prepared by attorneys that were employed by Jack Brooks, probably in 1981, maybe as early as 1980.

Lage: Now this is something, you have said, that the city was instigating.

Buck: The family had to file that petition. But the city, if we hadn't filed that petition in connection with the development plan, probably would have initiated a cancellation petition on its own account and cancelled the Williamson Act. Both parties to that contract can cancel under those old rules. It is not the case any more.

So the decision was made to go ahead and cancel, to go into a program to develop this property and sell off--I think at that time we wanted to sell it all, or at least the portion that was master planned for development. Various people in the family needed cash for liquidity purposes, estate planning purposes. As I said earlier, everybody was land poor, really, with too much raw land real estate assets in ratio to what else they had.

Legal Entanglements: Mel Belli and Family Dissidents

Buck: When that petition was filed, a couple of people in the family took exception to that. One was a young lady by the name of Eden Patterson, who was one of Don's daughters. Eden was living in a commune in Tennessee. The commune leader employed counsel in San Francisco, ostensibly for her. The Dinkelspiel office was the first to get involved, basically asking a lot of questions. The bottom line always seemed to be, "We'd like to get some money out of this property now. Yesterday would have been better than today but certainly not any longer than next week."

Of course, anything they could do to get someone to write a check for the property seemed to be paramount. The problem that Jack Brooks and others in the family had foreseen in the Brookmat consulting agreement that was signed in 1980 was coming to pass. You had a very small owner, Eden Patterson, who had, I think, maybe 1 percent or less, maybe 1 1/2 percent of the total ownership, and there were some portions of the property where she had zero ownership, and her people were saying, "Hey, you can't do this."

Lage: But you had put through the 85 percent rule in the Brooks contract.

Buck: True, but that didn't make any difference. They still felt that they were being taken advantage of. There were threats to partition the property. Despite the Brooks contract, any one of these owners could file an action to partition the property, have the court divide it up and sell it, or divide it in kind, or whatever. Anything like that, of course, messed the project up and brought everything to a screeching halt and caused major problems for everybody.

Buck: Another young fellow in the family named Scott Patterson took a similar tack, except I think he was possibly even more interested in getting money yesterday than Eden was; the motivations were similar. Scott went down and had a little chat with Mel Belli, who obviously saw a no-lose case here and decided he would take it.

The first thing Mel did was to take out an ad in the Wall Street Journal advertising the entire property for sale. That was received with great interest by the other family members because one of the ways you can sacrifice your non-dealer status when you own a lot of real estate is to do a lot of advertising for sale.

Lage: Now, explain the non-dealer status.

Buck: The dealer versus non-dealer status was a very important thing to the Pattersons back in the early 1980s. The family had been selling property over a long period of time. They had always been able to take capital gains tax treatment if they took cash for a sale of property, which was more favorable than being taxed at ordinary income tax rates. One of the ways you are able to do this, if you sell a reasonable amount of land, is to avoid becoming a dealer. The IRS always said that if your business was selling property on a regular basis, your profits from the sale of real estate would be taxable at the ordinary income tax rate, not at the capital gains rate. So under the tax laws at that time there was a big advantage to not becoming a dealer. If you became a dealer, you were out of luck.

Anybody who is in the business of selling raw land runs this risk. So we were being extremely careful at that time to maintain our "wholesale" status, to not become dealers, not to record subdivision maps, not to put up "for sale" signs, not to hire brokers, or advertise in the newspaper, or sell a lot of little parcels of land. All of those things had to be done very carefully.

Lage: Who was watching out for all that?

Buck: Dave Patterson was pretty much watching out for that, and Jack Brooks was. That was one of the things that he did as our development consultant. Marjorie's attorney was doing the same thing. It was done on an informal basis. There was nobody formally in charge of doing all this.

Anyway, Belli hits the Wall Street Journal with this great ad. Scott Patterson maybe had 1/2 of 1 percent of a few little tracts of the ranch, and he was going to sell the whole thing. Mel Belli wrote a wonderful letter to all the members of the family explaining how they were all going to get nailed by all these sharpies in Fremont, and they all better sign on with him. He would get their highest and

Buck: best price, and he would get cash right away. In fact, he had several cash buyers. All they had to do was call his office, and he would take care of everything.

The response was that Belli had jeopardized the family's entire program. Eden Patterson decided to join the bandwagon, and she signed up with Belli. Nobody else did, but everybody's confidence was shaken. This was unheard of--a Patterson family member going to see a lawyer and threatening to sue. I think Belli said that to take the property out of the Williamson Act would take a Houdini. It was impossible; it couldn't be done. It was a very ill-advised thing to do. You should not take the property out of the Williamson Act.

There was a lot of scrambling around. Dave's recommendation, Brooks's recommendation, and my recommendation at that time was to immediately go to court and get an injunction restraining Belli and his two clients from advertising the property for sale, among other reasons because they didn't own it.

We did go to court, filed a request for a restraining order in Alameda County Superior Court, and that action was successful. Belli's office was restrained. It was a rather dramatic defeat for the Belli office. They spent about a half a day in court. The family hired my old law firm, Crosby, Heafey, Roach, and May, and got in Ed Heafey, Jr., who is an excellent trial attorney and did a very good job. He really did his homework and did a wonderful job of bringing everything to court at the right time.

By one o'clock in the afternoon it was clear to Belli and his crowd--David Sabih, who was Belli's associate--that they were going to lose, bad, so they settled up. Jack Brooks agreed to buy out Scott's interest and Eden Patterson's interest, and Belli's office got the court record sealed from the public view because it was an embarrassment to them. Little things like misrepresentation and fraud and other charges were being bandied about the courtroom rather credibly, and Belli didn't want that to get in the newspapers, so part of the deal was that the record would be sealed so that inquiring reporters wouldn't pick it up.

This all didn't occur overnight. This took several months before the court date, and it took probably seventy to eighty thousand dollars in legal fees. There were also lawsuits filed to partition the property to get Eden and Scott's interests segregated out. Anyway, all the matters were settled. Scott's and Eden's interests were purchased by Brooks for a fairly small amount of money over a long period of time. Brooks offered those interests that he had acquired to anyone in the family that wanted them. Nobody did, so Brooks wound up in the Patterson Properties through the Brookmat Corporation, which is one of his entities. So that's why today you will see Brookmat as one of the limited partners in our organization.

Forming a Family Corporation

Buck: During that process with Scott and Eden and their lawyers, I remember a meeting down at Crosby's office in Oakland. We went out to lunch with Dave Patterson, and Brooks was there and one of the attorneys from Crosby's office that was working on the case. The question came up of what are we going to do in the future with these properties with this constant problem of fifteen, seventeen, twenty, and in the future, thirty, forty, fifty different owners in different places in different percentages. It created a real problem. The majority of the owners were basically hostage to any one, for whatever reason, good, bad, or otherwise. It was unfair.

So we raised those questions and discussed them, and I remember suggesting that we try to get all the owners to create some kind of a legal entity that we could operate with and manage everybody's interests on a common basis. I had a model for this, not the same structure, but the success of joint family management was not lost on me because of my experience with my family and its associates and partners in Kern County, through the Belridge Oil Company. This had been a very successful story and worked because, and only because, we had common management. If we had had undivided ownerships on the oil property, we would have never, ever succeeded. We had just closed our deal with Belridge in 1979, so the object lesson was very fresh in my mind.

So I suggested that we create some kind of a legal entity, and the fairest way that we thought of at that lunch meeting was to create a limited partnership. That way all the owners got basically the same tax benefits that they had currently, but instead of owning real estate they would own a limited partnership interest. Then we would add up all the owners and all the acres and make a ratio, and if you had ten acres out of a hundred, you got 10 percent of the limited partnership. You also would get 10 percent of the voting common stock in a corporation which would become the managing general partner of the partnership. So you had a corporation as a general partner, owned by all the landowners, or limited partners, in a ratio to their interests. If you had 50 percent, you basically controlled the corporation and controlled the family business. If you had 1 percent, you had a vote, but you couldn't dictate to 99 percent. It seemed to be the only fair way to approach the problem.

Finally, after about a year and a half, we got that accomplished.

Lage: Was that a difficult process, to get that approved?

Buck: Yes, it was difficult and very expensive. It cost maybe fifty thousand dollars in legal fees to Crosby's office and other attorneys because it was new and everybody felt they were giving something up, naturally. We had to explain this to judges, for trusts. We had to explain it to judges who ruled conservatorships. We had to explain it to lawyers and accountants and owners and wives. It was just a long, difficult, time-consuming process.

Lage: Did you have lawyers that handled it, or did you and Dave do it?

Buck: Dave and I did a lot of the work. I wasn't getting paid. I was a volunteer at that time.

Lage: And Dave also.

Buck: Yes, Dave never got paid. Crosby, Heafey's firm did a lot of the legal work when we finally got to the point where we were drafting documents and facing up to all the complicated issues that we faced in doing something like this. It wasn't as easy as I made it sound at that lunch meeting, where you could draw a chart on a piece of paper, with a circle for the corporation and a box for the limited partnership and a bunch of lines. It was very simple to look at, but not easy to implement.

So Heafey's office did most of the legal work, and the family joined together and paid them. Finally, we got the structure accomplished, and we got nearly everybody in the partnership. Marjorie Patterson didn't join at first because she just couldn't make up her mind, and then she went into a conservatorship, and we had a lot of problems with that. That dragged on until last year, before we got her in.

Lage: What would be the status of someone who didn't join the partnership?

Buck: They would be an undivided owner, and until you had everybody in you really didn't accomplish very much because you still had a situation where somebody with a minority interest had a disproportionate say in what happened.

Lage: Did anyone else hold out?

Buck: Oh, we had a lot of objections from a lot of people, and a lot of support from a lot of people. Some objections were valid, and some were frivolous. Some people didn't object; they just couldn't make up their mind and didn't want to do anything. It was a long, arduous process.

Lage: How did John and Sally Adams feel about it?

Buck: They were strongly in favor of it. The lawsuits by Belli really brought home to everybody the risks they were incurring by trying to run the ranch the way they had. In a little family where everybody is friendly and everybody knows everybody else, you usually don't have these problems. But the bigger it gets, the more diffused, and the less people know each other, the more disparate everybody's needs and goals are, the more likely it is you are going to have a problem like this. Typically, it comes from the little owner, not the big owner.

Finally, we got the entities created, we got everybody signed up, and we wound up with three partnerships--one in Livermore, two in Fremont--and one corporation which ran the two Fremont partnerships, and one corporation in Livermore which ran the Livermore partnership. The reason we had so many partnerships instead of just one was that the Livermore ownerships were very different from Fremont, and we didn't want to try to deal with the thorny problems of relative value and relative ownership. We wanted to try to keep the ownership basically commensurate with what it historically had been in each place.

Then in Fremont, you had two distinct types of property: farmland north of Paseo Padre Parkway that was not zoned for development, and land south of Paseo Padre that was zoned for development and would be going into an active sales program or a development program. So we segregated those two because the values were different and the goals were different, but we had one corporation in Fremont which runs those two because the ownerships were similar on both sides of the family.

Lage: Who runs the Livermore operation?

Buck: We have a separate corporation out there, but it's run by the same people as Fremont's; it's just the ownership of stock in that corporation that is different. The management is exactly the same. The board of directors is basically the same. So that's how we wound up with the structure we have today.

Lage: What is it called? What is PFM?

Buck: PFM is the name of the corporate general partner in Fremont. Then we have PTLM, which is the corporate general partner in Livermore.

Lage: Do these all mean something?

Buck: I don't know. I think PFM was someone's idea of abbreviating Patterson and Fremont [Patterson Fremont Management], but that's one decision I didn't have to make. Dave and some of the lawyers cooked that one up, I think. Then we had Patbrook, which is the development partnership in Fremont. I guess that was because of Brooks's name,

Buck: and he was the consultant on that. Then we have Patag, which, obviously, is agricultural property in Fremont. Then we have Patliv, which is the Livermore one.

We got all that accomplished by late '83, when we had everybody except Marjorie signed up. Marjorie initially couldn't make up her mind, and then she had some real problems and went into a conservatorship, which is another story entirely.

Lage: Does that mean that her attorney made up her mind for her?

Buck: No, it meant that nobody could make up her mind for her at all, because she was under a temporary conservatorship, and it was a contested conservatorship, and we really didn't get her into the partnership until 1985. In the meantime, everything that was done had to be approved by the court. If Patbrook did X, you had to get the court in Palm Springs to approve X, case by case.

Lage: So you had to justify everything as a good business decision?

Buck: Over opposition from her counsel, in some cases. Some of the opposition was not really justified, but that's just how the game was being played at the time because it was a contested conservatorship. It was very expensive and very time-consuming to the family, again the kind of thing that would have been avoided if we had had the limited partnership earlier. But everybody in the family had to dig in their pockets and pay, including Marjorie. It cost Marjorie a fortune, and she had to pay her own attorney's fees, as well as Sally's attorney's fees because Sally was the temporary conservator. It was ridiculous. And I was going to Palm Springs every six weeks. It was crazy.

Philosophical Objective: To Continue the Farming Operation

Buck: By '83, the development process was complete. We had a planned district approved, EIR [environmental impact report] approved, development agreement in place. Everything was set up for a sales program, so then we began to go into the current mode, which is selling and/or developing properties. We decided to hold a lot of land, and we've sold some.

Lage: How about the decision that the family wouldn't sell off all the land?

Buck: That was made by the new board of directors. After we got these entities created, we elected people to the board of directors, and the board would meet much as the family had informally met before, and decisions would be arrived at by majority vote. We now had minutes for the board meetings, and all. Once we got into the '81,

Buck: '82, '83 era, some minutes were kept. Of course, when the entities were created, we had a lot of minutes documenting what happened, whereas before there wasn't any record at all.

Lage: Except the one you are creating now.

Buck: Let's hope it's accurate. Let me make one more comment about these entities. At least the way I looked at it, and I think most of the people in the family shared my view, the entities gave the family the option to either manage the properties to the best advantage themselves, or to hire help, or a combination of the two. But they had a structure that could manage the property. Without that, they were going to get nowhere, and they would lose a lot of money, as well as their philosophical objectives.

Lage: Was there a philosophical objective within the family?

Buck: Yes, there is. I think a large measure of the family believes that the family should stay in the farming business. They felt it very strongly.

Lage: At this time also?

Buck: I think the family would like to see the farming operation continue. How viable it is over the long term I don't know. I would say that I would be real surprised to see an active farming presence other than just a caretaking operation beyond another ten years. They will always farm out there to take care of the ground, but as far as having an economic farm operation that makes money, makes a profit, and survives on its own, I don't think it can be done.

The acreage is shrinking, the cities are not going to be interested in pursuing it anymore. Union City has already told us that if they have a chance they are going to cancel the Williamson Act for us on the forty acres that are north of the flood control channel. The handwriting is on the wall whether the family likes it or not. Then the choice becomes, if you want to farm, where should you farm and how much do you want to pay for the privilege of doing so? But certainly without a management entity, you don't have a prayer of continuing in the farming business.

Lage: There is the land the park district owns that is being farmed.

Buck: Some of that is being farmed on a lease basis.

Lage: How much of Patterson family land is being farmed now?

Buck: There are about 400 acres left in farming now. And the Alamedas lease that, or, basically, we give it to them, and they use it. We're not getting any rental income from it. That's how bad the farming

- Buck: operation is. We get zero rent; in fact, we are subsidizing them. I think this year we are giving them probably twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars to keep them around.
- Lage: It is interesting that the family has this strong commitment to continue farming. Is it partly to save this land for better things later?
- Buck: I think if you asked that question to different people in the family, they would give you different reasons for it. A lot of people in the family are interested in preserving open space and green belt areas, and they are interested in farming as an ideal.
- Lage: Is this the older generation?
- Buck: Mostly the older folks. There are some younger folks who are in the farming business and feel very strongly about it, too. How that is going to be affected by reality as we move along here remains to be seen, because it is going to become, in my opinion, unrealistic to try to farm out here eventually.
- Lage: Things are closing in.
- Buck: Yes. It is going to happen inevitably, and I am afraid it is going to happen out here mostly because of the decisions that were made by the family before to sell what they sold and develop what they developed. They've developed the best farming land. They've put the farmer on to the secondary land. Water quality is not as good. Soil quality is marginal. So that has made it even more difficult for a fairly marginal operation to survive.
- Lage: So if the master planning had been done at an earlier stage--?
- Buck: Well, if the master plan had been done differently, with a farming orientation to it, I think you might have had a more viable farming operation. But the plan was not done that way. It was done for a lot of other reasons, mostly having to do with where the streets could be, where the sewer was, where the water was, and with very little attention paid to what the best farm land was. Economically, that was the only thing to do. It was a smart decision, economically, in terms of land value, but that decision certainly had its adverse impact on the farm.

The Master Plan: Residential, High-Tech Park, Open Space, and Urban Reserve

- Lage: Can you talk further about the outcome of the master-planning process?

Buck: Oh, yes. I haven't explained the master plan. [See town development plan, p. 399]

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The master plan divided the property into about five different areas. One was residential, in various villages, mixed-type residential of varying densities, some single family, some condominiums, some duplex-type townhouses. Another area was called the town center, which is a commercial area. Third would be the high technology research and development park, which was very much in vogue in the early eighties, and everybody wanted it. It looked wonderful and had nice trees and all that.

Lage: Something the city would want?

Buck: The city loved that, yes. That was incorporated in the master plan. The high-tech area was basically in the southwestern ends of the property, down toward the Dumbarton Bridge-Thorton Avenue interchange area.

The other two areas were open space because down at the lowest, western-most levels of the ranch, adjacent to the Coyote Hills park, there was some land that, as part of the planned district process, was set aside as permanent open space. The family basically worked out a deal to sell the development rights for that property to the city, and they have a receivable for that, and the property stays in open space.

Lage: Now, how does that arrangement work? The family was recompensed for the fact that the city put that land into open space?

Buck: Yes. The city said that the family could receive compensation for that dedication by allowing the city to take the hypothetical residential density for that property and reallocate it elsewhere in the city. The method by which you get paid is a little complex. The city will not pay you for those density rights. When a developer says, "I want to increase my density over here on Stevenson Blvd from eight units an acre to sixteen," he has to pay the city, normally, what they call an amenity fee. Basically, he has to buy the density from the city. They exhort a contribution from the developer in order to get the higher density to compensate the city for providing the extra services.

Lage: Sometimes it's a contribution of a park.

Buck: Yes, sometimes it's a park contribution. In Fremont, frequently it is an amenity-dollar calculation, which is based on a certain multiple of the park dedication fee. What it amounted to was that the Pattersons got \$16,000 a unit for the hypothetical density that could have been built maybe someday on that open-space land. It totals \$2.4 million. Over a period of time, other developers can pay

- Buck: us, instead of paying the city for increased density rights on their property. So gradually we are selling those off. It will take a while.
- Lage: Is that an unusual arrangement?
- Buck: It's a very novel concept. The density transfer concept has been tried in a lot of areas, and it hasn't worked very well because it is so complex and difficult to administer and figure out. Everybody feels his ox is being gored more than the next fellow's. As far as I know, at least out here in the West, it hasn't been done very successfully, particularly on an interjurisdiction basis. The Coastal Commission has tried to do this a lot, but they found that while they could make it work well within the coastal zone, they were trying to put units of density from the coastal zone out to someplace in a cow pasture, and it just didn't work.

Anyway, within the city of Fremont it seems to work, and that's how we did the open space.

- Lage: Was that open space suitable for development?
- Buck: No, not really. It's too low; it really has a lot of wetlands problems. You'd have to fill it extensively, almost prohibitively. The cost of filling down there would be very high.
- Lage: Is the open space going to be used for farming, or is it just empty land?
- Buck: Some of it is farmable. We are hoping to reclaim some of it, but it is not very good land for farming. There is a lot of saltwater intrusion. Seasonally, it is marshy. You can go down there and see--you don't really need to be a farmer to tell what is going on. When they have a cauliflower crop, the heights of the plants just tail off as you go further west, until pretty soon a whole season's growth on a cauliflower plant will be about six inches, because the land quality is tailing off.

So it is land that really had no other viable use to the family. Some of it may be reclaimed with some of the ground water work that we are doing, but it is pretty tough.

The last area is called urban reserve, and that's the lands north of Paseo Padre Parkway that are not low and are not brackish, basically between Paseo Padre and the Alameda Creek, the area where the farm headquarters is down to the park and north to the Creek. That's called urban reserve. The city has reserved in their master plan, I think, 1400 units of residential density over there, and 100 acres for high-technology park. That's subject to change, of course; high technology is overbuilt and in oversupply, so who knows what will happen to that. But sooner or later the city is going to want

Buck: to see that developed. The pressure to develop that in the future will be pretty strong. In the meantime, we are farming it. That area is owned by the Patag partnership.

Lage: So that is farm land only for the present.

Buck: It will stay in farm land for the time being, one way or the other; if we have to send one of the family people out there with a tractor, we will still farm it. You really have to do that. You can't just let it go to weeds.

Lage: But the Alamedas are farming that now?

Buck: Right.

Marketing the Ranch Lands: Sales to Kaiser and Ardenwood Development Associates##

Lage: Let's discuss the decision to sell to Kaiser and Ardenwood Developers.

Buck: After the master plan was completed and we had our family board, the marketing program was very low key. Jack Brooks just basically let people know that this land was available. Residential at that time in 1983-'84 was really slow--high interest rates, poor market for housing, very few building starts. It didn't look like a particularly good time to be going into the residential development business. Remember, the family now was wholesaling only. They were not going to subdivide anything, not going to sell lots, not going to build streets, because we were concerned about becoming dealers, and the family did not have the expertise or the desire, at that time, to take a more active role. There were a lot of ways they could have avoided being a dealer without just saying we are going to wholesale things out, but at the time, the family wasn't ready for that.

In this development, one of the things that was required to make it fly and make it work was off-site improvements, which are major things like streets, water lines, sewer lines, underground utility lines, railroad overcrossings, freeway overcrossings, freeway on-ramps, none of which was there. All we had in 1983 was a nice map with a lot of nice lines on it, and if you went out to the ranch, there was no evidence of it at all.

So all of that had to be built, and it had to be paid for by somebody. The way they decided to do that was to form local improvement districts, two of them. Local improvement districts are local assessment districts which are formed by landowners in an area, who join together and agree to have their land taxed to pay for these

Buck: improvements. The city sells municipal bonds and takes the money and pays for the improvements, and then the landowners pay those bonds off over twenty or twenty-five years.

Lage: In this case, was it all Patterson land?

Buck: Mostly Patterson lands. There were a few little landowners in there in district 25. District 27 was, I think, 100 percent Patterson.

Various companies looked at buying the property. There was Hewlett Packard, some other computer companies. Chevron Land and Development Company looked at it. Shapell Industries looked at it; Citation looked at some of it. Some of those reached the point of offers, some of them didn't. Chevron was, I think, prepared to pay \$80,000 an acre for the whole thing, cash.

Kaiser came along and said, "We will buy the high-technology portion only" for, I think, about \$100,000 an acre. That seemed to be acceptable to the family.

##

Buck: It was a pretty good deal. It was higher than any other bid, it was all cash, or delayed exchange. Under the tax rules at that time, you could take a long time to exchange; that was before the 1984 tax reform. We signed that deal up in June of '83 and closed it in February of '84.

We formed local improvement district 25. One of the big benefits of doing the Kaiser transaction that way was that it got most of the major off-site improvements in, through the local improvement district. The assessments would be shared by all the other land owners, principally Kaiser, and the Bridges piece. The Pattersons would be responsible for about 15 per cent of the total, through their ownership of the Town Center and two neighborhoods in village 3. The engineers' reports for those off-site improvements came to about \$45 million dollars, so you are looking at a major obligation in terms of off-site work, all of which had to be done before you could do any of the residential sales, really, before you could do anything with the Town Center.

It was a good deal for the Pattersons. It's easy to second-guess that decision. A lot of people in the family have come along and said that the family sold too cheap, or shouldn't have done it, but all things considered, it wasn't that bad a deal, and it did get the off-sites in, which turned out to cost close to \$53 million before we were through, and that's certainly something the Pattersons couldn't afford.

Lage: I thought it was paid for through revenue bonds, and then it was paid back through taxes.

Buck: It is paid by assessments on the property. When you get your property tax bill now, for the Town Center it amounts to \$15,000 or \$20,000 in regular property taxes; even with Kaiser's portion, you would be looking at \$500,000 or \$600,000 a year in bond amortization for the improvements. So the family was not in a position to carry assessments on the whole thing.

Of course, if they had done that, if all of this organization and all of this work had been done years ago, and they had gotten themselves in a real estate company position, that could have been done on the basis of the Pattersons paying for those assessments and doing the local improvement district themselves, and they would have sold the property for an awful lot more money. But they were not in that position. Kaiser, at least theoretically, was. It turned out they weren't either. [laughter]

So anyway, they closed that deal. That decision was motivated primarily by the need for liquidity of the Pattersons. They wanted cash.

Lage: And this cash was kept within the corporation?

Buck: No. The way the Patbrook partnership works, the proceeds of sales are basically divided up in accordance with each partner's undivided interests and then distributed out of the partnership so that each owner can take his money and go away with it. From time to time, in various places, we do the same thing with exchange properties. We distribute those out.

So the family eventually ends up with their own things in their own little family groups. They can stay together if they want. That option is always there, but if they want to take their marbles and go away, they can do that too. Particularly the cash proceeds. Except for cash that we need to retain for the Town Center development, or to amortize these bonds in the Town Center, until we can get something built, surplus cash proceeds are distributed to partners.

Then, about the same time, during '84, we negotiated an eight-year option program on all the residential property, with the exception of the Town Center area, the apartments in that area, to Ed deSilva and Jack Brooks. They call themselves Ardenwood Development Associates, and they had the right, beginning in 1984 and over the next eight years, to take down at least \$2 1/2 million worth of property per year. As long as they do that, and they pay all LID [local improvement district] 27 assessments, they have the right to acquire all that property over an eight-year period. They have far exceeded that goal. Total value of that property comes to about \$30 or \$32 million, and they are almost two-thirds through that, I think.

Lage: So the housing market has picked up?

Buck: The housing market in the last year and a half has been very good, so they are just going like crazy out there.

The same considerations apply there. The Pattersons approached it from a wholesale basis. Brooks and deSilva basically are middle men. They are building some finished units for their own account, and some of the Pattersons are going to exchange into some of those units. But basically they are middle men. They do the development work. They buy the property from us in a chunk. They do a subdivision and record final maps. Then they sell individual lots or groups of lots to builders, who then go down and get a building permit and build a house.

Lage: Do they sell many individual lots?

Buck: The builders that they have taken money from so far are all buying groups of lots. They are big builders, like Kaufman & Broad, Citation Homes, and Standard Pacific, and other major residential builders taking up big chunks of lots. Brooks and deSilva will make a hefty profit by turning that property around and reselling it.

Lage: Why didn't the family do that themselves?

Buck: Three reasons: lack of expertise, number one; concern about becoming dealers, number two, although that concern could have been handled; and number three, an unwillingness to take the risk that's involved. One of the reasons they didn't want to do that, is that, in order to do the residential development, they would have had to participate in the other local improvement district, number 27. The costs of the improvements that are necessary for that district run more than \$2 a foot. Well, that's more than \$80,000 an acre. You have two choices: either do it through the LID and pay the bonds, or you pay that in cash.

One of the things that sold the family on doing this thing with Brooks and deSilva was that Brooks and deSilva said, "We will do this project without selling bonds in the improvement district. We will pay for all the off-site improvements as we go, in cash." We are guaranteed that that will occur because the city won't give anybody a building permit until the assessments are paid. So we formed the district, the assessments were levied, but they are being paid off in cash as they go, so that buyers are getting lots, fully improved, with no assessments against them. And if there is a default in the option process--say we went along with the option program for three years and Brooks and deSilva had bought a third of the property and developed it and we had two-thirds left, we would not be sitting there with two-thirds of that acreage subject to huge assessments, which, historically, the family felt that it would not be in a position to pay. They didn't want to lose the rest of the property if the residential building program either failed, or deSilva and Brooks

Buck: went broke, or the housing market went down the tubes and they had to sit for five or six or seven years. This way they could still land bank, or hold the property indefinitely and farm it.

Lage: So this was a more conservative approach.

Buck: It was the most conservative approach possible.

Lage: Was this discussed in the board of directors' meetings?

Buck: Oh, yes.

Lage: Different options were discussed, and this was the one decided on?

Buck: This was the one that was decided on. And, again, there has been a lot of second guessing about whether this was the smartest thing to do or not. The family gave up a lot of profit opportunity, but they also avoided an awful lot of risk. In this very early stage in their management, I don't think they were ready to assume a more active role. Years from now, if the same scenario occurs, I think they will have a lot more options because they've got a structure, they've got some management, and by that time they will have people who will hopefully know what they are doing. Then they will have more viable options to consider. These other options were there as options, but short of hiring some expert to come down and run the business for them, I don't see that there was anybody in the family at the time that was capable of doing that.

Lage: When was this decision made?

Buck: It would have been '84. It was after we had the structure, but we really didn't have any management.

III CURRENT MANAGEMENT OF PATTERSON PROPERTIES

Need for Professional Management

Lage: When were you hired to manage the family business?

Buck: I was active in selling this whole thing from '82 on. I don't think anybody ever wrote me a check until the spring of '84.

Lage: How did the family feel about actually paying some of its members to take on this responsibility?

Buck: They didn't like it at all.

Lage: Did they not see it as a professional undertaking?

Buck: No, families are funny. I've had the same problem with my family. For all the work that I did down there in Kern County for Belridge Oil Company, I never got paid a dime. Not one dime. That turned out to be a mammoth project and very successful. But families don't like to pay family members. It's a funny approach; they don't seem to mind paying some outside person lots of money, but if you are a member of the family, I guess you are not supposed to work for a fee.

One of the themes I harped on all the way through this thing was that once we got to the point where there was professional management--if it is going to be me, or anybody--we have to pay for what people are doing. So finally they have done that, not without a lot of groaning and meaning, by the way. You should see these minutes--the howls of how much it's costing. That's the nature of families.

Lage: Are they assessed for that, or do you have enough money from selling the properties that the corporation has retained?

Buck: PFM charges a management fee, now, to the various limited partnership groups for whatever it is that it is doing. And that money comes from the partnership to the corporation, and the corporation pays salaries to the people that are here. We have an approved budget every year, and it's all gone over quite carefully.

Lage: Was there a deliberate decision to get someone from each branch of the family?

Buck: I don't know that that was a deliberate decision. I know that I took the initiative originally to go beyond John and Sally and get some of the younger members of their family involved because there was a real lack of available family people to do anything, and I was not in a position to do it all myself. I couldn't afford to take that much time because I still had a lot of Buck family responsibility and always will. That's a much larger responsibility for me than this is. And it's going to get worse before it ever gets better.

Lage: Have you been involved in the Marin County controversy?*

Buck: Yes, I have been for the last year and a half, and that's going to go on forever, and I have all the rest of the Buck family to deal with. You see, that is just a part of what the Buck family has, so eventually I can't stay here and do this as much as I have. But the professional management was something that I really instigated, and it has worked out really well.

Lage: How is the management responsibility divided between you and the Campbells?

Buck: It is sort of an informal working arrangement. We don't really have a hierarchy here. There are certain things that I do because of my experience and background and knowledge--financial analysis, a lot of the accounting structure, and making sure the financial statements say what they want. I sort of supervise that. I do all the legal work, and I pretty much handle the hefty negotiations and the overall negotiating strategies.

Leon does some of that and has been learning rapidly, amazingly rapidly, this wonderful business that we are in. He helps me on all of these things and does a lot of the day-to-day legwork that has to be done to analyze problems, like "should you stay in the Williamson Act or not." That really involves getting a lot of information together and studying it before making a decision. So he's here more than I am, and he does a lot of that--the nuts and bolts things.

*The lengthy court case that decided the proper disbursement of monies left by Beryl Buck's will for charitable purposes in Marin County.

Lage: What about dealing with local governmental entities?

Buck: It depends on what it is. Sometimes we both do it. In the case of getting our office out here [on Ardenwood Blvd.], Leon has done all of that himself. I haven't had to do much there. Zoning problems, future planning problems, the planning process that is going on now in Union City, I have to get actively involved in that.

Lage: Is Jack Brooks involved with you?

Buck: No, his formal relationship with the family is kind of at an end. Informally, he helps us out with problems that come up, and he's available as a consultant. We pay him now on a case-by-case basis. If he is actively involved in a particular problem then he gets paid. He is not on the payroll.

Jack Brooks as Master Politician and Long-Range Planner

Lage: Tell me more about Jack Brooks. How would you assess his expertise in these matters of planning, dealing with cities, and so on?

Buck: He is a master at the political arena. Most of the real estate business is political. He's very good at that. He's spent years at it, and he's very well connected politically, particularly in this area and in Sacramento. He can get a lot done because of that. So he is very effective and very knowledgeable. He's been in this business for thirty or forty years as a home builder and developer, so he knows what he is doing. He's been a big help.

Lage: Is he good at long-range planning?

Buck: Very good. He is very, very good at long-range planning.

Lage: What kinds of questions should I ask when I interview him?

Buck: Probably the same ones you have asked me, basically. He was very actively involved in everything that I have told you about--all these problems with the family and the partnerships and the structure and the lawsuits. He was on the other side of the table in nearly all of those.

Lage: And probably dates further back than your involvement.

Buck: Yes. He was involved with Singer Housing and can fill in a lot of gaps in the '68 through '78 time period that I don't have any information on.

Lage: He was actually the principal negotiator, I believe, on that Singer Housing dispute with the city.

Buck: He was it. The family had nothing to do with that at all, other than peripherally. They were decisions that he was making that had an effect on the family's property; he consulted with Don on that, very clearly. And some decisions that were made did have a big effect on the family property--the sewer in particular, and roads, the Paseo Padre overcrossing over the Nimitz freeway. The decision to make sure that got in was made, I think, in the early seventies. Without that, the value of this property would not be what it is today, clearly.

Lage: I had the understanding that he actually put in the overcrossing, that the city required it for fire protection access.

Buck: Well, that's a chicken and egg problem that you ought to ask him about, because if you didn't have the overcrossing, the city probably would have master planned the property differently. So I'm not sure what comes first, the overcrossing or the master plan. Obviously, with the master plan they've got, they have to have the overcrossing because you have to have access, fire protection, ambulances, all of that. I suspect that the overcrossing was hatched by Jack, knowing that without it the master plan would not become what he wanted it to become. It would be a lower, less intensive use, which means less value.

Lage: He sounds like a real mastermind.

Buck: That's right. He is very good at long-range planning because he knows how all the pieces fit together. The same thing with the Thornton Avenue interchange at the other end of the property. If you don't have a good interchange there, good freeway access, hopefully a four-lane bridge, you are not going to have as intense development.

Ardenwood Park: Economic Considerations

Buck: The same thing with the four-lane bridge that went across the Alameda Creek. Without four lanes you have a big bottleneck there. Immediately, that affects value. The Nimitz-Decoto Road interchange was the same thing. It's a tough piece of property to work with. A typical developer comes out and looks at the Nimitz and highway 84 interchange, and says, "That's where development has got to be." Well, that's the park!

- Buck: I've had more than one developer come in here and say we are absolutely insane to have designed the property that way. It's not true, because we've just put the emphasis someplace else, but most people look at the freeway interchange and say, "That's where you build."
- Lage: Was that considered, or did the city have that land in mind so strongly for a park that you couldn't fight it?
- Buck: I think the original impetus for the park was that the first developer that took that over, Singer Housing, didn't want to pay for demolition. It would have cost them an incredible amount of money to get rid of those eucalyptus trees, so it was an economic decision first and foremost that brought the park about. I think otherwise you very likely would have seen the development at the freeway interchange where everybody says it ought to be.
- Lage: That's interesting, because in talking to the historical people—I interviewed Dr. Robert Fisher—you get the background of the development of interest in this property and all the lobbying to see it as a park. And then your analysis comes down to an economic decision because George Washington Patterson planted those eucalyptus trees.
- Buck: Well, the developer probably would have pushed to have it developed over the opposition of the historians and the environmental groups because that land, in the traditional development process, is the most visible location. Everybody wants visibility, number one, and access, number one. And you could have had both at that corner which is now a park, but one of the things that tilted the developer's decision was the cost of removing those trees. It was a very significant aspect of the decision-making process; it is neither one nor the other, but it is a very important element.
- Lage: Does the park add any value to your property now that it is master planned the way that it is?
- Buck: I don't know that that is a significant contribution. It's just one of the things that makes it attractive. It's probably not as significant as some of the more mundane things like services and access, but it has a value, particularly for the residential property. It's hard to isolate these things, but it all has to be taken as part of the whole. You couldn't have gotten the master plan that was achieved through the city processing if you didn't give the city some of the things it wanted. The city knew that it wouldn't get the master plan it wanted and the things it wanted from the Pattersons if it didn't give us a few things, like the density-right transfer. So it was a give-and-take process. It's really hard to say that the park adds so many dollars. We just wound up with what we wound up with, and the value is what it

Buck: is, based on a lot of other things, like the cost to develop the property, the off-site amenity fees, sewer costs, all those other things.

Lage: Does the family corporation own other lands and manage them too?

Buck: Well, as we sell, we are exchanging into other properties.

Lage: That must have been a decision made along the way, too.

Buck: Yes. Some people wanted to exchange because they didn't want to pay the capital gains tax. You don't, if you exchange for other real estate, so we have other lands and, mostly, other commercial properties that we are acquiring through that route, and we manage those out of this office. But they are elsewhere--San Diego, San Francisco, Carmel, Fremont. So that is one of the things that this office does.

Gradually, this office will become more of a property management company, I think, which is what it was set up for. It's just going to manage a lot of different kinds of property, instead of just the Patterson ranch.

Lage: Can you think of anything else we should cover?

Buck: [Referring to interview outline] Abby [Campbell] does the books, which I didn't tell you. You don't want to hear about my typical day. [laughter]

Lage: Well, I've seen some of it now. You are up here two days a week?

Buck: Yes, two to three. I'm not in Carmel very much anymore. Between Marin and here, I'm in the Bay Area more than I want to be.

Working to Preserve the Value of Urban Reserve Lands

Lage: Did we talk enough about the relationships with the cities? That has come in during our discussion.

Buck: Yes, I have alluded to it. I think the most significant thing we are doing now, in addition to the day-to-day management problems, is trying to make sure that the value of the 400-odd acres that the family still owns and keeps in agriculture is preserved. That requires active, long-range thinking now. Development is a long way off, we think, but it could come up sooner than we expect.

##

Buck: The Ardenwood Villages have gone much, much faster than expected. Less than two years, and they are really almost through. The same can happen across the road with the Patag property. Whether it stays in farming or not is really immaterial. There are a lot of things we have to do now to make sure that those properties don't lose their future potential.

Lage: How would they lose their future potential?

Buck: They could become wetlands, for one. They could go back to a state--or not necessarily back to, but into, because they have been farmed for so many years that who knows what state they were originally in--but some of this property could become saltwater marshes if we don't take the right steps to control the effect of what the park is doing downstream, for instance. They have all these demonstration marshes and all these duck ponds and everything, which is wonderful from an environmental standpoint, but they are backing up the water. The water is backing up and coming into our farm ground, turning it into a saltwater marsh.

That means two things to us: one, you can't farm it anymore, which is bad; and two, if and when we are required to develop that property, by political reality and the realities of the agricultural economy, we won't be able to, if it's a saltwater marsh. So there is a value there to the future members of the family that would be lost by poor decision making today.

Lage: Are you working with the park district on that?

Buck: We're working with the park district to make sure we don't have those kinds of problems.

Lage: How cooperative are they?

Buck: Surprisingly cooperative. They take a little nudge once in a while, but they realize that what we are saying is that they are damaging our property and they are going to take its value away. Unless they want to pay us for it, they can't do it.

Lage: You do have legal rights, then.

Buck: Oh yes, but if you just sit there, it is going to happen. One day you will wake up, and your land will not be what you thought it was, and then it's much tougher to put back. Some of these things are irreversible. You can wind up with property that is subject to the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers, for example.

Lage: Do you think they were wetlands at one time? This whole area was something of a wetland before the flood control project, I guess.

Buck: It's really hard to say. That's a difficult definition to come up with. Originally, these were all alluvial flood plains from the Niles Canyon, and they formed seasonally like they did from the Tigris and Euphrates rivers or the Egyptian delta. They flooded every winter, and you would go out after the flood waters had gone away and plant crops and do wonderfully.

So originally that's what all this area was, but no longer, because you have the flood-control ponds upstream and all the recharge ponds, and there is no longer an alluvial situation out here. So it is really hard to say what they were once. What we are concerned about is--if we don't do the right things today, not just with salt-water intrusion, but with streets and control of traffic, sewer capacity, the water system, what Union City does with its vacant land to the north of us, what Newark does to the south of us, what our neighbors do with shopping centers--all of those things have a big impact on what the family owns.

That's where we mess with the cities so much. That requires a lot of imagination and long-range planning. That's kind of fun; it's a lot more fun than deciding if the farmer is going to plant corn or tomatoes. [laughter]

Lage: Let's end with that thought.

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THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

Leon G. Campbell, Jr.

Balancing Agriculture and Development,
Family and Public Interests

An Interview Conducted by
Ann Lage
in 1986



LEON CAMPBELL

1985

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INTERVIEW HISTORY — Leon G. Campbell

Leon Campbell brings to this interview the practical outlook of one who, as executive vice-president of Patterson Properties, is involved in day-to-day planning and management of the Patterson real estate holdings. At the same time, as former professor of history at the University of California, Riverside, he brings the historian's cast of mind to his observations of the past, present, and future of the Patterson ranch properties on Fremont's Northern Plain.

Mr. Campbell is the son-in-law of Sally and John Adams and husband of Abigail Adams Campbell, whose interviews appear elsewhere in this volume of Patterson family oral histories. He was instrumental in working with Dr. Knox Mellon to place the George Washington Patterson home on the National Registry of Historic Places, and he was involved from the beginning in conceiving of, planning, and seeking funding for the oral history project. In addition to participating in this interview, he has written the introduction to this series.

His remarks in the following interview focus on management decisions and master planning. In particular, he discusses the problems of maintaining agriculture in the midst of housing and industrial development and describes the process of coordinating the family's planning efforts with the three surrounding cities and other public agencies whose actions have an impact on Patterson properties.

The interview was conducted on September 24, 1986, in the Patterson Properties office in Fremont, California. Mr. Campbell reviewed the transcript with care, elaborating on and clarifying his recorded comments. Tapes of the interview session are available at The Bancroft Library.

Ann Lage
Interviewer/Editor
Project Director

September, 1988
The Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please print or write clearly)

Your full name LEON G. CAMPBELL JR.

Date of birth MAY 8, 1938 Place of birth LOS ANGELES, CA.

Father's full name DR. LEON G. CAMPBELL

Birthplace ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

Occupation M.D. - HEART SPECIALIST

Mother's full name MARGARET FLAHERTY

Birthplace PHILADELPHIA, PA

Occupation HOUSEWIFE, NURSE

Where did you grow up? PASADENA, CA.

Present community WOODSIDE, CA.
(1960) (1965)

Education STANFORD UNIVERSITY AB, MA

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA PHD (1970)

Occupation(s) PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (1970-86)
ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY (1986-); VISITING SCHOLAR, STANFORD
UNIVERSITY (1982-); EXECUTIVE V.P., PATTERSON PROPERTIES (1985-

Special interests or activities Latin American history

I CAREER BEFORE PFM, INC.

Family Background and Education

[Date of Interview: September 24, 1986] ##

Lage: Let's start with a little brief personal background--where you were born and raised.

Campbell: Surely, Ann. I was born in Los Angeles, California, on May 8, 1938. My grandparents had emigrated out to Pasadena from Minnesota. My grandfather had come over from Scotland, and the family had farmed in Minnesota. My father was a doctor, a heart specialist in Pasadena. He had gone to school at Stanford and Johns Hopkins, and my mother had been a nurse in Baltimore, and they had met in medical school. I grew up in Pasadena, attended schools there, went to Stanford. I received my graduate degrees ending up with a Ph.D. in history, which I took in 1970 after completing military service. Really, I think my education emerged out of a lifelong interest in history, with a specific interest in Latin America. My father was very involved as an agriculturalist himself in a joint venture with the DiGiorgio Fruit Company. I did labor negotiations that required my knowledge of Spanish. From there, I went down to the University of Mexico and became very interested in Latin America.

Lage: When did the labor negotiations take place?

Campbell: This was in the 1950s. The bracero program was in effect then. Those were contract workers, and I worked for my dad in arranging labor contracts and other details. That required a knowledge of Spanish, and so I took lots of Spanish at Stanford and at the University of Mexico. I traveled widely, and ultimately went back and took a master's and a Ph.D.

This symbol indicates that a tape or segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes, see page 238.

Teaching History at UC Riverside and Stanford

Campbell: In 1970, after having lived in Latin America and written my dissertation, I came back and took a job at the University of California, Riverside, one of two UC jobs that year that were available.

Lage: Those were tight times for historians.

Campbell: Those were very tight times! And I should say that in 1963 Abby and I were married.* Her father, as you know, is a neurosurgeon at UC San Francisco, and so we were always anxious to come back and are very involved with the University of California as a family.

Lage: Your background is similar to the Pattersons--the Scottish background, the agricultural...

Campbell: Yes, there is some of that, I think. Sort of inadvertent. I guess we didn't realize the similarities as we went along. Certainly, the UC ties, traveling down in Latin America, living in Peru and Spain, doing work there and here which was very concerned with land, all contributed. Although I wasn't really doing anything in terms of agricultural history per se, we were living in areas that were agrarian and I learned a lot about farming economics. I was interested in that.

At UC I started off as assistant professor, step one, and by 1976 I had gone to full professor. I was chairman of the Department of History for four years and I was dean in the Division of Undergraduate Studies there at Riverside. So I really was totally dedicated to an academic career at that point. And neither one of us, I should say, Abby or I, were even remotely involved with the ranch. Abby, as you know, visited frequently with her parents and spent a good bit of time there. In fact, my only association with the ranch was when I was in graduate school at Stanford and we stored all of our furniture over there in a barn and neglected to cover it. This was when we first went off to Latin America. What we didn't know was that the barn was inhabited by bats which severely "depreciated" our furniture and left it really a mess. We came back a year later, and we were appalled at what had gone on. So we did know the ranch, its buildings, Abby's grandmother, and that sort of thing. Abby, of course, was very familiar, having grown up there.

* Abigail Adams Campbell is the granddaughter of Henry Patterson and the daughter of John and Sally Patterson Adams. See page 378 for interview with Abigail Adams.

Campbell: I stayed with the University of California just until recently; in 1982, we first came up to northern California on my sabbatical after I had left the chairmanship. I came up as a visiting scholar at the Center for Latin American Studies at Stanford. During that year, 1982-1983, we became somewhat familiar with things that had gone on at the ranch when Bob Buck briefed us, although I was writing and we weren't intimately associated with it. However, we began to attend board meetings and soon got up to speed. Then in 1984 I returned to Riverside to teach. That is, we stayed up here, our kids were in school here, and I began to commute to UC Riverside. During that year I would be down there for three or four days and up here on the weekends, so we became more intimately acquainted with what was happening at the ranch and began to participate as decisions were made. The board indicated its desire to open a Patterson Properties business office to plan and manage its real estate, and it wished to have family management. I think by this time everyone realized it was already a large and somewhat complicated operation and that it needed direct supervision. In 1985 I began to come over here to Fremont one or two days a week, still maintaining my visiting scholar position at Stanford and continuing research. Then in June of 1985, I began to work more nearly full-time at the Patterson Properties office as did Abby, Bob, and Wil. We had four phones (all ringing) and no secretary! It was an experience, a "start up!"

We set up this office. Then in June of 1986, I resigned from UC and was rehired as an adjunct professor of history at UC and retained my title over at Stanford. But I'm really here at Patterson in a full-time capacity now. You can't be in this business on a part-time basis; it changes too fast.

Lage: But you still have a link to the academic world?

Campbell: There's a link to UC and Stanford, which I would like to maintain.

Lage: Will you be teaching any courses as adjunct professor?

Campbell: I'm not teaching any at present but that possibility exists. They would like me to teach. I continue to guide the projects of graduate students who are in the pipeline taking master's and Ph.D.s. UC has me on a consultantship basis where they bring me down now and then for short courses and things of that sort. When I'm in southern California I give talks on my research, and I still maintain a speaking schedule at professional meetings around the country. I'm still active in my research, but my production is, of course, much slower.

Beginning Involvement with the Patterson Properties

Lage: Now maybe we can talk about why you decided to make the switch.

Campbell: I think it was an organic process; it sort of evolved. First we began to attend board meetings, I think as early as 1983, and we realized that lots of responsibility had been shouldered by the family, and it was getting to be a burden. They couldn't be everywhere, dealing with Kaiser, the city of Fremont, the farmers, the park people, developers, engineers, etc. The board is composed of Patterson family members who are professionals, have careers of their own, families of their own; some are retired. The decision had to be reached reasonably shortly as to what the Pattersons were going to do with the remaining lands, and how they could keep control rather than give this over to others. That's one problem. The other was how actively they were going to manage and supervise the property which they had exchanged into and select other properties as productive investments.

So it was sort of a natural process, I think, since Abby and I were here and Bob Buck was spending a great deal of time here, too, that the three of us would begin to take over those responsibilities. We did it on a part-time basis for over a year, and then it became clear that unless the remaining lands were going to be sold immediately or management was turned over to an outside organization, we were the logical choice. The farming venture, for example, was in transition and needed help to return to viability.

After the sales to Kaiser for the technology park and the option agreement with Ardenwood Development Associates were executed in 1985, there was considerable remaining land in Fremont and Livermore. I think the family then determined that what they really wanted, in a positive sense, was hands-on family management, to retain the properties for the long-term and to plan the future, since it was both an ongoing responsibility and an opportunity.

II PATTERSON FAMILY BUSINESS BEFORE 1980

Henry and William Patterson: Commitment to Agriculture

Lage: We should go back and try to get some of your impressions of the earlier events.

Campbell: The Patterson family business prior to 1980 was agriculture. My knowledge of Henry and William is secondary. That is, I'm only partially familiar with Henry, who died before I met Abby. I did know Sarah Patterson only slightly when Abby and I were engaged, and we spent some time down at the ranch.

I think their commitment to continuing the agricultural operation was very strong. This you can see from the ranch itself. What's interesting, I think, was how these families remained intimately associated with the East Bay. The Henry Patterson family moved to Piedmont for the schools. They always had a very strong East Bay orientation; the family was always connected to the ranch. Fremont really was remote in those days. It was not in the immediate postwar growth path which was developing around Oakland and, of course, San Francisco. So it was very rural here well after San Jose had developed, and life continued on much as it had years before. The Nimitz Freeway did link up the East Bay some before Highway 680 was built. But Fremont remained an agricultural area and the Pattersons continued on in agriculture as they had from the 1850s, the time of George Patterson. That's remarkable continuity--well over a century of farming.

Lage: And the Pattersons kept that going much longer than a lot of other families.

Campbell: They did, for a long time, even as other farming interests went out of operation. The first lands developed were over on the east side of the freeway in Fremont proper. But in this northern plain, the Pattersons retained the land in farming, giving over some to form the Coyote Hills Regional Park. I can't think of

Campbell: any other large agricultural operations here that remained in being up until the 1950s and 1960s. So that's unique, and I think that speaks to their commitment to agriculture and to the land itself.

As for Henry and William, as I understand it, there was a division of labor. Henry operated the ranches. And William carried out the task—and a very important task—of dealing with the municipalities. The city of Fremont was growing and beginning to encroach on the ranch. The water district, and the Alameda County Flood Control District, those kinds of issues were really very, very important. So the ranch wasn't just accidentally preserved; I think Henry and William had a lot to do with that.

Donald Patterson and the Postwar Period

Campbell: After their deaths Donald took over. I did not know Donald either, but I think there was a very direct sense of Donald succeeding Henry and William's stewardship. His long association with the ranch is an important period in the ranch's history.

Lage: Right, and it seems to be a period that we don't know much about.

Campbell: I don't know much directly, but I think it's a very important part, and some of the persons whom you're interviewing can fill you in. It's during that postwar period that the future of the north plain area took shape as the East Bay developed and people moved to the Bay Area as jobs were created.

Lage: It's a key period.

Campbell: It's a key period because there was a tremendous housing boom going on, particularly in San Jose and the Silicon Valley. I guess what's remarkable to me as a newcomer is how the Patterson Ranch avoided becoming swallowed up at that point. I would think that the lack of direct access via 880 and the new Dumbarton Bridge helped. These bridges really make the "Bay Area" a reality. There were land sales, but the emphasis in that period was on dedications and condemnations. I mean the breakup of the Patterson Ranch in the period prior to 1980 stems more from the creation of the Coyote Hills Regional Park than land sales. These acquisitions in turn laid the groundwork for the creation of the Ardenwood Regional Preserve, since they allowed urban planning within an open space environment. The planning for Ardenwood Forest New Town probably began with Donald, I think, and Jack Brooks.

Lage: The Coyote Hills dedication is interesting, as I look through some of these newspaper clippings I've told you about [the Grace Williamson and local history collections, Fremont Public Library]. It seemed to be quite controversial. Of course, the family's side is not in these newspapers, but it was apparently the first East Bay Regional Park that had to be obtained by eminent domain. So there was some unwillingness on the part of the family to have it dedicated, or at least there was disagreement about price.

Campbell: That's something that I'm not really capable of commenting on. It never came up in any discussions. I think it's a source of pride today. Eminent domain is something that all large owners face, and it's regarded as a loss of livelihood. The Pattersons have faced it both in Fremont and in Livermore, and have deeded over not only Coyote Hills but Del Valle Regional Park. Today we maintain a cordial relationship with the East Bay Regional Park District [EBRPD] and know the directors of the district. We understand their objectives and they understand ours. Obviously, park districts have to be in the forefront of acquiring land, perhaps in advance of the population base to support them. The controversies may have had to do with the uses and boundaries of the park. After all, parks are public and farmers are private people. I would think those differences of viewpoint would probably be somewhat natural.

Today we're intimately familiar with the need for preservation of wetlands and shoreline. But back in the 1950s, if you stop to think about it, those issues really weren't as apparent to owners or to municipalities as they are today. So a lot of it, I think, is a matter of understanding. We're very supportive of what the East Bay [Regional Park District] has done over in Coyote Hills, but preservation of agriculture also means protection of farmland. We still have to insure that the land and water are not harmed either from development or experimentation. We monitor water levels and water quality, since they affect crop yields a great deal.

The Alameda County Flood Control District Decisions

Lage: The other thing that struck me, in terms of this more distant past, is that it was the flood control district that made development possible on the northern plain. The flooding had actually promoted agriculture and enriched the soil. The flood control allowed development, and of course, William was president of the Alameda County Flood Control District. I wondered if you would know, although this may be much too much before your time, if he did that with foresight?

Campbell: If it was a conscious foresight? It's really hard to tell what was conscious foresight and what was done as preservation of agricultural lands. I think to some degree you're right. Flooding promoted certain types of agriculture. On the other hand, flooding precluded other more rational types of agriculture: two-cropping, winter and spring cropping of land. So it may have been an agricultural decision which ultimately allowed for other successive land uses. I doubt this was a primary motive, though. It was just sound conservation practice.

It seems that the lettuce and cauliflower operations tended to be the most profitable and logical for this area. It led to the long-term tenancy of the L. S. Williams Company.*

Lage: So it could have been an agricultural decision as well as thinking of development.**

Campbell: Yes, my guess is that agriculture would be paramount because I don't think, in the long run, one could have foreseen the kind of development that is taking place out here today. That would have been the ultimate in foresight. Land and water quality were their biggest concerns. I think, on the other hand, Donald Patterson certainly began to anticipate residential growth early on as the Nimitz Freeway linked up the East Bay. But I think, really, farmers tend to do things to preserve their land. That's their major concern. Certainly the owners didn't have the wherewithal to support those things such as flood control. Those were bond issues that counties were interested in passing. I think Alameda County was beginning to function as a county and look at the East Bay in general terms. County governments which, because of growth, focused on areas such as Hayward and Oakland began to think of Fremont, think of Livermore, think of the outlying areas. Local water districts acted, and transportation authorities. So it turns out to have been very foresighted. It has permitted growth. But I don't believe that was the primary reason. I think it was the preservation of agriculture.

I would just back up and say one thing. The flood control district and the water district decisions clearly, to my mind, as an historian, are pivotal because the hydro-geology of the North Plain is really crucial, even today. It is bay-front land. It's excellent land, but you have potential saltwater intrusion all along the bay as increased pumping takes place. And you have policies being carried out now by flood control districts setting levels and creating salinity barriers and so forth, all of which

* See interview with Gene Williams in this series.

** See 1955 interview with W. D. Patterson in appendix D to volume II of this series.

Campbell: affects our water quality, often in unforeseen ways, i.e., by forcing some saline water through the shale eastward in response to the recharging of fresh water aquifer. William and Henry did see early on that water was the key issue in maintaining agriculture, so I think all of that is consistent with preserving the farm.

William and certainly Donald later began to spend more and more of their time interacting with municipal agencies. The postwar really was a crucial period. It used to be, I think, that farmers sort of lived and let live. But the fact that they preserved the property really is a tribute to their successes with dealing with agencies and individuals since not until the 1970s, as I understand it, did the city concern itself with agricultural preservation and planning on this scale.

The Singer Housing Sale

Lage: In the seventies, it seems that the sale to Singer Housing was the first big sale of Patterson land. Is that correct?

Campbell: Yes.

Lage: Are you familiar with that?

Campbell: I'm not really familiar with that. Only to provide some background, I believe that there was not a conscious decision at that point to sell land for development. I think, again, that many of the Patterson land sales were primarily motivated by tax considerations so that sales were carried out as a means of preserving the balance of the property in agriculture.

Lage: And some of it was land exchanges?

Campbell: There were land exchanges that took place, primarily since 1984.

Lage: Did the family exchange for other agricultural land?

Campbell: Yes. The family exchanged back into agricultural land in Oregon and perhaps California. I'm really not sure about the extent of this. The first lands sold were located south of Jarvis Boulevard. Remember that Highway 84 wasn't in, Jarvis Boulevard was the only access to the West Bay, so it was natural that that land was developed first.

Lage: I'm thinking of a different land exchange, though. This was reported in the newspaper, and you never know how accurate it is. I read that part of the payment for the property that the Pattersons sold to Singer was in other lands in northern California and Oregon.

Campbell: Yes. They bought cattle and agricultural property at least in Oregon. It may have been that some of the family did trade for other agricultural land also. The commitment to farming and cattle raising has continued.

Lage: I wondered if those were agricultural lands that the family considered continuing to farm.

Campbell: That's quite interesting. Some of the family does raise cattle in Oregon today; this could be the same property.

We've been consistent in making exchanges for, among other things, tax purposes, but also because the family now has property management capacity. We manage several properties for numerous Patterson family members.

Lage: That sale to Singer turned out to be controversial, or the subsequent development that Singer Housing planned for it. There were a lot of political ins and outs. Was the family active in that, do you know?

Campbell: I think Donald Patterson--and to back up a little bit, there's no doubt that Donald Patterson took over the management of the ranch following the deaths of Henry and William. So Don's memoirs at the Pioneer Society might speak to that. I think the controversial aspect probably comes, again, from the fact that in 1972 it was probably one of the larger developments in this rural area. It has to do, I guess, with the natural assumption of planning responsibilities on Fremont's part, looking at these developments, taking more of an active role in that. Cities began to take these duties on. Other than that, I don't know much about it. I do know, however, that the land sold to Singer was not in the Williamson Act, and the tax situation required a sale. Prop. 13 had not passed yet.

Lage: At any rate, it was resolved. It did involve the house [the George Washington Patterson home, now preserved as part of the Ardenwood Regional Preserve], and maybe that's an important thing to look at. The house was sold along with the other acreage.

Campbell: Yes, it did involve the house. The one thing I would reiterate is I think it was always the Patterson family's desire to have the house preserved and turned over to the public in some capacity. (I heard they had negotiated with the Boy Scouts of America and perhaps other groups.) The only question was how could that be financed. Because the city of Fremont, and I suppose even East Bay Park District at certain times didn't have the wherewithal to bring it back for public use. And you know, it was in a very dilapidated state following Henry and Sarah Patterson's deaths. The provision in William Patterson's will

Campbell: was to burn his house.* He didn't want it standing as long as it couldn't be maintained. Fortunately, the George Washington Patterson house was preserved.

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Lage: There was no sense of not wanting the house open to the public in the case of William Patterson?

Campbell: I don't know. The matter of preservation, planned developments--the kinds of, oh, Irvine Ranch solutions--or planned developments in general which included significant historic preservation, they were relatively rare in the 1950s. I think, again, what you see today in the Ardenwood Historic Preserve is the result of certainly ten years of planning. They began with the house. The idea was how do you protect the house, how do you protect the eucalyptus groves? There was a provision for that in the Singer contract. So the family and Jack Brooks understood, and I'm sure the city of Fremont understood right away the value of protecting the grove and the home. The only question was 1) who had the capacity, and 2) who should bear the costs, which seemed significant and were significant. This is how the master plan evolved around 1980.

As time went on, it became clear that the farming operation was also unique and that some of it should be put into a preserve. The question was how to do it; I suppose Singer and Brooks had some ideas on how to do it originally, but the logical resolution was to have it go to the city and East Bay Regional Park District in some sort of a partnership.

Lage: So this was something you see the family as having a positive interest in?

Campbell: Oh, yes, definitely. In fact, I can recall the discussions ongoing when I was teaching in the East, as to how can we best do this. How can we assure the preservation of the house because a great deal of money has had to go into the restoration of that house. I think initially the city contributed the salary of a full-time guard. Taking it from that step to what you see today, landscaped, rehabilitated internally, the decent program--that took a lot of community spirit by service clubs, the chamber of commerce, the family, etc. Everyone wanted to do it; the question was, who had the capacity to do it?

* The William Patterson house was burned down after his death in 1961, in accordance with a provision in his will that it must be destroyed if none of his sons wanted to live in it.

Campbell: In my mind, the most creative element of the development itself is that it began with the inclusion of a great deal of open space. I'm not sure my data are correct, but if one takes into account all of the Patterson lands that are now under the auspices of East Bay Regional Park District, it may amount to about a tenth of their total holdings. If it's true, it's quite a contribution.

Lage: Counting Del Valle?

Campbell: Counting Del Valle. So I think it's unquestionable that the Patterson family had a concept of open space and farming and then acknowledged some development consistent with that concept.

Lage: When we say "Patterson family" we talk about it as a unit, but was that actually the case? You had how many owners before you formed the corporation?

Campbell: Yes, I think that certainly Donald Patterson took the lead and all that, but I know there was regular contact between Donald and the Adamses and Donald and his brothers. So I do think there was certainly informal agreement as to what should be done.

Lage: Kind of an informal network of consultation?

Campbell: Yes, I think they were all agreed on at least these goals. I don't believe there's any dispute at all about that as a goal. It's just that Donald was the business manager, which was traditional for the oldest son, but I think the family was certainly in agreement on it, even though some of them were in more secondary roles because they had their own businesses and their own professions.

Lage: There wouldn't have been a formal means of coming to decisions at that point, would there?

Campbell: I think they had a number of meetings at their residences, but things were done more informally then. I've gone back to our early minutes. They met on a regular basis, and certainly consulted by telephone.

Lage: This would be prior to 1980?

Campbell: Yes. It seems to me from the sixties on there was a lot of that.

Lage: Some might want to disagree with you.

Campbell: There's no doubt that the paramount fact is that Don ran things. That was very consistent with farm families where the oldest son was put in charge. I don't think there's any question of that, based on what I know.

Lage: Several people have brought that up.

Campbell: Yes.

Lage: It was a matter of the oldest son and that he was the one in charge.

Campbell: Someone had to do it. That's still true today. The fact is that these families acknowledged that the older son would do these things, and he in turn was prepared to do this job. They left him alone to do it.

Lage: And he did it without any payment, I understand?

Campbell: Yes, that's right, as has David Patterson subsequently. I think we in this office owe them a tremendous debt for all the work that they did. They ran the ranch and ran their own businesses. And did well by us. Families who abdicate this responsibility usually regret it later.

III PFM, INC.: PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT OF PATTERSON PROPERTIES

The Need for Incorporation

- Lage: Shall we look at that decision to form a family corporation and master plan the property? You've mentioned that to me as being kind of a key turning point. Were you involved in that?
- Campbell: Abby and I were not directly involved. Patterson Fremont Management was incorporated in 1983. PFM is the corporate general partner which runs the Fremont properties owned by several limited partnerships, as well as the properties that we've traded into subsequently as the results of exchanges, and handles all the other general business. Another corporation, PTLM, operates the Livermore ranch.
- Lage: And they are family corporations?
- Campbell: Yes. That came about, in my understanding, once it became clear that there was a management and development potential. I think essentially demographics indicated that there was going to be tremendous pressure for development out here, which is apparent today. As long as the ranch was in undivided ownership it meant that it was very difficult for the family to make decisions. With the death of Don, it moved past the ability of one individual to make all of those long-range plans on behalf of everyone else. No one person would want such responsibility. By that time you had several families, trusts, you had life income beneficiaries, you had people like ourselves, and then grandchildren--remainder men and women. It became very complicated, and there were legal issues. So the corporation was formed as a means of orchestrating concerted family planning. There had been some evidence of disorganization earlier.
- Lage: Within the family?

Campbell: Within the family. There were certain individuals with different interests who particularly wanted to sell their interests, which would have forced everyone to sell if they had been successful. So at that point PFM was capitalized and undivided ownership interests in land were exchanged for stock in the various partnerships. This took a while to accomplish, to explain why such a move was prudent. So everyone then was placed in a position where they controlled a pro rata share of a larger stock corporation. It meant that everybody voted their percentage interests and observed a set of by-laws, and you went back to majority rule. That was significant because it took the burden off family members who were having to operate on behalf of a lot of persons whom they couldn't contact daily or who didn't understand all that was taking place. A board of directors from the family was set up early in 1984 to jointly establish policy, and a staff was formed to implement these actions.

Lage: Was that a decision that was accepted without much opposition? It seems like a logical way to go.

Campbell: I think it was. As I say, there have been no indications of any departure from that idea once it was put into place. Again, it's very clear that decisions had to be made, but unless you're close to a rapidly changing situation like this one, you might not see the need for decisions and planning. As far as the partnerships which we manage, and we're in contact with all of the various partners through our quarterly newsletters and financial reports, the kinds of input we're getting is that they're very happy with the organization we have developed. Organization saves you money and protects your assets in the long run.

Lage: How many members are there now?

Campbell: Well, let's see. We have about twenty-five limited partners today. We have an eight-person board, which represents the various ownerships in the property.

Lage: It includes all the active owners, are you saying, or the representatives?

Campbell: All of the various ownerships are represented on that board through family representation; that is, one son of the William Patterson side of the family might sit on the board as a representative for his siblings and so forth.

Lage: Is it assumed that the William Pattersons have a certain point of view and the Henry Pattersons another?

Campbell: I think, historically, they probably had. I'm not sure it was always opposite, just separate. I'm sure you know independent farm families have very different points of view beyond their

Campbell: agreement on land use. Some board members as trustees favor development more than do others who are strong environmentalists. But today I think those points of view are beginning to conform. There's a coincidence of interests today. That really stems from better information flow, regular meetings, a full-time business organization which can get together with the various owners and let them know what's happening out here. That isn't to say that there is complete unanimity of opinion on the board. I don't think there is, and I wouldn't expect it. There are very divergent interests as to whether sales should be undertaken, what sort of uses the property ought to be put to...

Lage: Does it break down along family lines? I think that would be kind of interesting if the views down into the second and third generations still reflected the two branches of the family.

Campbell: I would say not. I used to think that it did, but once you have equivalent representation on the board, I think that, on the continuum from, say, development to perpetual open space, you find representation in every family for both of those positions. I don't believe it's generational either. People just have their own opinions on where these uses should intersect or balance off. What's interesting, though, is that virtually all of our board votes are unanimous. There's a great deal of discussion and give-and-take prior to a vote, but the votes themselves tend to be unanimous, and we go on to the next matter. Again, you debate matters of principle and policy, but oftentimes it gets back to the question of feasibility, like in the preservation of the house. The Patterson board can make all the decisions it wants, but we have to remember at the same time that the city councils of Fremont and Union City and Newark and the Association of Bay Area Governments, and the Army Corps of Engineers, environmental groups, the farm tenants, all these different agencies have their own agendas. So we're really part of a larger scheme, and one of the jobs of this office is to try and accommodate those various interests, to find some common ground on which they can agree.

Master Planning and the Sales of Land

Lage: Is there a particular decision that we could explore that would show these things you've talked about in the abstract--not only how a decision within the family is made, but how it's related to the feasibility issue?

Campbell: Well, I think the two major decisions to date that the family has undertaken was the decision to master plan the ranch, and with respect to that master planning, to sell the technology park area to Kaiser. Then, secondly, to sell off part of the residential property to Ardenwood Development Associates.

Lage: And when was that decision?

Campbell: In February of '84, the Kaiser sale was consummated, and the same year the Ardenwood Development Associate Open Agreement was signed.

Lage: This was when you were involved?

Campbell: That's when we were involved. Actually, I was elected to the board in December of '83, and we began to discuss both the Kaiser sale and the residential option agreements throughout '84. The Kaiser sale was all decided by the time I came on board; the ADA option was in the discussion stages. Those decisions were difficult to reach for the family because they represented the sale of a good bit of the property, and they also represented a clear development future. But, again, what made those decisions palatable, even to members of the family who would rather have seen the property stay the way it was, was that the deals were all cash, they produced improvement districts which added value to our remaining lands, and the development was reasonably restricted to certain parts of the ranch. In addition, a great deal of open space was preserved, and the farming operation was retained. If one takes into account the Coyote Hills and all of the property known as Tract M down the eastern slope of Coyote Hills, that acreage was dedicated as permanent open space, paid for through the assignment of saleable density rights.

Lage: Under whose ownership at that period? Still the family?

Campbell: No, that is open space under the jurisdiction of the city of Fremont. All of the property to the north and west of Paseo Padre remains in agriculture. Then the original commitment to the city to preserve the ranch house was expanded to include the preserve, the original farming operation, or about thirty-one acres in all. So I think, again, that's an example of planned development that was economically responsible but it also required developers to pay for the other amenities (streets, freeway overpasses, lighting, utilities) that would preserve the essential qualities of the ranch as a public attraction. So that was a decision that was important; both of these decisions were important.

Lage: Did you hire a master planner?

Campbell: Jack Brooks served as master planner for this project. He, at that point, met regularly with the Patterson board and he has a small limited-partnership interest in part of the remaining Patterson lands. So that the Pattersons, I would say, were well informed as to what was taking place. It was an active role of the Pattersons; they were able to plan what was going to happen.

Lage: Would it have been Jack Brooks who was the liaison to the various public agencies? The city...?

Campbell: Yes, definitely. Jack has had a long association with the East Bay--Oakland, San Leandro, Fremont. He's had something like a forty-year association with the family, knew Henry and William, worked with Donald, David, and today the entire group. So although the planning took a long time, the net result was that the city of Fremont probably began to see the possibilities of this as a model development. There weren't many big open-land plays of this sort in the Bay Area, in this area, that is, close in to the West Bay. The decision to permit the Ardenwood development was worked out, I guess, over a long period of time. The decisions were to build multi-family as well as single-family housing, cluster housing, which, we think, really meets a big need in this area, with the opening of the new Dumbarton Bridge, in about 1984.

Lage: The family was able to sort of come together, then?

Campbell: Yes, I think the family began to realize that the sale of certain parts of the property were necessary in order to protect the rest of the property to do with as they chose down the line. It bought us the time, gave us the economic capacity to hold on to the Town Center area that you're familiar with, as well as the urban reserve land to the north.

Pressures for Development in Fremont's North Plain

Lage: Was one of the alternatives just not to sell at all and to keep more agriculture in operation?

Campbell: Certainly it must have been an alternative. I wasn't associated with matters then, but I think it was an unworkable alternative. Municipalities have the right to cancel the Williamson Act which, prior to the passage of Proposition 13, was a means of keeping land in agriculture.* The city wanted this development--it provided a tax base and is an attractive addition to the city. It's changed Fremont some, I think.

* The Williamson Act [California Land Conservation Act, 1965] keeps taxes lower for land owners who contract with their local government to keep their land in agricultural use for at least ten years. Lands under this provision are assessed on the value for agricultural use rather than their development potential. Proposition 13 was the 1978 initiative measure which limited property tax in California. --Ed.

Lage: The family had used the Williamson Act, I assume?

Campbell: Yes, I think the family utilized the Williamson Act to keep farming after other farming areas were going under, but this was due more to the fact that it's good farm land. After the passage of Prop. 13, the Williamson Act has been less responsible than land quality and commodity prices for keeping land in agriculture.

The structure of farming is such that farms have to pay for themselves. Higher yields don't always result in net profit increases. This farming operation has been up and down and farm prices are now in a trough, as you know. So if the Pattersons wanted to make up deficits of their own pockets it could have remained as it had. But that's difficult to do, when you're talking about eight, nine hundred acres of farmland. What we've chosen to do is to strengthen the remaining farming operation and make it profitable.

Lage: You said that the Williamson Act could be cancelled.

Campbell: Well, the point is that since cities can cancel the Williamson Act, it's quite possible that had the family wished to keep all the land in farming, if the Patterson family had taken that position, there's some indication, I would think, that the city of Fremont would have canceled it on their own initiative, as a result of wanting to plan and develop this area. Because the area south of Jarvis Boulevard was developed, Hayward was developing, Union City was anxious to--this was the kind of area that Fremont was quite interested in. You couldn't overlook its bayfront location.

Keep in mind, too, that this was a period of high technology growth; in fact, the whole definition of Silicon Valley was expanded out of San Jose north to include the Milpitas corridor, even all the way up to Foster City, maybe not in a strict geographic sense. But the other aspect of this property is that it is located between Stanford and UC Berkeley, two of the premier research universities in the world. So its future as a research park ultimately was picked up on by Kaiser, but it was seen by a lot of people. On this whole Highway 84 corridor, if you drive down it, you'll see R and D [research and development] zoning on either side, and because it has bay proximity, proximity to the high tech entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley and Sunnyvale, and land was cheaper here, it was a natural for this sort of usage. Cities were in competition to become the next Silicon Valley.

Campbell: So I think those are the kinds of pressures that really indicated that farming of the entire region was going to be impractical. The way you protected farming was to master plan and allow for farming in certain areas. And for development to be restricted in others.

IV MAINTAINING AGRICULTURE IN AN URBAN SETTING

The Changing Market

Lage: The farming really seems like an anachronism as you look at the high technology park, the multi-residential...

Campbell: Yes, it's been difficult. We've learned a lot about how you maintain--in fact, that would probably be a good oral history project--how do you maintain a high quality agriculture amidst tremendous change.* It hasn't been easy. You look down at Irvine, and you look at Orange County. The classic example. They never could do it down there. Farming went out of operation because of commercial and population pressures; people wanted to live there, basically. Here, the farmers' problems really don't have so much to do with the surrounding development because we've controlled that. They have more to do with the farming market. So the farming operation is changing tremendously; it's changing to much more of a local, regional, specialized farming operation. But people do want to live here, close to the bay and the freeways.

Lage: You mentioned on the phone that the family is going to take an active role in agriculture.

Campbell: Well, only this--traditionally, large-scale farming has been mechanized, it's been oriented towards rapid transfer of farm produce to eastern markets, and it's been high overhead, high-technology farming. In recent years there has been a move away from that type of farming to specialized niches. Up here, for example, if you look at the labor situation--whereas in the Central Valley you have a built-in labor supply, and labor is migratory, it migrates all up and down the Central Valley from the wine country down to Bakersfield and beyond to El Centro.

* See also interviews with Mel Alameda and Gene Williams in volume I of this series.

Campbell: Up here, you don't have a stable labor pool, you have to provide labor housing in order to have large-scale farming. And labor's very expensive. This puts local farming at a disadvantage in a conventional market system. So that that, among other things, produces an inclination on the farmer's part to change to try and sell to local retail chains, market chains, to get into the specialty vegetable business, which is very hot now, to sell to restaurant chains, to market locally through fruit stands. All those things are a reorientation that would have taken place regardless of the development that's happened.

Lage: But is that what is happening?

Campbell: We're very involved now since the farming operation is in trouble and because we think that's one of the best ways to protect the farm operation. I should just stop to say that we've supported the farming operation; we've really made it possible for farming to continue up here. We built a new farm center; we built a new labor camp; we have reduced rents to zero, basically.

Lage: The labor camp is located on the ranch properties?

Campbell: Yes. We worked very closely with the farm tenants now, whereas in the past, farm tenants basically--like other tenants, sent you a check at the end of the month.

Lage: Ran the operation totally.

Campbell: Ran the operation totally. But let me emphasize again how much this property is changing. Development patterns are changing, farming's changing, and we have to be really involved in that. As long as we farm, we want to see the farming profitable and healthy.

Lage: How many acres are left now in farming? I know that there's a preserve.

Campbell: Well, yes, there's about four hundred acres in farming--I would say we're farming something under five hundred acres right now.

Lage: Does that count the East Bay Regional Park lands?

Campbell: No, the East Bay Regional Park lands are being farmed under contract, but I don't believe our people (the Alameda Company) are farming them. They're being farmed independently. We would be interested to farm those lands if they would be interested in having them extend their farming operation. I'm working on this now. So there's some chance that we might get involved in those kinds of farming contracts.

Lage: You mean including it with the Alameda Company operation?

Campbell: Yes, to see if they would be interested in expanding their operation to include the park--because East Bay is going to, eventually, have quite an extensive farming operation in the park. The Alamedas certainly know this area well. It's a matter of, I guess again, of logistics, of their ability to take on more farming. The specialty farming is very intensive, and the Alamedas have a retail farm outlet on the ranch, called Oak Grove Farm. This could give them a produce outlet at the park.

They're doing a lot of direct marketing now with market chains, and they're starting to serve the population base out here.

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[Discussion about interviewing Gene Williams, who farmed Patterson lands from the 1950s-1981.]

What Gene tells you will--I think that's really a crucial period because that's the other side of the coin, what was really happening to farming as the Pattersons were making the decisions in flood control and development. Farming, you see, I think was on a gradual downslope. Production was falling off even before development began.

Lage: Do you foresee agriculture making a comeback? It's a challenge, I would think, to fit into the urban setting.

Campbell: Well, it is a challenge, but I think it will; it's possible that farming will come back before high technology! That's the other local industry. It really is, I mean that seriously. Farmers will survive if they reorient and meet current demands. They're very sophisticated shoppers out there today; they're wanting fresh produce. Fresh produce is commanding very high prices in the markets; it's a matter of getting the right product to those people.

Lage: It's certainly talked about enough--the need for local farming, for local markets.

Campbell: It's talked about a lot. Alice Waters [owner of Chez Panisse, a highly regarded Berkeley restaurant] goes all the way down to a local operation we know in Rancho Santa Fe in San Diego County to get vegetables; others use the Webb Ranch in Portola Valley. The Chino family operation is in Rancho Santa Fe.

Lage: Yes, I know of them. Their produce is wonderful.

Campbell: You know that? All right, that's the one. That's the model that we're trying to see developed up here, something like that, because it's a splendid family-run operation and superior

- Campbell: produce. Simply by word of mouth, they command a huge market down there. And with the freeway now, you see, too, the Paseo Padre freeway means that the farm produce operation is on a thoroughfare so the people can get to them now more easily.
- Lage: The crops would be much more diversified, too.
- Campbell: Crops are diversified, yes. Yes, they're doing lots of bok choy and different kinds of lettuce, of course, cauliflower, tomatoes, two kinds of corn, white and yellow corn, beans, peppers. They're just getting into this.
- Lage: What kind of a labor pool do they have?
- Campbell: The Alamedas have agricultural operations outside of Fremont, but their laborers run from unskilled agriculturalists to skilled tractor drivers, and I really don't know all the various types. But there are skilled and unskilled labor. They're housed right on the ranch. They're seasonal, but some of the people remain year-round, maintenance people.
- Lage: The family built the living quarters?
- Campbell: The living quarters are barracks types, they're prefabs. But the family provided those and always has. Again, that's an additional expense because in most cases, in Salinas for example, you contract for labor. You just simply call up the labor organizer, whoever does it, and labor is provided on a temporary basis; it's much cheaper to do that. So there are lots of things that make farming here difficult.
- Lage: I can see that, but as you talk about the urban vegetable scene, that's the advantage of this area.
- Campbell: Yes, well, we're hopeful, we're hopeful about that. Time will tell, but the residential development provides a local market, as do commuters.

Water Problems

- Lage: You mentioned to me, when we were talking at one point, problems of saltwater intrusion. Is that a current concern?
- Campbell: It's been a concern for a long time.
- Lage: Matt Whitfield indicated that the water district had solved the problem of saltwater intrusion.

Campbell: It depends, I guess, on how you define saltwater. From a farming standpoint it has a direct effect on quality. There's lots of boron concentration here. There's a very active effort by Alameda County Flood Control to recharge the Newark aquifer up to traditional levels; 1916, I think, is the base year. There are some ambitious plans by the Bay Area Conservation District, BCDC, to develop a barrier that's going to prevent saltwater intrusion. But this recharging moves saline water into some of our wells. Nevertheless, saline intrusion's always going to be a problem here, and it has a direct impact on agricultural yields. That's just a fact of life; it has to do with the geomorphology of the bay. The farmland towards the bay is low-lying and not as productive as that out by the old ranch.

The other thing is, when you get away from water quality, water quantity's an issue. The water tables are much higher than they traditionally were. East Bay Regional Park District has a very active program of ponding, demonstration ponding, where they test the waters going into the bay for trace metals and for oils. That's a bird refuge; fish and game is active out there. Well, the ponding has impacts on farming because standing water tends to back up and create sloughs on our property. We are very actively trying to pump out this water, for slough maintenance. Because sloughs, if you leave them unattended, will grow, and they fill and erode good farmland. So we're doing that as part of protecting our farming. When you have water tables being as high as they are, it means that you can't get two crops off farmland during the year. So the whole water issue--the wetlands, what is a wetland, what's a seasonal wetland, how can we keep farming effectively, those are issues that we regularly discuss with East Bay Park District and the other people out there.

Relations with Agencies

Lage: Is the Corps of Engineers involved in that?

Campbell: Corps of Engineers hasn't been directly involved with us because we have no identified wetlands which we own. Corps of Engineers is more active, really, with some of the other owners out on the bayfront. All of these agencies, I think, have their own opinions about this land, and every development requires a full environmental impact report, so we spend a great deal of our time dealing with agencies. There is very little consensus in the wetlands area, beginning with definitions.

Lage: Sounds very complicated. Do you find that the East Bay Park District is--just take this pending issue--are they concerned with your needs, understanding of your needs?

Campbell: They're beginning to be. One of the things is that you have agencies that are very active, they have their own agendas, they own their own lands, and farmlands and absentee ownership tends to be sort of passive. Before we opened the office our general supervision of farming and water issues had been somewhat sporadic. So I think many of the things that have happened were inadvertent. If you're dealing with, say, a homeowners' association right next door, those things aren't going to happen because home owners are present, they're going to be protecting their own interests. But they've been very understanding once the Patterson agenda has been explained to them.

That's true, too, of the municipalities. Before we opened this office and were a daily presence and were known quantities here, there was a little bit of a vacuum. Brooks looked out for our interests but it's not the same as handling your own affairs. I think we're actively taking our board's wishes and translating that into action at the municipal level. So I think we're getting along--so far!

I do think there's a good bit of--good will may be the right word. There's an understanding that this is a unique area, that it has to be done right. This project has gotten very strong--strongly positive--reviews at the city level. And the Pattersons have been good for Fremont for many years. We have credibility.

Lage: That was going to be my next question--did the city actively promote retaining agriculture there? What was their attitude towards it?

Campbell: I'm not quite sure. Councils in the 1970s were more protective than their successors in the 1980s. I think the city has actively promoted the retaining of open space as part of development. I think their position on agriculture is certainly consistent with that. But their mandate really is to provide housing and jobs as well as open space, and Prop. 13 ended a lot of the municipal programs in terms of weed abatement and maintenance. That's been thrown back to the property owners. So since farming is active and does a lot of those things, they have been happy with farming. However, the issue isn't joined yet since residential activity is consistent with current demand.

V FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PATTERSON RANCH

Non-Agricultural Development

Lage: We've talked a lot about agriculture; now, what about the lands that are going to be developed? Do you still retain some of those directly, or have you sold them?

Campbell: We're retaining directly, Ann, an area called the Town Center, which is at the intersection of Ardenwood Boulevard and Paseo Padre. That is a sixty-acre parcel, fifteen acres of which are currently zoned commercially for a shopping center development. Another forty acres of residential, about 944 residential units, are presently zoned on that property. So we're concentrating on that right at this present time.

Lage: Is that going to be developed by the family?

Campbell: The family will develop that along with a development consultant in a joint venture. We're now exploring the exact structure of that venture, but we hope to be actively involved.

Lage: That's been approved, though?

Campbell: The project is approved. I mean the current zoning allows for that, and the Patterson family board has approved the concept of retaining the property; I think that's the crucial factor-- planning and maintaining it, keeping the Patterson signature on the property.

Lage: Was the approval of the zoning by the city controversial?

Campbell: No, that was part of the Ardenwood Forest general plan. That entire eight-hundred-acre parcel was approved in 1982. I think you have in your office a map which I sent you which indicates

- Campbell: the parameters of the general plan and the approved uses. Residential development requires industrial and commercial to keep alive the concept of working near where you live.*
- Lage: What about the Pattersons' lands in Livermore?
- Campbell: The Livermore lands are a different sort. Originally there were ten thousand acres or so of Livermore ranch land, that's down to about five thousand acres now. As you know, part of the Livermore ranch lands were given over to East Bay Regional Park District for the Del Valle Park, which is an aquatic park. The remaining lands are leased out to a cattle operation. They'll remain as a cattle ranch; it's a hill ranch, and the cattle business, while it's not thriving, at least it's keeping its head above water.
- Lage: Are they protected under the Williamson Act?
- Campbell: That's a good question--that land is not in Williamson, although I don't know that for sure.
- Lage: But high taxation isn't as big a problem as it was before Prop. 13?
- Campbell: That doesn't seem to be a problem. The land is removed enough from Livermore. Livermore, certainly, is in the growth path of Highway 680. Pleasanton and all of those areas represent the end of that path right now. It's in the East Bay commute-shed. I guess the pressures will begin to develop in Livermore in the next decade. But again, it's all a function of absorption of built-out areas now in Contra Costa.
- Lage: That might be your next master plan somewhere down the road.
- Campbell: Oh, gosh, I hope we resolve this one successfully first!
[laughter]
- Lage: Are there things that we need to talk further about? Things I may have missed that you thought of? One quick question, is Jack Brooks still involved?
- Campbell: Yes, he is. That is, Jack was on a consultantship basis with the family, which ended with the Kaiser sale. That was a formal arrangement between the family and Brooks. The informal arrangement, as I say, goes back forty years and still continues. We talk with him a lot about planning and issue resolution. There's no one who's better informed than he as to land-use policy in this area.

* See town development plan, p. 399.

Lage: He has the right connections, I understand.

Campbell: Well, yes, he's earned those. He has very strong connections in the city, I would say as a result of doing the kinds of developments that the city favors. There's not ever been, to my knowledge, any controversy about the quality of the developments, although some may oppose the fact of them. I'm told that this development has even received an award from the Sierra Club, which is unusual. Also, as a professional in the field, he's seen issues on the horizon which the family has only guessed at, such as the costs of our keeping the land and self-financing the improvement districts. He's emphasized planning a great deal, which has helped our own. So we emphasize planning with him, and he's saved us a good bit of agony.

Union City, Newark, and Fremont City Planning

Campbell: A great deal is going on. Unless you're familiar with decisions that are being made, unless you have a well-thought-out plan of your own, those decisions will be made in spite of you. This really means that it's our responsibility to take positions beforehand—well, let me give you a specific example. In Union City, located just to the north of Ardenwood, there's a tremendous interest in planning, in giving Union City a definition. There are Union City and Centerville, lots of little towns there. They are interested in creating, really, I would say, the same kind of planning that's gone on in Fremont. Newark is a bit more developed out, and I suspect planning has gone on there for a longer time.

The Patterson lands located north of the flood control channel come within Union City's jurisdiction, so that we feel that it's to our benefit to observe the deliberations, to be aware of all the environmental impact reports, to get an understanding of the city's philosophy. The cities can assign uses, assign densities, and those have a great deal of future effect. They affect your valuation, but they also affect your abilities as a landowner to do your own planning. The only way you can impact these studies is to be involved in the process from the beginning.

Lage: Is that part of your role?

Campbell: Part of my role is to issue Patterson position papers, to appear before planning commissions and councils, and take the board's wishes and translate those into policy. The other ownerships up here are large builders, Ponderosa Homes, Citation Builders,

Campbell: Kaiser. Most of these large plots other than ours have been taken down by large residential builders, and they're very active in the planning process, and so we have to be too.

Lage: What kinds of positions are you taking in Union City?

Campbell: Right now, the position we're taking is to try to determine what is their thinking with regards to our lands. How do they view our lands? From a wetlands perspective? Can we stay in farming or will we be put into an assessment district as well? Do they see the future of our lands in industrial? In commercial? In residential? How are they acknowledging traffic flows? How will those impact on our lands across the channel? The Town Center area? We want to make sure that, if there is a development scenario adjacent to our lands, it's a well-planned one. If it's not well planned, then we want to insure that it's going to be and that our needs are recognized in the process. So it's a little different than planning your own lands. Once a general plan has been approved in Union City, then the rules are set, environmental impact studies have been completed, and then you have lost the choice of what you want to do with your own lands. So it's really in use determination. We need to balance our wishes with theirs.

Lage: You want to be involved in this general plan.

Campbell: You have to be involved early on, and you have to know what you want since they do.

Lage: What is the quality of the people you deal with in the government in Union City and Fremont?

Campbell: I'm impressed with councils and city governments, I really am. I've not had a great deal of experience dealing with them. I think these people spend a tremendous amount of time trying to understand the needs of their community and the extensive change that's taking place. They also have a very good conception of their cities. They're beginning to understand that they have a great responsibility in creating the city of the future. There is not likely to be agreement on many issues. Change bothers people, myself included. It's got to be explained and, better yet, made apparent that there are benefits.

Lage: This is Union City in particular you're talking about?

Campbell: I think you can apply the same to Fremont and, I'm sure, to Newark, too. They have tremendous responsibilities at the municipal level which perhaps they didn't have fifteen, twenty years ago. I don't want to misunderstand city government because I've not been a part of it, but choices today are so complex for volunteers--I mean city council persons. They put in a tremendous

Campbell: amount of time, and they're not paid large sums of money. They're the penultimate volunteers, really. Fremont appears to me to have planned well; the others are trying to catch up. We've been impressed with staffs because my guess is that the whole planning process in southern Alameda County has not been as extensive as it has been elsewhere. I mean, the development crush hit earlier on, say, up the Highway 17 corridor, and in the West Bay. So Fremont has some negative examples to avoid.

Lage: Fremont seems to have put a lot of energy into planning.

Campbell: Fremont's put a tremendous amount in. If you drive through Fremont, with the hillside initiative which assures no development along the ridge line, with the city hall complex, and the space which is designated for libraries, and all civic functions being located in one area. It's the only community in this area that I can think of that has all of the qualities which will allow it to grow in an orderly way. My prediction, and remember, you heard it here first, is that Fremont is going to be the next Palo Alto; it will attract professionals, and managers will want to live and work here, because it's got the capacity to be what it wants to become. It doesn't have a lot of in-fill development that has to be altered and changed. I think it can create spaces like Ardenwood. I know that's the feeling of the city planners. To some degree we share that feeling in Ardenwood. The opportunity is still there, which can't be said for some other places.

Lage: That's true. Do you find that same quality in Union City?

Campbell: I don't know Union City as well at all. I know Union City is spending a good deal of time and money in trying to determine how it's going to fit into the general scheme of things; how it's going to look. My impression is considerable redevelopment is required in the older areas, and there's not yet any agreement on the area west of Union City Boulevard.

Lage: Aside from your formal appearances in front of boards or commissions, do you try to make informal contacts with civic leaders, councilmen?

Campbell: Try to. Yes, we have gone out and taken the initiative in getting to know councilpersons and the mayors, and the staff persons. We also have gotten to know developers, private planners, engineers. Just again, part of it was our own education. These people had been doing these things on behalf of the Patterson family for many years, and so it's taken at least a year to introduce ourselves and understand the thought processes which led up to the current situation.

A Historian Looks Ahead

Campbell: It's harder when you come on board in the middle. There's a lot of historical work to be done before you can get in a position where you really can plan for the future. You need to understand well the context first.

Lage: So you understand that?

Campbell: So I understand that part of it.

Lage: That's where the history professor comes in. [laughter]

Campbell: I understand that people really make a difference, shape events. Say you're dealing with cities, you're dealing with particular individuals who have long acquaintance with your properties. You have to sit down in the way we're sitting down today and understand just what's the whole history of the land use, where the process has been going for the recent past. Why is it shaping that way? Because once you understand that, then you can see where the process is headed and how much you can influence it. Not that everything is inevitable or inexorable, but many of the decisions have been made; it's clear that certain things are going to happen. If you want to prevent them or support them you have to know how to do so.

Lage: Do you want to give a prediction as a final word? Or is the next Palo Alto your prediction?

Campbell: My prediction is that this area (i.e., Ardenwood) will, in fifteen or twenty years, be unique because it is ideally located and because it has the planning opportunities that don't exist too many other places. There are some other unique areas in the East Bay, this whole tri-city area (Union City, Newark, Fremont) that we're dealing with here--in which Ardenwood is really the central twelve or thirteen hundred acres--I think is going to have a direct impact on the development of the greater San Francisco Bay Area. That was made possible by the expansion of the Dumbarton bridge. Work configurations today, where people cannot obtain affordable housing in the West Bay, yet the high-technology and white-collar employment that tends to concentrate in Palo Alto and San Mateo can't continue indefinitely. Gridlock will occur before 2000 if it does. I think it's inevitable that Fremont is going to be associated with that kind of situation. Ultimately some of those businesses and technologies are going to come this way and join up with the residential development which is taking place. It's got to happen; it's sensible.

Lage: So you have people living where they work?

Campbell: You have people living where they work and living in an environment that is healthy, and I think there's not lost opportunity time from commuting. Problems create preconditions for solutions. The South Bay needs another administrative/commercial headquarters, and maybe even cultural headquarters, as Palo Alto has evolved into being now. In the Palo Alto area the dominant feature has been Stanford University, of course.

Lage: That's what Fremont lacks.

Campbell: That's what Fremont lacks, a university. But, to my mind, Stanford and Berkeley are close by, and Ardenwood being situated between them has the opportunity to be what Ardenwood calls itself, and that is a new town.

Lage: Anything else you would like to add?

Campbell: Gee, I think I've talked too long already. I'll probably see the clean copy and want to retract everything.

Lage: Well, I don't think you'll want to retract. You might find areas that we didn't think of and you can add them.

Property Management and Stewardship

Campbell: I can certainly be informed on a lot of these areas. I hope I've filled in some gaps. When Knox Mellon and I conceived of the oral history project it was designed to be of use to people looking at use evolution, planning. Maybe what we see as successes now will prove shortsighted. The only thing I can think of to add is just to emphasize what we do here a little bit. We manage all of the agricultural operations and all of the Patterson properties which are not only in Fremont, but Livermore, and the investment properties. We operate several limited partnerships. The major limited partnerships are the development partnership of Patbrook, but also the agricultural partnerships, Patag and Patliv. Those are all divided down into subgroups, that is, individual groups of owners who own a property. So we manage for about twenty-five separate partners, individuals and trusts.

Lage: Now we didn't really talk about Patbrook. Is this a separate partnership?

Campbell: Patbrook refers to the Patterson lands in Fremont out of agriculture, being developed or approved for development. So Patbrook refers to the more actively managed properties, properties which we're either going to develop ourselves or which are managed as investment properties.

Lage: And Jack Brooks is a partner--?

Campbell: Well, Jack Brooks has a small interest in the Town Center project, purchased from Pattersons who wanted out. So he's a minority partner.

Lage: Then the other partnerships?

Campbell: The other partnerships are all composed of family members in different properties located throughout California.

Lage: This gets more complicated.

Campbell: It is done as a unit. Let's say we're talking about the ownership of a particular building or property. The ownership of a particular building might be held by five, six, seven or more Patterson family members including trusts. Title is held by Patbrook, and the building is managed by the corporate general partner of Patbrook which is PFM Inc., which means this office. We do more than just manage, though, since the managers are also owners. We act as owners since we are owners. Our activities are far more extensive than those of outside management.

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We talked a little bit about what we do with various municipalities, but I should emphasize that we have a very active management program of our own. As we take on the responsibilities of planning and developing some of these properties, the functions of the office will expand. Bob and I are stretched out pretty far as it is, running this big an organization.

Lage: Is there a dollar figure we can put on the corporation or is that private information?

Campbell: It would just be speculative. I think it's very hard to estimate the value of the properties because you have residential values which we could probably determine through sales prices of housing, the values of the R & D [research and development] properties, you know, you could get evaluations. But it would be speculative. The commercial property built out at present allowances probably would have a value of one hundred million dollars or so. That's a guesstimate. The value of the property has probably increased tenfold in the last ten years.

Lage: Is the increased value attributable to this kind of active management, would you say, or to general demand factors in the area?

Campbell: It would be too presumptuous to claim the former but, to take one small area, our negotiations with Kaiser have resulted in considerable savings too numerous to recount. We opposed them on several issues which, had they changed uses as proposed, would have affected the Town Center uses. Just the simple supply and demand curve has added value, but planning continues to do so. The demand for housing; the kinds of retail uses we control are the only ones in the Ardenwood area. That is, we have allowable zoning for restaurants, for hotels, a shopping center, for these sorts of uses. Who's to say how valuable they are; they're not built yet. But they're unique in the sense that many of those uses aren't allowable otherwise in this North Plain area, in this proximate area. So there's a great deal of potential to protect and to help establish, and our job, running the office, is just the stewardship, I suppose, trying to protect those future valuations. Everything we do is designed to protect the values that the family has built up over a hundred years.

Lage: It sounds as if the family's interest in agriculture and maintaining it, in the long run was very economically beneficial, whereas other families sold out long ago.

Campbell: I think that's right. The Pattersons lasted longer than most. There's no doubt about that. Not selling everything off turned out to be probably the most appropriate solution. The family will be able to do what it wants to do when it wants to do it since it can afford to wait where others can't. Because this is not a syndication, there are no tax advantages to doing something immediately; the family can really pick and choose how it wants to proceed, and that's a big advantage as well as a big responsibility. Continuous ownership for over 130 years results in that.

Lage: A lot of planning and predicting involved.

Campbell: Yes.

[end of interview]

Transcriber: Alexandra Walter
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TAPE GUIDE -- Leon Campbell

Date of Interview: September 24, 1986

tape 1, side A

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tape 1, side B

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tape 2, side A

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THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

Wilcox Patterson

Donald Patterson and Patterson Ranch Management,
1950s-1980s

An Interview Conducted by
Ann Lage
in 1987



WILCOX PATTERSON

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INTERVIEW HISTORY — Wilcox Patterson

Wilcox Patterson is the grandson of William D. Patterson and the second son of Donald Patterson. During the 1970s he worked in the savings and loan industry in Menlo Park. His interest in real estate and his close contact with his father during this time gives him insight into his father's management of the Patterson Ranch. He clearly states Donald Patterson's guiding principles in these years: "the orderly liquidation of the ranch," while protecting the interests of the ranch tenants and family members.

His interview is valuable not only for its insight into the period when Donald was managing the ranch, but also for its sympathetic portrait of his father outside the business setting. Reserved, controlled, conservative at work, he also had a wide range of interests--entomology, exploration, history--and is described by his son as an adventuresome person and a fascinating conversationalist.

Wilcox Patterson was involved after his father's death in management of the ranch properties and currently serves on the board of directors of the family corporation. His interview provides additional information on the swiftly moving events of the 1980s. After discussing the business aspects of the ranch, Wilcox gives some fond reminiscences of visiting the ranch as a youth and provides a look at his grandfather Will, his home, and the people and produce of the ranch.

The interview was begun on April 1, 1987, in the patio of Wilcox's mother's home in Menlo Park, California. His wife, Sandy, was present for this session. Technical problems caused the latter portion of this interview to be unusable, and a second session was held on May 20, 1987. This time we met in his father's upstairs office, surrounded by photos and mementoes of his father's life. The setting seemed conducive to reminiscing about Donald, for it was in this office that Wilcox and his father had held many wide-ranging discussions during the 1970s. We were able to recapitulate the lost material from the first session and add to the portrait of Donald and the boyhood memories of the ranch. Wilcox reviewed his interview transcript, making minimal changes. Tapes are on deposit in The Bancroft Library.

Ann Lage
Interviewer/Editor
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please print or write clearly)

Your full name WILCOX PATTERSON

Date of birth 1-28-41 Place of birth OAKLAND, CALIF.

Father's full name WILLIAM DONALD PATTERSON JR.

Birthplace SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

Occupation RANCHER AND INVESTOR

Mother's full name DOROTHY ELIZABETH WILCOX

Birthplace OAKLAND, CALIF.

Occupation HOUSEWIFE

Where did you grow up ? ATHERTON, CALIF.

Present community WOODSIDE, CALIF

Education BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE BUSINESS

ADMINISTRATION CHAPMAN COLLEGE ORANGE, CALIF

Occupation(s) PRIVATE INVESTOR AND INVESTMENT
MANAGER, PRESIDENT OF PACIFIC REAL
ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST

Special interests or activities ROTARY CLUB

SAILING, RUNNING, GARDENING, SWIMMING
CHAPMAN COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AND
MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENTS ASSOCIATES

I THE RANCH UNDER DONALD PATTERSON'S LEADERSHIP

Wilcox Patterson's Schooling and Career

[Date of Interview: April 1, 1987] ##

Lage: Let's start with your own personal background briefly to outline where you are in the Patterson family, where you were born, and that kind of thing.

Wilcox P.: I was born in Oakland in 1941, January 28, at Lake Merritt Hospital. My mother and dad were renting a house at that time in Berkeley. When I was about a year and a half, we moved to Palo Alto and lived on Tevis Place in Palo Alto. Then when I was around two or two and a half we moved to Glenwood Avenue in Atherton where I was really raised. We lived there up until about 1968 or so.

I went to Menlo-Atherton High School, the public high school, for three years and one year to Menlo School, a private school here in Atherton, which I enjoyed very much. I liked the small size of the private school and the stricter academic curriculum than we had in our public school.

So when selecting a college, I chose a small West Coast four-year liberal arts college. The one I chose was Chapman College in southern California, which at that time offered a very unique study program. It was a single-subject study plan where you took one course for six weeks, received five semester hours and then went on to the next course. I enjoyed it, but it worked really better in theory than in practice. The school went back to the regular semester system my sophomore year.

This symbol indicates that a tape or segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes, see page 277.

Wilcox P.: So I went four years there, majoring in business administration, getting a bachelor of arts degree in 1962. After leaving college, I went to work in the banking industry for what is now First Interstate Bank. I worked for them in southern California for about three years during which time I met and married Pamela Cranmer, a girl who was also working in the banking industry. She was from the New Jersey coast area. We lived in southern California for a couple of years, then moved here to northern California where I rented a house in Menlo Park. I was transferred up here by the bank, but I wanted to come back here because I knew that I would, and wanted to, eventually work with Dad in the family business.

We had a daughter, Stacy, who was born in late 1964 in Los Angeles. Then five years later a son, Reid, was born at Palo Alto Hospital. I stayed with United California Bank a total of five years. I was working in their Palo Alto office when I met some young fellows through the Palo Alto Junior Chamber of Commerce, which was a very active group of young people in the Palo Alto area. Two of these fellows were from a local savings and loan association, Palo Alto Savings, that was a seventy-five year-old locally owned and operated company that had literally grown up with Palo Alto.

It was a very unique company; it was small, closely held, and dealt primarily in very high quality real estate, and their lending operation was very conservative. I interviewed with them, went with them in 1968 or '69, and started as a management trainee, one of three on a training program. A year and a half later I was made the assistant manager of the Palo Alto main office. Six months later, due to some personnel changes and a merger with another company, I was elected vice-president and manager of the Menlo Park branch, which at that time was their third largest branch out of five branches.

I stayed there as manager in the Menlo Park office of what was then Palo Alto-Salinas Savings (the name was later changed to Northern California Savings) for a total of thirteen years, where I built that office into the second largest in the system. I was then promoted in early '79 to the regional vice-president for the Peninsula-Bay Area which included fourteen branches from Burlingame down to Morgan Hill. I loved the work. I worked with about a hundred and fifty young people in fourteen offices and travelled a lot among them overseeing all of the operations: the savings, the real estate lending, personnel management, budgeting, and so on.

I left the company in September of 1980 following my father's sudden death in March of that year. Dad was stricken with what we later learned to be an inoperable brain tumor while vacationing with my mother at one of the family's beach houses,

Wilcox P.: Mahamoku, in Hanalei, Kauai. I flew over to Honolulu and met him there in the hospital where he was undergoing tests and beginning to show some signs of recovery. We spent three weeks there before he was able to travel, and then we returned to the mainland.

My plan at that time was to stay on with the Northern California Savings but work with Dad much more closely, kind of as his eyes and ears in the business. However the doctors notified us here at the Palo Alto Clinic that, in fact, it was not a stroke as we had suspected, but it was an inoperable brain tumor. Apparently, the first signs of it occurred in late October, early November, of '79, several months before. Dad knew there was something wrong, but he did not, apparently, go to the doctor. The first major sign of it was, of course, the seizure where he collapsed in Hawaii. I'm convinced that he knew what his condition was, so did the doctors, but he asked that it be kept from the family. He came back here, got his affairs in order, met with John and Sally Adams, talked with David, and died on March 3rd.

With his death, I evaluated my situation over the next six months, found that I could not take over his work and do the job as regional vice-president of Northern California Savings, so I gave notice to Northern California Savings and took over Dad's work full time.

Lage: Was this again the sense of the first son of the first son? I keep picking this up from Patterson family members.

Wilcox P.: No, I'm not the first son. My older brother, Bill, was teaching and had been a teacher for many years in the Sacramento area. But I was the closest. I did have the real estate lending background. I had been involved in running some of the family operations for about fifteen years. These were a small group of properties that Dad, through the years, had gifted to the five children. I had managed them for about fifteen years and would mail income checks out to my brothers and sisters each month. So I had the hands-on experience and I was the natural one, living here also, to come in and take over.

But at that time it was not taking over just Dad's work. The president of the board of directors of Grove Farm Company, the privately-held sugar plantation on Kauai owned by the Wilcoxes, my mother's family, flew to Stanford University for a summer program for executives of small businesses. I met Dave Pratt during his stay at Stanford, and some months later David wrote me from Hawaii and asked me to join the board at Grove Farm, which I accepted.

Wilcox P.: In the meantime, I had been asked to join a board of directors of a local company here called Pacific Real Estate Investment Trust, which is a small, locally owned and operated real estate investment trust. At that time we had about twenty-five hundred stockholders; it's publicly held. So I also joined the board of directors of that company. The family had begun to invest in that company through my dad some years before.

I took on some outside things as well, and I began to realize that what I was doing in my work was very fractured. There were about seven major areas of endeavor, all of them required wearing a different hat. There needed to be some semblance of order brought to all of this because I felt like I was in a juggling act. About that time, and this was in late 1980 and early '81, David Patterson and myself--David is Dad's youngest brother and Dave has a very good business background training and had been managing his own affairs for a number of years after leaving private industry--had been in regular and steady contact over the jointly-held family operations, i.e., the farming and the development in the Fremont area and the cattle ranching in Livermore. Dave and I were meeting with each other on a regular basis and began to formulate a plan to incorporate.

Donald Patterson's Education, Marriage, and Career

Lage: Before we go into your involvement with the Patterson properties, I want to go back a little bit and talk more about your father. You were just telling me a story about how your mother knew the Pattersons.

Wilcox P.: Yes. Dad was the oldest of three sons by seven or eight years, I think, older than his brother Jack, Bruce's father. Dad went to grammar school in a small local farm-community school there, either in Newark or Centerville but within that area, close to the ranch house.

Lage: Would that have been Lincoln School?

Wilcox P.: It might have been--I don't know the name of it--but I remember him telling me that Grandpa and also Dad were concerned about the local high school. Dad wanted very much to go on to college. So he transferred to high school in Piedmont and went to Piedmont High School where he graduated. He went on to Harvard and then Stanford Graduate School of Business.

My mother's family was living in Piedmont at the time. But my mother [Dorothy Wilcox Patterson] actually knew my grandmother and grandfather Patterson before she met my father because her

Wilcox P.: parents and the Pattersons were friends. They used to come down for parties to the ranch long before Mom and Dad met each other. Even though Dad had graduated from Piedmont High School, I don't think Mom and Dad knew each other there. I think they met at the opera some years after Dad had graduated from college.

Lage: Did your grandparents move up to Piedmont when your father did?

Wilcox P.: No, I don't think so. I think my father was staying with family friends there during the week and going to school. I don't think the parents moved there. I'm rusty on that, but I'm going back to stories my dad told me.

Then he met my mother formally after Harvard and Stanford, when he came back and was working in San Francisco and living in a very fancy boarding house with a group of bachelors; they had a butler and a cook, and they lived quite a high life in San Francisco. Dad met Mom at that time, which was long after my mom had met his parents.

Lage: Was this while your dad was working?

Wilcox P.: Yes, he was working then. I think he was working for PABCO Chemical at that time; I'm not sure. He started there and was overseas with them in the late thirties, just prior to the outbreak of hostilities in Europe that led to World War II. He was mostly in Germany, and he had some very interesting stories to tell about that.

Lage: Let's discuss briefly what kind of business career your father had before he took over management of the Patterson Ranch.

Wilcox P.: From my recollection, he worked at PABCO Chemical. He was a foreign representative for them working mostly in prewar Germany, in '36, '37, and was in Berlin. He spoke German pretty well apparently and was working with some German companies over there on behalf of PABCO. Of course, there was a great deal of political unrest: Hitler was coming to power, and there was a lot of disruption, a lot of rallies going on in and around Berlin at that time.

Apparently some men at one of the German companies that he was calling on mentioned a rally in the Sports Palace in Berlin, which is now in the eastern sector. Apparently--I've seen it from the outside--the capacity of that place is close to 300,000 people, and Hitler was to speak that day. Dad was curious and went over to hear him. He said he was the most dynamic, electrifying speaker he'd ever heard in his life. He had a microphone and a very powerful public address system, and he worked the crowd up almost to a fever pitch. Dad was amazed at the influence he had over the people.

Wilcox P.: Toward the end of his talk, he called for a salute--the Nazi salute, the raised hand and the "Heil Hitler"--and Dad did not do that, and some Germans that were in the crowd near him turned to him and said to him in German, "Salute," which he understood--he understood German, he understood everything that was being said. I don't know why, I think maybe he was just being obstinate and perhaps was angry about seeing this, he didn't salute and they knocked him down and rolled him down a flight of stairs and gave him quite a roughing up.

Lage: Did he protest that he wasn't a German?

Wilcox P.: No, they knew he was an American, but there was quite a fever pitch in the crowd. He wasn't hurt, but he said it emphasized and underscored the effect that Hitler had on a crowd.

Lage: What a historical moment for him to have taken part in.

Wilcox P.: Very, and it was right after that that the company called back everyone from Germany and, as a matter of fact, even from Europe. Of course, hostilities broke out in Europe not too long after that. But it was quite an interesting experience.

Lage: Was this after he was married?

Wilcox P.: I'm not sure. I'm trying to remember what year he and Mom were married. Thirty-seven, '38, right in there? Very close to that time.

Lage: But he stayed with PABCO.

Wilcox P.: Yes, he stayed with them a few more years and then he went with Joshua Hendy Iron Works, which built steam turbine engines for ships during the war. They were in Sunnyvale. Dad was an engineer with them, or head of one of the engineering departments. Then they were bought out after the war by Westinghouse Corporation. Then Dad moved to National Motor Bearing Corporation and was the plant manager in Redwood City.

When I was in the third grade, the teacher announced at the beginning of our class--Miss Stolberg was her name, a very strict, a very good teacher--she said, "I wonder if you all saw Wil Patterson's father on television last night on 'Richfield Success Story'?" A lot of the kids had. I didn't because Dad wouldn't allow television in the house. [laughter] I didn't know anything about it. So typical of Dad, he didn't tell anybody.

Lage: It seems like he kept to himself.

Wilcox P.: He was a very modest guy. Yes, very modest guy. He thought it was a bunch of silly business, I think, but the sponsor of the show had asked him to be interviewed on the program so he did. But he only said something about it after that embarrassing incident at school when we were all asked if we had seen him on television. [laughs]

First Housing Development on the Ranch

Lage: Was he with Westinghouse when he stepped in to help manage the ranch?

Wilcox P.: No, he left Hendy after the buyout by Westinghouse, then went with National Motor Bearing Company, and he was with them from about 1945 to about 1955. Then I think it was 1955 when he quit National Motor Bearing and went to work running the ranch full time.

Lage: Was that because of an illness of your grandfather?

Wilcox P.: It was because my grandfather was getting on in years and needed some help. There were the early rumblings of development pressure in and around the ranch at that time. Let's see, 1955 marks either the year or very close to the year when development first touched the ranch. That was through Jack Brooks and Wayne Valley, who then had Besco Construction Company. They had negotiated with Jack and David and Dad to buy some land that they owned in their own right. Dad and Jack and David had each been gifted a hundred acres, three hundred acres total, by my grandfather, to manage on their own. They farmed that for years on their own and received the farm income from it. They decided to sell that land for development. The name of the project was Cabrillo Park--still there. It's on the east side of what is now the Nimitz freeway.

Lage: It's very near where Jack Brooks has his office.

Wilcox P.: Yes, that office where Jack is right now was Jack Brooks's first construction office opened in 1955 or 1956, when he began to build the Cabrillo Park subdivision. I was fifteen, and I got a summer job as a construction laborer for Jack and worked on that subdivision laying subfloor. I weighed about 140 pounds, and I thought I was going to die, I was so exhausted at the end of every day. I couldn't drive a car so my father would drop me in the morning and then I'd walk to my grandfather's house from there in the evening after work and then Dad would take me home. I've never worked so hard in my life. Golly!

Lage: Was it an experience?

Wilcox P.: Yes. There were three fellows working with me that were students at Oregon State. They were on the football team on scholarships, and Wayne Valley was a big football fan and, as you know, was one of the major owners of the Oakland Raiders and now, of course, Jack Brooks is too. Wayne Valley gave these guys summer jobs to help with their education. All three of them quit; they couldn't take it.

Lage: And you stayed on.

Wilcox P.: And I stayed on. [laughs]

Lage: It says something about--.

Wilcox P.: Well, I don't know. It said something about the work ethic, I think, that Dad believed so strongly in.

Lage: So that was something you were brought up with?

Wilcox P.: Oh, very. No sloughing off, no.

There were some funny things that happened about that, too, because some of my friends, when they were sixteen or seventeen, were getting new cars as gifts, you know, from their parents. I asked my dad about a car because I love cars--still do--and he said, "If you want a car, you go out and get a job and earn it." That's how I started working for Jack Brooks summers even before I could drive. Then somewhere I got the idea [laughs] that Dad must be in some kind of financial difficulty. So at the dinner table one night I asked him if perhaps he and Mom were having difficulties and, if so, we kids could work part time. I've never seen him laugh so hard. [laughter] He said, "That has nothing to do with it." He said, "I want you to appreciate the value of the dollar." He was a very effective teacher in that respect. It stuck. But he got a good laugh out of that.

Donald's Management of the Ranch

Lage: Are you aware of what kind of things your father did in managing the ranch? What would a typical day be like? When I talk with former tenant-farmers, they present a picture of the tenant-farmers going about their business and giving a percentage to the ranch. When I talk with the family, I see Henry and Will and your father being much more active in ranch management. Now how do you see it?

Wilcox P.: A typical day for Dad would be to drive over in the early morning—he'd arrive about eight o'clock—usually chat with my grandfather. I'd ride over with him a lot, and he'd chat with my grandfather when he got there at my grandfather's house, about business. They would confer sometimes for a couple of hours, often just the two of them.

When Henry was alive, and remember he died when I was very young, but when he was alive he was kind of the front man. I mean, the real decision maker and the person that really had the last word, I think. He had a very sharp business mind. I think Will, my grandfather, and certainly Dad looked to him for the final decision at that time. When he was still alive, Grandpa and Dad would meet with him quite often. But a good part of their day was in meetings among the three of them and then later the two of them after Henry had died. I remember that Dad didn't quit his work and come over to the ranch on a full-time basis until after Henry had died because Henry and Will ran the ranches very well. Although Dad played an active part, it wasn't a full-time job.

But the three of them would still do a lot of conferring. They would go around in the car and visit the tenant-farmers and spend a great deal of time in their old clothes and boots standing in the irrigation ditches out there in the field, just chatting with the people and finding out what's going on.

When Henry died and Dad did this full time, he taught himself Spanish so that he could speak fluently with the fieldworkers. He understood, I think, a little Portuguese as well. He would go out often on his own, often with my grandfather, but I remember, even after Grandpa was sick and wasn't able to go with him, Dad would go out and stand in the muddy trenches in his old clothes. He drove an old jeep station wagon and talked to the braceros in Spanish.

Lage: These were probably the people who were working for the Gene Williams operation.

Wilcox P.: Yes, these were a lot of Gene's people that were irrigators and field hands and foremen and people of this kind. Dad would go out, and there was method to his madness. He not only spoke in their language and really got a feel of what their problems were and what was going on and really put his finger on the pulse of the ranch, but he also got a marvelous opportunity to practice his Spanish. [laughs]

Lage: The ranch furnished the labor camps and things like that, I understand.

Wilcox P.: Yes, the ranch furnished the camps, and Dad would go out to the camps almost daily and chat with the families as well. He loved talking to the Spanish people. He enjoyed Mexico, and later on, for his exploration work in Baja California with the California Academy of Sciences, he was named a fellow in the Royal Geographic Society in London.

Donald as Explorer, Amateur Entomologist, Businessman, World Traveller

Lage: There were many different aspects of his life, then.

Wilcox P.: Yes, yes, interesting guy. He had a great interest in Mexico and in learning Spanish.

Lage: Now what did he do in Baja California? What kind of explorations?

Wilcox P.: He did exploration work primarily in the San Pedro Martier Mountains, which are the southern extension of the Sierra Nevada. Most of these were scientific trips having to do with his interest in entomology. He would go down there and lead expeditions of scientists from the California Academy of Sciences. He used to chuckle—my older brother, Bill, would go down with him because Bill is also an entomologist. Dad would often handle the entomological [side], the role of the entomologist.

Often there would be other entomologists with them, but there would also be—he used to call them "bug men"—scientists that specialized in the study of, for instance, scorpions. There was a scorpion fellow that used to go down, catch all these different kinds and label them and so on. There was a beetle man. [laughs] There were all kinds of scientists from the California Academy of Sciences that would come down on trips put together by the academy.

Lage: Would your dad finance these trips?

Wilcox P.: No. No, he would pay his own way, and the academy would pay the way of the scientists because Dad was not a scientist in the true sense.

Lage: But did he study entomology at Harvard?

Wilcox P.: No, he studied it as a child. He was interested in entomology as a child and simply studied it as a hobby all his life. Also geology. He knew a great deal about geology. Engineering, mechanical engineering, and, of course, business.

Lage: What did he study at Harvard?

Wilcox P.: I believe his undergrad major was civil engineering, either civil or mechanical engineering at Harvard, and then it was, of course, business at the business school at Stanford. But it was an engineering background there, either civil or mechanical engineering combined with geology because one of his first jobs, either after he graduated from business school at Stanford or between Harvard and Stanford, was working in a sulphur mine during the summer in the Nevada desert. Another job that he had was working as a wiper in the engine room of a tramp steamer between San Francisco and New York going through the Panama Canal. He said it never got below about 120 degrees in there.

Lage: He sounds like quite an adventuresome person. Did that come across in his personality?

Wilcox P.: It did if you got him away from a business setting. If you were camping with him and telling stories, yes, it would come out. The way I learned a lot of things about my father was either through chatting with my Uncle Jack, who I really admired, and Jack was quite an adventurer, or talking with either friends of my dad or with Dad when he was away from the family and away from a business setting. He became much more relaxed, much more jovial and outgoing and much more inclined to talk about his past that way.

Lage: What was he like when he was in his business setting?

Wilcox P.: Very controlled, very reserved, very precise, very conservative.

I remember I became interested in sailing and boats, which was another interest that I've had all my life, and I remember I was at the ranch one day while Dad was over talking to Henry, I believe. I was pretty young, and I was talking to Uncle Jack. Jack mentioned a boat that Dad had owned, a forty-foot boat. I didn't know anything about this. Dad had sunk it in a storm off San Francisco, and Dad and a friend that he was with were rescued just in the nick of time. So I mentioned it to Dad, and he said, "Where did you hear that story?" [laughs] I was afraid to get Jack in trouble. So it finally came out that Jack had told me, and so then the story of this episode unfolded. It was a real saga, but none of us knew anything about this sort of thing. He did not discuss things like that.

Lage: He kind of kept things to himself?

Wilcox P.: Yes.

##

Lage: During our break you told me about coming over to visit your father. Let's record that to give a fuller picture of your father.

Wilcox P.: Okay. I was saying that two or three times a week after work, when I worked here in downtown Menlo Park, I would swing by the house here. Dad and I would talk, oh, maybe for an hour before I headed home. My wife was also working, and we wouldn't normally get home till seven o'clock or so. But I talked to Dad about business. He had a tremendous insight into economic trends, where he felt things were going.

In '78 or '79, I was promoted to regional vice-president, and I'd just gotten a brand new company car--Chevrolet, I think. When I was promoted to regional vice-president they bought me a brand new Buick with all sorts of custom features on it. I came by with the new car and the promotion and told Dad about it, and he thought it was great. I said, "Yes. Come out and see my new car." He said, "Well, you just got a new car." I said, "I know, but they insist that a regional vice-president drive a Buick and not a Chevrolet, so I turned in the Chevrolet and they got me a new Buick." He said, "That's preposterous." He walked out and looked at this fancy car, and he shook his head. He said, "Don't you folks know what's coming? We're headed for a major recession." He was absolutely right; this was early '79. The big savings & loan and banking shakeout and real estate shakeout came in late '80, '81. He was absolutely right.

We used to talk about business; we used to talk about things he'd done. In the last five years, he opened up much more about his early adventures. He'd done far more things than I'd ever dreamed of. My grandfather had loved adventure and had loved travel. When the boys were born, my dad and his brothers, he was restricted from doing a lot of that. He always wanted, after the boys were grown, to travel again. He waited too long and a stroke got him and then it was too late; it was a downhill slide from there. So Dad said, "As soon as the youngest of you children is grown, I'm going to buy a condominium, sell the house on Glenwood, the big house, and buy a condominium where we can close the door and travel." He and Mom did that for thirteen years. They travelled all over the world on scientific expeditions, on historical expeditions, trips.

They spent a great deal of time in England where they kept a flat in London. They spent, oh, sometimes up to four or five months a year there in Sloane Square. When Dad was president of the Society of California Pioneers in 1967, he had occasion to



from the
Oakland Tribune
October 1966

W. Donald Patterson, shown with his wife at their Rancho Potrero de los Cerritos, has interests ranging from the historical to the contemporary.

Tribune photo by Howard Erker.

White Tie and Stetson

The boots and Stetson that are part of W. Donald Patterson's uniform for operating his Newark ranch will be replaced by top hat, white tie and tails for the social season's fanciest shindig October 20.

That would be the annual members-only champagne supper given at the Society of California Pioneers headquarters on McAllister Street in San Francisco immediately preceding the opera opening.

A post-Pioneer version of the Renaissance Man, Mr. Patterson can switch from Stetson to top hat to pith helmet with equal ease; the owner of Rancho Potrero de los Cerritos, who last month became the 80th president of the Pioneer Society, also is an explorer of repute as well as an authority on flood control.

LIKE ALL members of the 116-year-old all-male pioneer organization, Mr. Patterson can prove descent from an ancestor who arrived in California before 1850.

George W. Patterson, his paternal grandfather, came here from the East in 1848, and his maternal great-grand-

father several weeks later. Grandfather Patterson, after some unsuccessful ventures in the Trinity region, acquired the Newark property and some 10,000 acres near Livermore.

Much of W. Donald's versatility would seem to have been inherited from his father, William D. The elder Patterson was active in dramatics at Washington Township's high school, and later became greatly interested in water conservation and exploring.

IN ADDITION to his Pioneer Society post, Patterson is a director of the San Francisco Zoological Society, and a member of the California Academy of Sciences and the New York Explorers' Club.

Last year, he organized a

safari to Baja California to search (unsuccessfully) for treasure rumored to have been hidden by the Jesuits at the time of their expulsion from Mexico in 1767 by King Charles of Spain.

Last winter, he accompanied Dr. Thomas Poulter of the Stanford Research Institute to the Arctic on a scientific project sponsored by the U.S. Navy.

MR. PATTERSON has no immediate plans for more exploring, his ranch-running keeping him pretty well occupied.

He and his wife (the former Dorothy Wilcox) are the parents of five children, Grace, Eden, William, George and Wilcox (the latter is married and makes his home in Anaheim).

They live in Atherton, but since it is a mere 15-minute drive to the ranch, which straddles the Newark-Fremont dividing line, Mr. Patterson commutes back and forth constantly.

His father took a great deal of pride in his Pioneer Society membership and had the names of his three grandsons entered on the members' roster as soon as they were born.

THE SOCIETY'S present president shares his father's esteem of the organization and is looking forward to its gala pre-opera dinner.

But there is no element of the pompous in his pride.

"It's really sort of fun," he says, "to be surrounded by portraits of a bunch of ancestors looking down their noses at us while we eat."

Historic Occasion

Because Sir Lionel Denny, Lord Mayor of London, is the grandson of Jonathan Denny who landed in San Francisco in 1849, did some gold mining and voted in the election to determine California's statehood, the Society of California Pioneers felt it fitting

and proper to tender a reception in honor of the visiting Mayor and his wife, Lady Denny. Society President W. Donald Patterson and Mrs. Patterson headed the receiving line. Mrs. George Brady, Jr., wife of former society president, assisted.

TELEPHONE

MANSON HOUSE 2500.

THE MANSION HOUSE.

LONDON, E.C.4

26th September, 1966.



W. DONALD PATTERSON AND SIR LIONEL DENNY
... pioneer president chatted with Lord Mayor

Dear Mr. Patterson,

Your letter of September 20th to hand and I must say that I hardly expected to get a further membership certificate after having been presented with that magnificent lithograph which has been shipped by sea and the receipt of which I am looking forward to with great pleasure.

I can only reiterate to you and your colleagues my great feeling of privilege at being admitted to life membership of your Honourable Society.

My wife and I will never forget the delightful reception you gave us at your Hall during our visit and we retain happiest memories of our fourth visit to San Francisco.

In the course of next year, I hope to embark on a great reproduction programme, by Xerox or some such method, of all the twenty-eight letters written by my grandfather after sailing from England until his last one on sailing from Quebec in 1852, also his diary 1849/50 and the log of his homeward trip. I will certainly see that the Society receives copies.

Meanwhile with kindest regards to you all,

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

Lionel Denny
LORD MAYOR.

Mr. Donald Patterson,
The President of
The Society of California Pioneers,
456 McAllister Street,
San Francisco,
California 94102.

Wilcox P.: meet Lord Mayor Denny and his wife, the Lord Mayor of London at that time, who came over here for a visit. Mom and Dad entertained him at that time and got to like them very much. The Dennys invited them to come to England and they did, loved it, met a lot of the Dennys' friends, and decided to take a flat there in London, which, as I say, they did every year. Twice a year, actually, in May and October.

Dad was a member of the Pacific Union Club in San Francisco, which had privileges also with Boodles in London, and so Dad would go to Boodles there in London, and not too long after that, he was made a member of the Royal Geographic Society for his exploration in Baja California in Mexico, as we talked about earlier.

So he had a wide range of interests all his life, but I found him to be the most fascinating in about the last five years of his life where he began to open up more about his early experiences to me. We talked a great deal about business together, and I found him utterly fascinating on that subject because he had such an insight, through his reading and his contacts and so on, into business and economic trends. I found it very helpful in my own work. And he was a fascinating person to talk to on almost any subject.

Lage: He read widely, I see from the books here in his office.

Wilcox P.: Very widely, on a range of subjects. He could talk more widely on more subjects than any person I ever met. For that reason, he was a fascinating conversationalist and, I think, very much sought after socially. He and Mom had a tremendous circle of friends. I know that, all through my life, people that knew us both would comment on what a fascinating person my father was. I was telling my wife, Sandy, just the other day one of my biggest regrets is that she did not have an opportunity to meet him because they would have struck it off very well.

Donald's Goal: "The Orderly Liquidation of the Ranch" ##

Lage: Last time I asked you what your father's guiding principles seemed to be in managing the ranch. Do you remember your answer there?

Wilcox P.: I think, above all, integrity. He wanted to manage the ranch in a way that was very benevolent. It carried forward Henry and Will's way of doing business, which was conservative--particularly Henry--benevolent to those tenants and people that were connected with the ranch and, at the same time, trying to

Wilcox P.: keep an eye on the interests of the family members that had a stake in the ranch at that time. You remember there were far fewer at that time because my generation wasn't directly involved. But Dad felt a tremendous obligation and responsibility to carry the ranch forward conservatively and not do anything that would jeopardize the future of the ranch or the financial future of any of the people connected with the ranch, either the tenants or the family.

Lage: Obviously, development was taking place during the time that he managed the ranch. Was this part of his goal?

Wilcox P.: Yes. His goal, and I can even quote it verbatim and then I'll qualify it, was "the orderly liquidation of the ranch." Now, this was his goal starting about 1965. After Grandpa passed away, Dad felt that the family was very diverse by this time, that some of us really weren't very close--we didn't know each other very well. The two branches of the family were widely scattered; they had diverse interests. We had a whole spectrum of interests and abilities and so on, and very, very few people showed any interest in the ranch whatsoever at that time.

Lage: As an agricultural operation?

Wilcox P.: As anything, yes. There was no interest in historic preservation; there was no interest in the ranch as a farming operation; there was no interest expressed towards preserving it. Dad felt that the pulse of the family, at that time, was pretty much total disinterest in the ranch. So he felt that the best way to handle it was to try to work smoothly with all the people--and he had a very good relationship that he'd developed over the years with Marjorie.

He was one of the few people that could speak to Marjorie because there was absolutely no communication between Marjorie and the rest of the family at all. She was living in Palm Springs then. But Marjorie had a major interest in the ranch. She had a great deal of love and respect for Dad. When he died, Marjorie called me and talked to me for about forty-five minutes. I was really moved at how much she cared for Dad. She really cared a great deal for him and respected him a great deal. So Dad worked very, very hard in a real balancing act of trying to work with Marjorie and her problems, which he was able to do, and at the same time, work with Sally--and Sally and Marjorie weren't speaking at all; they hadn't for years...

Lage: That requires a lot of tact.

Wilcox P.: Yes.

Wilcox P.: He felt at that time, and he discussed this with the family attorney, and I think rightly so at that time, that it was impossible to bring the family together in any kind of business sense: a partnership or corporation. With the disinterest that was evident then, or seeming disinterest, he felt that the orderly and gradual liquidation of the ranch was appropriate so that everybody could have their money from their share of the ranch and go their own way and do with it as they wished.

Lage: Did he express this to everybody?

Wilcox P.: No, he expressed it to me, and I think he expressed it to George. Now, whether he discussed this with Dave at that time, I don't know. But I remember he told me that at this time that was the philosophy under which he was operating.

Lage: Was Jack Brooks the key person that he worked with towards that goal?

Wilcox P.: No. His relationship with Jack was interesting. There was a great deal of mutual respect, but Dad felt that although Jack had developed the ranch initially--that initial three hundred acres for Cabrillo Park--and there'd been many other inquiries by Jack and he knew that Jack would love to develop the whole ranch, Dad admired and respected Jack tremendously, but he felt that he didn't want one developer to have a hold on the bulk of the ranch. He negotiated a deal for Sarah Patterson, Henry's widow, to sell three hundred acres of land to Transamerica Corporation for the development that's known as "the Lake" over in Newark. He sold another piece to the Catholic Church.

Lage: What did they do with that?

Wilcox P.: They held it for a while and then resold it. They bought, I think, twenty acres. Now what they were going to do with that I don't know. I didn't know very much about that transaction.

He sold a small piece to a Dr. Beretta, who is still active in the Fremont area. He's a dentist, I believe. So he spread around the development, and he did it slowly and carefully--I think with the idea of somewhat of a master plan.

Lage: A master plan in his own mind?

Wilcox P.: In his own mind, yes.

The 1971 Sale of Ranch Lands and Home to Singer Housing ##

Wilcox P.: It was in late 1979 that the city of Fremont began to work towards developing a master plan for the development of what they referred to as the Northern Plain of Fremont, which was about 1,100 acres, of which about 800 was our property.

Lage: Does this Northern Plain have a smaller area than the ranch? I mean, 800 acres is your property, but the ranch included other property that was not part of the Northern Plain?

Wilcox P.: Right. The development portion of the Northern Plain of the city of Fremont is what you see now in that Kaiser High Tech Park, the Ardenwood Forest New Town.

Lage: Is it bound by the two freeways, highways 84 and 880?

Wilcox P.: Yes, and the bay. But it includes the Coyote Hills Regional Park, which is almost 1,100 acres. It is made up primarily of the 300 acres that Kaiser has, the 200 acres in the historical Ardenwood Park and the 300 acres in the Ardenwood Forest New Town. Plus the land that had already been sold to Citation Homes that would become part of that Ardenwood Forest project.

Lage: Before we go to 1979, let's just talk a little bit of that sale in the early seventies or around '71 to Singer. Did you get in on any of that?

Wilcox P.: No, I was working here full time at Northern California Savings and I was pretty busy but I did go over and meet David and my dad and Jack Brooks--I hadn't seen Dave for a long time, hadn't seen Brooks for a long time--at the Title Company in San Leandro to sign those final papers. They were very, very complicated. Dave was there and it was the first time I had seen Dave in a number of years and I remember that he had not too long before that had open-heart surgery. I remember that he was recovering from that at that time. But anyway, we signed, or Dad signed and David and Brooks signed, an enormous stack of escrow papers to close that transaction.

Lage: But you don't know anything about the decision making, why it was that particular piece of land that was sold?

Wilcox P.: No, I really don't.

Lage: And what the thinking was about the house? The land included the George Washington Patterson house.

Wilcox P.: The land at that time included the house. In exchange for the right to develop that land, part of the condition was that Singer give that house to the city.

Lage: But not initially. That came out of the suit.

Wilcox P.: Came out of the lawsuit and everything else that went on.

Lage: Do you remember anything about the family's feeling about preserving the house?

Wilcox P.: Just a little. Dad felt it was a good thing. I remember him making a statement that he was concerned because Sally and Marj had bad memories about the house and wanted it destroyed, did not want it preserved. He felt that by the city taking possession of it, they would then do what was best, in the public interest, for that house, and that it would remove the family from an emotional decision-making process on the house. But I think his feeling at that time was that it should be preserved, that it did have real historic value, and that he was concerned that it would be either destroyed by vandals or development. So I think he felt that the right thing was for the city to take possession of that house and remove that as an emotional issue from the family.

My sequence of the events involving that sale of land to Singer is somewhat clouded because I wasn't active in that at all, but I know that there was a lawsuit filed. What happened apparently was that the city, after the purchase, put that area in a ten-year development freeze that was broken several years later as the result of a lawsuit filed by Singer against the city. It was a very costly delay, and it was a very costly lawsuit. Singer won; they got it out of the development freeze and were able to go ahead with the development.

But then there was a great deal of concern because the city then took possession of the house and some grounds around it, but they didn't have the money to do anything with it. They had a Fremont police officer and his family living there kind of as a caretaker, just sitting on the house literally, keeping away vandals, but that was about all. It was after Dad's death, and now I'm moving to the post-1980 era, but to carry on with the story of that house the city then came to the family about late '80 or '81 and said, "Gee, if you could donate \$75,000, we'll match that with labor and materials and we'll put \$150,000 into the house and that will get the restoration process started." So David and I solicited family members and got people to donate that money out of the close of escrow of some land sales. So that got the funds.

Lage: Did most members of the family donate?

Wilcox P.: Most.

Lage: Did you have the sense that it was something they all supported?

Wilcox P.: There was some disinterest and not all supported it.

Lage: By that time it was a pretty diverse family.

Wilcox P.: Yes. It was pretty scattered, and there was not a lot of interest in the ranches. You know, a lot of people hadn't been on the ranch for years at that time.

II FORMULATING A MASTER PLAN AND INCORPORATING THE FAMILY

Donald's Illness and Death, 1979-1980

Lage: You told us that after your father's death you stepped in and took a more active role, along with Dave. I think we've covered that.

Wilcox P.: Yes. But in '79 the city, as I've mentioned, began to formulate a master plan for the Northern Plain of the city. I remember going to the planning commission and city council meetings with Dad. Dave was there with Brooks. This was late '79, November, December, and I remember driving Dad over, picking him up here at the house and driving him over to one of these meetings, and on the way over I noticed that he didn't look well, at all. He looked exhausted. He seemed to be very slightly disoriented. When I say disoriented, I mean he wasn't quite as sharp as he usually was. I was concerned because I thought he was working too hard at that time and that he was exhausted.

We got to the meeting, and he sat there with me very quietly. Then at the break we stood up, and people were milling about, and there were a lot of people from Fremont there that had been around for years that knew Grandpa and knew Dad. They would come over, and they were saying hi and so on. Dad became confused and actually disoriented. I got very worried. The meeting ran late, and I knew he was exhausted. When we went out together I asked him again if he was all right. I think this was about December of '79. We got in the car and he had mentioned a shortcut to cut through Fremont and go home. When I asked him about it, he couldn't remember. He got very confused. So we just drove home the normal long way around. That was my first clue that something was wrong.

Other than the fact that in October of '79 we'd been sailing together up at Inverness, and we sailed all the way up Tomales Bay, which is about ten miles. It was a windy day, and we sailed up to this little island near the mouth of the bay and turned

Wilcox P.: around and came home. On the way home, he fell asleep in the boat and I sailed it home. When we got back to the house, he went upstairs and slept for five hours. Mom remarked about it. She said, "Donald has been looking awfully tired lately." This was October, late October, '79.

Then my next exposure to this--and I thought nothing of this at the time--but I was very concerned at that planning commission meeting in Fremont in December of '79. Then, of course, it was in late January that he suffered a seizure in the islands and then he died on March 3rd. It was an inoperable brain tumor.

A Model Master Plan

Wilcox P.: But after his death, Jack Brooks, the city, chamber of commerce, all kinds of people there active in Fremont, began to hammer together this master plan. There were seventeen or eighteen plans submitted to the city. The final one is what you see now, which I think is an excellent plan.

Lage: Wasn't it the one that Jack Brooks took quite a role in?

Wilcox P.: Yes. Jack, with his knowledge of planning and knowledge of the city and the lay of the land, played a major role in that final draft, but it was an enormous project involving many people and it took two or three years to hammer it out. It's a good balance. A 200-acre park dividing the housing from the high tech and then surrounded on the bay side by the wildlife park of 1,000 acres. It's a marvelous balance. But it was an opportunity for a city to work with a large piece of land that was once basically under one ownership. That doesn't happen too often. I think, I hope, that we'll see this as a model in the future for this kind of master plan.

Family Mavericks Spur Incorporation

Lage: Let's move on to the decision to form a family corporation. Earlier you described to me the problems with your sister and cousin that were part of the historical background to this decision. Do you want to record that story?

Wilcox P.: Yes. After Dad died, I took over his work here in the office in which we're sitting. All his files were here. For six months I continued to act as regional vice-president for Northern California Saving, handling the peninsula region for them. It

Wilcox P.: got to be too much, and I left in October of 1980 and began to work full time, working both out of an office in my home in Woodside, and also here in Dad's office, and working closely with David, as I mentioned before.

Eden, my youngest sister, and I had always been, I felt, quite close. I managed some jointly owned property for us five kids here and mailed my brothers and sisters a check every month for their share of the income, handled all the books, and I always included a little letter to Eden, "How are you doing? Do you need anything? Is everything okay?" She'd met a couple of real characters in Berkeley when she graduated from Cal and was living in a commune in Tennessee. I was very worried about her. My dad had been very worried and very upset about her.

I began to see the relations deteriorate between Eden and the family for no apparent reason. I called and was told by this "guru", Roger Solomon, that it was Eden's desire to liquidate all of her personal interests in the ranch land for cash immediately. Were we interested in buying her out? I said, "Well, this is a new twist. Why does she want to do that?" I was very skeptical and very suspicious. I didn't know this fellow. I could barely understand him; he spoke with a heavy European accent, very demanding, very pushy. I'd heard some bad things about him from my brothers and sisters who had visited back there. My father was very skeptical of this whole arrangement, so naturally I was suspicious, and my thought was to protect Eden's interests. Next thing I knew, there was some correspondence from Eden offering her interest for sale at what I felt was an unreasonable price. I felt that perhaps we could reason with her. I knew the value of her interest would increase in years to come. I saw no need for her to liquidate everything. Next thing we knew there was a lawsuit. It was also joined by David's son, Scott.

Lage: Had they had any communication, Scott and Eden?

Wilcox P.: None before this time. As a matter of fact, Eden and Scott didn't even know each other at all. How they made contact, I don't know. Maybe Dave has some theories on that. But we found that obviously this "guru" did a lot of research on the family. One of the things that I found happened was that when Eden came out for my father's funeral and stayed a month with my wife and me, she rifled my father's files and obtained copies of my grandfather's will and trust and my father's will. Naturally, being a beneficiary they received the inventory of Dad's estate.

Somehow this Solomon character also discovered that Scott Patterson had feelings of estrangement from the family, which I wasn't aware of, and got him to join in the lawsuit. They hired Melvin Belli and came after the family. Well, David and I were

Wilcox P.: the only two active members in the business of the family at that time. This was '81, '82. So we settled, and Jack Brooks bought out their interests, as the family was unable to financially.

About that time, Dave and I looked at each other and we said, "This business of having the undivided ownerships--we're going to have to incorporate to keep this thing together," and a few people started thinking that, "Gee, maybe we ought to keep this thing together." David did a lot of work, a lot of calling, a lot of writing to family members that hadn't been in contact for years. He did a tremendous job.

Lage: So this was kind of a reversal of your father's plan for the ranch land.

Wilcox P.: It's a reversal of the previous trend, the orderly liquidation. David began to write and call and stay in contact with a lot of people that had been estranged from the family--not estranged, but just not in contact with the family for years--and began to generate an interest, advocate for an interest in preserving the holding under some sort of a corporate or partnership structure.

Lage: Was this with the idea that it would be financially beneficial?

Wilcox P.: Yes. So Dave and I got together with Crosby, Heafey, Roach & May, who were the law firm that represented us in the suit, very ably, and we brought all their best minds together. We brought Jack Brooks into the process of trying to come up with a fair system of converting undivided interests in real estate--which at this point were deadly because any dissident could block everybody else from doing anything even if they owned one percent, unless you filed a partition suit and bought them out. So I remember a brainstorming session that lasted five hours at Crosby, Heafey, Roach & May. We had a number of the senior partners there from the law firm. We had Jack Brooks there; we had Jack's attorney, who was a very able guy; we had David, myself, and a number of very sharp attorneys.

Lage: How about Bob Buck?

Wilcox P.: Bob was not in that meeting. He hadn't come into the process yet. I don't think Bob was there.

But we had some very able young attorneys that worked under the partners at Crosby, Heafey, Roach & May. We finally divided an equitable system of converting these undivided interests into shares of stock in a corporation that would be the managing general partner for three partnerships that would run the ranch, two partnerships in Fremont and one in Livermore. Actually, there was PFM Corporation--PFM, Inc.--which was a family corporation in which we all held shares of stock, which acted as

Wilcox P.: the managing general partner for the two partnerships to run the Fremont ranch. Patag, which ran the agriculturally zoned lands, and Patbrook, which ran those lands which were slated for development. PTLM, which is the corporation which runs the Livermore ranch and is the managing general partner in the limited partnership, Patliv, that runs that. Anyway, it was fairly complicated.

Lage: And the conversion?

Wilcox P.: And the conversion process was very, very complicated.

Lage: But didn't some of you own particular portions as well as undivided interests in--?

Wilcox P.: Right. The interests were both undivided but with some individually owned parcels.

Lage: Did you look at what the development plan was for those different areas?

Wilcox P.: The development plan was pretty much formulated, yes. We knew basically what areas were going to be development and which were going to be slated for agriculture. We assigned respective values to them, but the common denominator that we had to use, the only common denominator there was at that time, was the tax assessor's values placed on the land at that time, and we converted it on that basis. But it was a very complicated job and Dave, I think, deserves most of the credit for that. He did a tremendous amount of leg work and a tremendous amount of working late at home on figures. Dave is very good at that, making this conversion process accurate and making it happen and bringing this all together.

Lage: It sounds like there would be a lot of public relations required among the family?

Wilcox P.: Yes, a lot of public relations. But it did come together. Kicking and screaming, it came together and now it works very well. But it necessitated buying out those dissident members of the family: Eden, Scott, Jackie Humberger--David's former wife. There was a long and very difficult process of bringing Marjorie and her interest into this through her conservator, which is Security Pacific Bank.

Transition to Professional Management by Family Members

Lage: You mentioned that you worked in the PFM office after the decision was made to have professional management.

Wilcox P.: Yes. Leon and Bob Buck and I had several meetings at my house, and we mapped out what we felt were the requirements of the office--bear in mind, we hadn't even got an office together then yet. We discussed about what we would need and about what time each of us could afford to spend. I committed two days a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays, to work there in the office and did that for about a year and a half when we had the office that was leased over in the hub area of Fremont.

Lage: This was getting the management going?

Wilcox P.: Getting it going, right. Leasing a space, interviewing and hiring a secretary, getting the office going, getting the filing system set up, moving the files from David's place and my office over there. Getting the office up and running, which took a long time. One of the problems was that Abby Campbell and I worked very hard on an interview process and hired a very competent woman full time to be secretary for us over there, a woman that had a great deal of development exposure in Fremont and knew a lot of people and so on. We leased the office and hired her, and then John and Sally indicated that they, at that time, hadn't made up their minds that they wanted a full-time office. So we put everything on hold for about five months. In the meantime, the woman quit and found another job. [laughs] Abby and I were going over and babysitting essentially an empty office with this employee and trying to keep her busy.

Lage: This is after the corporation was formed and you still had to--.

Wilcox P.: Yes. We had the board's unanimous blessing to go ahead with an office and we went ahead, until Sally and John's misgivings.

##

So once we got the blessing again, we carried forward with the office without a secretary, with Abby and myself and Bob and Leon doing it. Then Leon and Abby moved up here [from Riverside], and Leon came on full time, which helped a great deal. After a year and a half I was elected president of the Pacific Real Estate Investment Trust, a locally-owned and publicly-held real estate investment trust. My work began to expand with some of the investments that I was doing.

Wilcox P.: I had formed our own small corporation and partnerships which I was running for my mother and my brothers and sisters. My mother's health situation, Pacific Real Estate Investment Trust, and the management of my brothers' and sisters' affairs became such that I felt it was time to move away from the PFM office. With Leon coming on board full time and getting more involved, there wasn't a need for my services so much. So that left the office with Leon, Bob, Abby, and my recommendation that they take my salary and put it towards hiring a secretary now because we needed it, which they did. So now there's a secretary and those three, and it runs fine. You've spoken with Bob and Leon so you know--.

Lage: Right, I've gotten a good picture, I think, of that.

The Current Board and Future Directions

Lage: Do you have any comments you'd want to make about how the board operates from your point of view? How are decisions made when, I guess, there still are a lot of diverse opinions?

Wilcox P.: Yes, there's a lot of diverse input, but I think that everybody is pretty satisfied with the final decision that's made. What we strive for is to get satisfaction from as many of the board members and their constituents as possible.

Lage: And each board member more or less represents a certain branch of the family?

Wilcox P.: Right. In most cases, each represents other family members. Not all, but in most cases. For instance, David and I represent the W.D. Patterson trusts on the board, and Bruce represents his father's trust besides his own interests and his sister's and mother's interests, so there's some multiple representations there. But we have a wide range of opinions on nearly every issue on the board. I think we have good exchanges and good input. We have the one outside member from Security Pacific Bank.

Lage: Representing Marjorie?

Wilcox P.: Representing Marjorie's interest, right. So I think the process works very well.

Lage: What do you see as the future? Will this go on as a property management corporation or--?

Wilcox P.: There is diversity of opinion on that right now. I think what we've seen in the last year particularly is a desire of the majority of the family to move away from the idea of developing the Town Center portion of the ranch which is that key sixty-acre parcel that we're keeping for development right in the middle of that Northern Plain area. We're moving away from the idea of trying to develop that ourselves or joint venture that ourselves. I think the consensus of the board and the family is moving more towards handling that in the same way that we've handled other lands: hold onto it until the optimum time, bring it to the optimum point, and then sell that land on perhaps a successive option agreement or something of that kind, allowing the people that have an ownership interest in that piece to either take cash or exchange for other like-value real estate as they've been doing. Each family member has the option, then, of putting their exchange property under the property management agreement of the PFM office as an ongoing thing.

Lage: So some will stay with it.

Wilcox P.: Some will stay with the corporation, yes. Some will stay with the corporation, but there's been a diversity of opinion there. There's been concern about the operating costs of that office: the salaries and the operating costs. There's been concern among those people that have had property management experience over the years about having the office manage the property as opposed to having them manage the property themselves. So the future, the long-term future, of that office is at this point, I think, probably in question. But certainly in the near term, and I'm talking five years, I think there's a need for that office to operate, to be a presence in Fremont, to be a presence in the family to ensure a sense of unity and to possibly discourage a recurrence of the kind of litigation that we saw in '81.

Lage: Very good. You've given me a different perspective. It's important to record a variety of points of view.

III MEMORIES OF THE FAMILY AND RANCH

Grandpa Will Patterson

Lage: I wanted to pick up some memories from your boyhood about the ranch, your grandfather, Will, and your great-uncle, Henry.

Wilcox P.: My memories of Grandpa, as we called him, are marvelous, absolutely wonderful. One of the warmest, kindest people I've ever met. Wonderful with children, loved all his grandchildren.

Lage: He had a close relationship with them?

Wilcox P.: Very close relationship with him. All of us kids admired him, loved him. He would take us in his jeep, and he had a funny dog named Oscar that was a long haired hound of some kind, a wonderful, old dog. That dog died and Jack had gotten a dog called Treoper, a white bull terrier that was the funniest dog I ever saw in my life. It would ride around in the jeep with Grandpa, just loved him, go everywhere with him. If it saw a cat, it would go crazy. It would even climb a tree to get at a cat.

I remember riding in the jeep with my grandfather, and Grandpa was driving, and Uncle Jack was in the seat next to him, and Treoper was sitting up in the back with me. Without warning, Grandpa went over a steep embankment in his jeep, an old navy jeep, and the dog flew forward the whole length of the jeep and slammed head first into the iron or metal dashboard of this jeep. I swear it put a dent in the dashboard, and the dog looked around and shook his head and crawled back up on the seat with me, didn't hurt him a bit. Jack and Grandpa just howled. They thought it was just the funniest thing. But this dog was just a real character. If you know what a bull terrier looks like, it's the dog that George C. Scott had in the movie Patton.

Hunting on Ranch Lands

Wilcox P.: Anyway, lots of wonderful memories. I did a fair bit of duck and pheasant hunting and rabbit hunting on the ranch as a boy while Dad was in his business meetings with Grandpa and Uncle Henry. I was always a little afraid of Henry because he was so stern. But I think he was a very kind man; I sensed that. I would tramp around the ranch with my .22 rifle and became a pretty good shot and enjoyed hunting. I also did duck and pheasant shooting on the ranch.

Lage: It must have been a wonderful spot.

Wilcox P.: Oh, yes. The family holding was 3,000 acres at that time, a little more, and there wasn't much around that. I mean, you could walk all the way from my grandfather's house to the bay lands. The only people that you'd see would be perhaps an occasional car on the little secondary roads and a few fieldworkers, and lots and lots of jack rabbits and pheasants and so on. Down at the lower part of the ranch by the bay lands that are now the Coyote Hills Park, that was all duck ponds.

Lage: Both Henry and William hunted, didn't they?

Wilcox P.: Yes, both hunted. I used to see Marjorie down there a lot. She was a crack shot and loved hunting. She had a red--I think it was a red jeep that she'd ride around in. Occasionally I'd run into her. I remember one day Dad dropped me off on one of the levees by the duck pond to hunt ducks by myself, and he was late in picking me up, and I was freezing cold. Marjorie drove by; she spotted me out there and wondered if I was okay. She drove by and drove me back to the house in her jeep, I think. But I liked her very much. I do like her very much.

I had a fabulous childhood. It was tied in very closely with the ranch, very closely with my grandfather and with Uncle Jack and Uncle David.

Exploring the Secrets of the W.D. Patterson House

Lage: You were telling me some about the house and the explorations you made as a boy.

Wilcox P.: Yes, the house was marvelous. It had a porch that went around almost three sides, two sides anyway, with big columns. It was a two-story brown shingle, enormous place, and I thought it was very beautiful. It was warm, kind of dark inside. You entered

Wilcox P.: into a big entry hall with a fireplace and then to your left was a wonderful, beautiful living room with a big fireplace where we used to have our Christmases. Then there was a series of sitting rooms and then a wonderful dining room, again with a fireplace. That's where we used to have our Christmas dinners, with Uncle Jack carving. Then a marvelous breakfast room and a huge kitchen and pantry.

Lage: All a lot of wood.

Wilcox P.: A lot of wood, a lot of dark wood. This is all on the first floor. Then there was an area that was later used as a wine cellar; there was a huge back porch; bathroom; back hall. Then there was a marvelous back hall and off that back hall was the gun room. There were, I don't know, hundreds of guns in there. Collections from World War I, World War II. There were shotguns, pistols, rifles that my grandfather and Jack and Dad and Dave had acquired over the years. It was a fascinating room for us to go in and poke around because it was memorabilia from years and years and years. There'd be cases of dynamite in there [laughs] which were later moved out to the barn. It was a very masculine house, very much a ranch house, very much an outdoor, rough and tumble house.

Then upstairs it was all bedrooms and halls and bathrooms. George would remember better than I, but there were one, two, three, at least four very large bedrooms upstairs with three or four baths.

Lage: That was planning ahead when he built that as a newly married man.

Wilcox P.: Yes. Then there was a big separate garage.

Lage: How about your grandmother? How did she fit into this masculine scene?

Wilcox P.: Well, very well. She was a very strong woman. I remember her as being very, very smart. She wasn't as outgoing as my grandfather; she was more reserved. I remember Dad telling me she had a very good mind for business, very much like Uncle Henry did. She was a very shrewd lady, very smart, a very warm lady but quieter, and she was ill fairly early on in my life. She died before my grandfather, you see, so I don't remember her nearly as well, nor was her personality as outgoing as Grandpa's.

Lage: You didn't have that kind of close relationship?

Wilcox P.: No, I didn't, but only because I was much younger. I remember that she had a terrible time and was in a great deal of pain, all of my life that I knew her, with arthritis, particularly in her

Wilcox P.: hands. That was a tremendous discomfort to her, but she was a wonderful woman. I know that Dad admired her tremendously. I remember that she had collected some coins, for instance, that caught her eye. They were U.S. coins that she thought looked odd or one thing or another. It turned out that some of these were very, very valuable due to minting discrepancies. Kind of interesting. I think she had quite a stamp collection, too, but I don't remember that as well.

Lage: You had mentioned to me the secret panels of the house.

Wilcox P.: Yes, there were three or four secret panels built into the house for the storage of valuables. Dad and Grandpa told us about these panels. They didn't describe them; they just said they were secret panels. That's the way they described them. That was all. They said, "Why don't you see if you can find them?"

There were really three secret panels, I think three, and then a secret area that Dad had as a fort when he was a little kid, up under the main stairs, but you got to it from the basement. We never did find that; Dad had to tell us where it was. But we found the secret panels. The one in the dining room was activated by a doorbell button hidden on top of one of the moldings that went around the lower paneling in the room. You had to reach up--we had to stand on a chair, I think, to do it--and feel your way, and you'd touch this button and it would activate a battery-powered solenoid switch which would pop open a door. It was a panel that must have been eighteen inches wide by four feet tall, maybe, something like that. Then there was another one in one of the halls between two of the upstairs bedrooms that led to a small staircase built on the outside of one of the chimneys that went up through the house and led up to the attic.

Lage: What a wonderful place of adventure for kids.

Wilcox P.: Oh, for kids to just roam around it was like a castle with 3,000 acres of ground around it. It was a fascinating place, and it was filled with fascinating people. Uncle Jack was a fascinating man. I admired him greatly, and my grandfather was a fascinating man. There were a lot of interesting people around.

Ranch Tenants and Employees

Lage: Did you have any contact with the various families that lived on the ranch?

Wilcox P.: Not so much. We had some contact with the Andrades that leased from the ranch; some contact with some of the L. S. Williams people. There were some early dairy farmers that leased from us, the Marchy family--they were Swiss--that we saw from time to time. But two people that did make an impression on me and also, I think, on George were Dennis and Nora. They were a husband and wife team. He was the gardener, and she was the cook. They were live-in help that my grandfather and grandmother had for years, and they were marvelous people. I remember when I was about five years old, I was asking Dennis about the pigs that were in the pen out back. He said, "Do you want to see them?" He picked me up and put me inside the fence. Well, [laughs] pigs can be dangerous! They grunted and started coming for me. I remember yelling bloody murder, and Dennis snatching me out of there. He had ahold of me the whole time, but it wasn't obvious to me!

Lage: That made its impression.

Wilcox P.: Yes, but he was a neat guy. Had a wonderful sense of humor. He and his wife, Nora, cared a great deal about my grandmother and grandfather, and vice versa. Also they enjoyed the kids coming over and visiting.

Henry, Will, and Family History

Lage: Any insights to your great-uncle, Henry, from your point of view?

Wilcox P.: Oh, from my point of view? I didn't know him well. When I saw him, he was always all business. He was always serious, never smiling. I was a little bit afraid of him because he always seemed so stern and so serious. But yet I always sensed that he was a kind man. I never saw him angry or I never saw him any other than just serious and very business-like and very somber.

Lage: Even with his brother, your grandfather?

Wilcox P.: Yes. It was always business with him.

Lage: Did they seem to have a warm relationship or--?

Wilcox P.: Yes, they seemed to have a kind of understanding of one another than was a good fit in business, and it was a respect and understanding and a liking of one another, yes.

Lage: They'd worked that long together.

Wilcox P.: Oh, yes, and very, very well together from everything I could see. But I was pretty young then. I was eleven or twelve. But I sensed that Henry was a sad man, even at that age. I didn't have any idea why, but I sensed that there was a sadness in him but that he was a good man. But I always thought he was very smart.

Lage: Did the family talk at all about the previous generation? Did you have any sense of family history, of Clara Hawley Patterson or George Washington Patterson?

Wilcox P.: You mean in my childhood?

Lage: At any time.

Wilcox P.: In my childhood, very little because Grandpa and Henry were alive during most of that time.

Lage: They didn't discuss their mother?

Wilcox P.: No, they didn't. They were more concerned with current issues and, with them alive and both houses there and the ranch running in full steam as it always had, there wasn't much—I wasn't aware, anyway, of much talk of George Washington or Clara Hawley Patterson. After their death, Dad did quite a bit of research into the past and did some tapes, which he stored at the Society of California Pioneers.

Lage: Yes, we are transcribing those.

Wilcox P.: So Dad became interested in the family roots and family history. Then since Dad died, Dave and Joan Patterson have done a lot of research into the early, early history. Going back to where George Washington came from in Pennsylvania and Illinois and coming out here. So they've done a lot of historical research.

But no, when I was a child, that was history.

Lage: That's right. Maybe we don't start looking until it's disappearing.

Wilcox P.: Yes, and it wasn't until Henry and Grandpa died that I began to get a sense of any history. Then when Dad died, a much greater sense of history.

Lage: Then, of course, George has taken quite an interest.

Wilcox P.: Yes.

The Bountiful Harvest of the Ranch

Lage: Anything else you want to add about the early days on the ranch for you?

Wilcox P.: No. Just wonderful memories, particularly in the summertime, tramping through the orchard and picking the ripe figs and cherries that would grow. One of the things that we mentioned earlier, I think, was the cider parties, the apple cider parties, which go way back in my memory. I was five or six at that time.

Lage: So they were an ongoing thing?

Wilcox P.: Yes, they were an ongoing thing, and they were a marvelous party. Forty, fifty, sixty people. Dad and Dave and Jack bringing bushel baskets of apples and dumping them into the top of the apple press or grinder. Then they'd be ground and that would then be pressed, and the fresh cider would pour out.

Lage: This was all done there during the party?

Wilcox P.: Yes.

Lage: Did the guests participate and help in picking the apples?

Wilcox P.: Yes, and made gallons and gallons of cider. Then I can remember picking cherries, being up on a ten foot ladder and picking cherries in this marvelous orchard. There were loquats, there were apricots, peaches, cherries, figs, walnuts, hazelnuts, nectarines, all growing in orchards surrounding my grandfather's house. You could spend all day and not have any meals, just eat off the trees in the summertime. Then in the fall you'd gather the hazelnuts and walnuts and chestnuts, too. We'd gather chestnuts and then roast them over the fire. Marvelous place. It was like another world.

Lage: It wasn't that long ago, and yet it certainly is a disappearing way of life around the Bay Area.

Wilcox P.: It began to disappear in the mid-fifties.

Lage: When did the Nimitz freeway come through there?

Wilcox P.: I was working on the project for Jack Brooks building Cabrillo Park, and that summer the earth movers began breaking ground for the freeway. That was 1956, I believe, or '57, because I can remember I was driving by then, and I could no longer walk back to my grandmother's because they'd fenced off the excavation area, and I had to cross at Decoto Road at the overcrossing there.

Lage: So that divided the ranch and really was kind of a symbol of the end.

Wilcox P.: Yes.

[End of Interview]

Transcriber: Anne Schofield
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THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

George Patterson

Recalling the Pattersons' Past:
The Family, Land, and Historic Homes

An Interview Conducted by
Ann Lage
in 1987

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INTERVIEW HISTORY — George Patterson

George Patterson continues the family interest in history. Like his father, Donald, and grandfather, William, George is active in the Society of California Pioneers. He also serves on the Patterson House Advisory Board and is well versed in Patterson family lore. His interview provides colorful pictures of his great-grandparents, George Washington and Clara Hawley Patterson; and telling reminiscences of his grandparents, William D. and May Patterson, and of their home on the Patterson Ranch.

George Patterson also worked closely with his father, Donald, on the ranch, and he adds to our knowledge of Donald's management style and his relations with the ranch tenants. He describes the diverse uses of ranch properties before Donald's death—including a Nike missile base, a biosonar research facility, a gladiolus nursery, and a hydroponic farm operation. His interest in family history is reflected in his efforts to aid the restoration of the George Washington Patterson home and his ongoing involvement on the house advisory board.

George Patterson was interviewed in two sessions, on April 1, 1987, and May 20, 1987, at his mother's home in Menlo Park, California.

Ann Lage
Interviewer/Editor

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name George Norton Patterson

Date of birth 10-24-42 Birthplace Palo Alto, CA

Father's full name William Donald Patterson Jr.

Occupation management/investor Birthplace Oakland CA

Mother's full name Dorothy Elizabeth Wilcox

Occupation housewife Birthplace Oakland

Your spouse none

Your children none

Where did you grow up? Atherton CA

Present community Palo Alto CA

Education Menlo-Atherton High School, Univ. of Hawaii

Occupation(s) electronics/property management

Areas of expertise —

Other interests or activities history, travel/architecture, electronics

Organizations in which you are active Society of California Pioneers,
Heritage Council

I FAMILY ROOTS

The Wilcoxes From Hawaii

[Date of Interview: April 1, 1987] ##

Lage: Let's start with your personal background. Where do you fit in the Patterson family tree?

George P.: Yes, well, you know--pretty much the same as Wil. [This interview took place immediately after the interview with George Patterson's brother, Wilcox.] George Patterson, the middle child, two older brothers, William Donald III and Wilcox, and then two younger sisters, Eden and Grace. As I say, myself in the middle. My parents, Donald and Dorothy Patterson.

Lage: One thing I didn't get from Wil was something about your mother and her family.

George P.: The Wilcox family.

Lage: Right. Your mother said she was born in Oakland, raised in Oakland.

George P.: Yes, and they lived in a house on Lake Merritt and then later moved to Lincoln Avenue in Piedmont.

Lage: And what's the tie to Hawaii?

George P.: Well, my great grandparents were Abner and Lucy Wilcox, who came from Harwinton, Connecticut, and left on a sailing ship with the 8th Mission Company of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions of Boston, Massachusetts. They arrived in Hawaii (or the Sandwich Islands, at that time) in 1837. There was a group of people. They were mostly teachers and all manner

This symbol indicates that a tape or segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes, see page 337.

George P.: of people--teachers and preachers, agricultural people, and just a general sort of thing. You know, every few years they would send these mission companies over.

Abner and Lucy had, I think, seven sons, or something like that. They originally went to Oahu and then were stationed on the island of Kauai, which is where the Wilcox family henceforth stayed and established. They had a mission on Hanalei Bay, a mission house and the church and a school, which are all still there, preserved as museums by the Wilcox family. They're all tied in with the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, which is an organization formed of all families that are descended from one of these mission companies that went over to the Sandwich Islands.

As happened with most of these missionary families, they spent their life teaching or working with the Hawaiians, and then their children usually stayed on in the islands and went into either agriculture, planting, or trade. In our case, the family went into sugar planting. George Norton Wilcox, who's my namesake--I was named George Norton Patterson--was sort of the main man in the family, and he went to work for this existing Grove Farm plantation, which was run by some Germans. They had problems with irrigation and getting the water from one side of the island to the other. So he went back to school in the East--I think he went to Princeton--and took up hydraulic engineering.

He went back to the Islands and solved the irrigation problem, and over a long period of time and hard work, he acquired the plantation, not from the Hawaiians, but from the German planters. I guess they gave up. The family has pretty much been oriented around that plantation ever since, and it has been expanded through the years, and they bought an adjoining plantation and sugar mill. So that's really been the base of the island side of the Wilcox family.

Now, of those seven brothers, some of them stayed in the Islands, stayed in sugar planting, and then the eldest, Charles Hart Wilcox, came back to California, to Oroville, and went into various businesses, principally hardware and lumber. My mother is descended from that side, from the California side. So that's why there are two branches, two sides, of the Wilcox family, the mainland side and the island side.

Brother Wil is on the board of directors, one of the people representing what they call the mainland side of the family. So that's where that all ties in. There's no Hawaiian ancestry, or blood, in the family. It's all New England Protestant missionary, but they're very old and established in the Islands. Through the years, they were very public-spirited people, gave a

George P.: lot of money and assistance to the Hawaiian people, in terms of hospitals, clinics, and schools, and just generally good works. Anyway, that's the Wilcox side.

Patterson Family Sense of History

Lage: I'm glad we got that recorded. It's interesting that you come from this historical family on both sides.

George P.: On both sides, yes, that's right. Maybe that accounts for some of my interest in history because I've always been made very aware of this on both sides. I was always closely connected with the ranch, the Patterson side, because it's so close at hand. The Hawaiian side was always stories and everything, until I was twenty-one or something, and I went over to the Islands for the first time and really saw that firsthand.

Lage: In the Patterson family, was there a lot of sense of history?

George P.: Yes, there was. The people who, to my knowledge, were most closely associated with the history or the most interested in it, and in preserving it, were my grandfather--well, going back--my great-grandfather, George Washington Patterson, was one of the early members of the Society of California Pioneers in San Francisco, which was an organization founded in 1849 of people who came out to California, principally San Francisco, before the end of 1850. Originally, it was before the end of 1849, but then they moved it up to 1850.

Lage: So it was actually founded at that time.

George P.: At that time, yes. And my great-grandfather was, I believe, one of the founding members, or one of the very early members of the society; he was active in it. Then my grandfather, William Donald Patterson, was active in the Pioneer Society as well and followed that up very closely, and then my father was also very active, and I'm a member and on the board of the Society of California Pioneers also.

My father was president for a two-year term of office. I know my grandfather gave a lot of artifacts and support to the Pioneer Society through the years. He gave collections; he gave some family artifacts and also purchased collections of gold-mining implements, and a collection of everything from Wells Fargo items to gold-mining tools, and that sort of thing.

My grandfather had gathered up and kept stacked away in trunks in the attic all of the old records, accounts, diaries,

George P.: letters, tax rolls, property deeds and maps, all that stuff, dating back to the beginning of the ranch--kept it all together, organized, and then that was given a few years ago by my father to the Society of California Pioneers so that it would always be kept in one place, with access to anybody that had a legitimate interest in looking at it.

Lage: I looked over some of that when we first started this project. It's a wonderful collection.

George P.: Right. It was organized and catalogued a few years ago by a fellow that my father had go in and organize it and itemize it. That's the type of thing in so many families that I've talked to that through the years gets scattered because each member of the family and their children and their grandchildren, they find it, and they say, "Oh, yeah, well, you can have this diary, and you can have these letters, and I want this photograph," and back and forth. Pretty soon it gets scattered around, and then if somebody wants to do some research or really bring this all together, it's very difficult because it's scattered so widely. Oftentimes, some of it is lost completely, or it's never seen by anybody. It's just sort of pack-ratted away. And this way, it will always be protected, and the diaries and letters have been transcribed into typed manuscripts, so that they are readable. The original letters are there on file in the library--which, of course, now is in great turmoil because it's all being rebuilt. The whole society is being renovated so most of that stuff is boxed up now; you can't see it. It probably won't be available maybe for another year.

A person who's very very active in that, and has been compiling a history, and is one of the main people for the preservation of the Ardenwood House, the George Washington Patterson house, is Dr. Robert Fisher. [See interview in this series.] He has a great collection--in fact, when he was going through the house, anything pertaining to the family records or business accounts, all those sorts of things, he turned those over to my father, and they were included in that collection at the Society of California Pioneers. So most things are there, and there's a wonderful collection of old photographs, and Dr. Fisher also has some of those. I've seen most of them.

It is fortunate that those things were saved, and it's partly because the family lived in the same houses from when they were built. They were never abandoned, and they always were kept there right up until the end. They were able to keep an eye on them.



Above: William D. Patterson home, 1950s.

Below: Patterson family group on the porch of W. D. Patterson home, 1942. Left to right, William, Joan (wife of Jack), May (wife of William), John B. (Jack) and Donald (sons of William).



Destruction of the W. D. Patterson Home

Lage: When your grandfather's house was burned, was it carefully gone through?

George P.: Oh, yes, very definitely, yes. All the historic stuff had been taken out and was taken over to the Pioneer Society, and anything pertaining historically to the ranch or anything was taken out. The contents of the house was divided up. The three brothers, by themselves, without any outside influence, went through the house, and each person picked out what they wanted, put it in a pile or put their label on it or whatever, and then the rest of it was given to charitable organizations. So, all the things that were of historic value had long since been gathered and protected.

I even went there myself just before the house was burned because I think there was a period there when they were kind of vacillating back and forth, really whether to do this or not, and so I went through the attic very, very closely and found a lot of things that weren't historic as far as the family was concerned, but I found it very interesting. My grandfather had a strong interest in participation in the First World War. He was the organizer of the sixth liberty loan on the West Coast, and so there was all this literature in the form of magazines and papers and all this sort of thing, both British and American, on the First World War. There was a whole firsthand history of the First World War stacked away in trunks, which was going to be destroyed. I was fascinated with it, so I took all that, and I have it stored away. I don't know whatever I'll do with it, but it's interesting to look at.

There wasn't really much left in the house. The Catholic Church was given permission to come in, and they took the furnace, which was relatively new, and the furniture and all that sort of thing was either taken by the family members or given away. The only thing is that at that time there wasn't as much interest in old houses, architecture, preservation, and restoring of old houses that there is now, and the house had beautiful woodwork and cabinetry--beautiful glass crystal cabinets in the dining room, and the living room was done in redwood, clearheart redwood, with a rustic brick fireplace, and a column of redwood pillars.

Then, the entrance hall was, as I remember, done in oak with a sandstone block fireplace, and the library was done in oak as well, with built-in shelves and that sort of thing, and it kind of had a round sort of tower-like room, with little triangle-shaped windows. The dining room was done, I believe, in a combination of mahogany and a light-colored wood that might

George P.: possibly have been gumwood. Very, very pretty. And then, of course, the house had all the original lighting fixtures. It was built in 1904, and they had electricity there at the time that it was built. Looking back on it, I kick myself for not taking those because throughout they were completely original. The dining room, and the living room, and the hallways were beautiful--sort of the craftsman style, early turn-of-the-century craftsman-style fixtures. And, of course, the whole house was that style.

Lage: Do you know who it was designed by, or anything about that?

George P.: No, I don't. That's a good question; I don't know who would have the answer. My uncle David might know. It was a beautiful house, and it was all designed as one house--it wasn't an eclectic put-together series of additions like the George Washington house, the original house.

The year the house was built, 1904, was sort of the height of that craftsman period; it was just after the Victorian. It was almost a classic example of that, with the brown-shingled exterior and the porch that went all the way around, and the interior rooms downstairs all had the open-beamed ceiling. Not a vaulted ceiling, but just a flat ceiling with the heavy beams running across. That was carried through in all the rooms downstairs. And as I say, beautifully done. The paneling had never been painted over; nobody had ever gone in and modernized it or changed it in any way. It was one of these styles that now, of course, everybody really appreciates, and they're trying to put houses back to that. It was, essentially, because it was always lived in by the same family, left the same. It was in beautiful condition, and as I say, I have a collection of photographs of the interior. I'll show you those sometime.

Right at the end, I think some of those things might have been taken, but my last memory was that they were all there. Maybe at the end, some people wanted some of the woodwork and fixtures, but I sort of doubt it.

Lage: When I looked through the papers at the Pioneer Society, I noticed somewhere in one your grandfather's diaries a reference to Maybeck.

George P.: Well, if in fact it really was a Maybeck-designed house, that puts it in a whole other category, and makes it even more of a crime to have burned the house. I wish you hadn't said that, because I was sort of saying, well, it wasn't that historical.

Lage: It didn't say it was a Maybeck house; it's just that his name was mentioned [in 1931-1933], and I noted that.

George P.: Oh, yes. Because Bernard Maybeck is--yes. If it was, I'll feel even worse. But it could have been; it was right at that period when he was designing the houses; it had a lot of his features.

Lage: Don't you think that would have been noted by your family, or your grandfather would have mentioned it?

George P.: Yes, I think so. Of course, at the time that my grandfather was alive, I didn't have that sophisticated an interest in old houses. I liked old things, but I wasn't sure why yet. I loved the feeling of it, and I was more concentrated on the light fixtures and the wall switches, you know, the old push-button wall switches. I think, at the time, the word Maybeck wouldn't have rung a bell, but I never recall hearing that. But it's certainly possible.

Lage: I think that would be in the record, because I think the things Maybeck designed are known.

George P.: They are--they're books of all his houses, or at least all the known ones. Now, there's a few that might have slipped through, but this was such a large, spectacular house that if it were designed by Maybeck, it would be in the books. But a lot of the ideas that were a trademark of his style were incorporated in the house. The plans of the house I think were in the attic. As I remember, they were rolled up, all these blueprints. I vaguely remember this, I could be mixing this up with the other house, but I vaguely remember that. Because all that type of thing was saved. I believe that they were there; they were rolled up and they were suspended by strings in the rafters to keep them away from the rats. But they wouldn't have had any interest to me at the time. My memory may be playing tricks on me.

Tales of George Washington Patterson

Lage: Did that first California generation of Pattersons get talked about in the family; did you hear stories about George Washington Patterson, or about Clara Hawley Patterson?

George P.: Yes, I did. Not a great deal--as I say, when my grandfather was alive, I was not that interested in the history of people. I was interested in things more: guns, for instance, and artifacts, farm machinery, the dynamite--I was interested in the dynamite-blasting machine--all that sort of thing, and well measuring devices, you know. Something more tangible, mechanical, that sort of thing. But I do remember stories about George Washington, and Clara Hawley--just more or less generally more about his character.

George P.: The most revealing story that I ever heard about George Washington Patterson wasn't from the family; it was from a neighbor who had grown up there with George Washington Patterson, named Wally McKeown. They had the neighboring ranch, and it's since been divided up and subdivided; the house is still there, right across Alameda Creek from the ranch, so they were close neighbors. Now, my father did some tapes with Wally.

Lage: As part of this project we have transcribed those tapes. [See volume I.] McKeown was quite elderly at the time.

George P.: He was, yes. He was ninety-seven at that time. Well, Wally told me some stories, because I would drop in occasionally and bring him a basket full of cauliflower from the fields--this was a few years ago. He lived there by himself in the old house with his sister, neither one of them ever married. She was a little bit younger, in better health, but very very poor eyesight. She was almost blind. But a very interesting lady to talk to, and Wally was an interesting old fellow. Each time you'd see him, he'd have different stories, different recollections. You'd ask him a question about something one time, and you'd get a blank, and then you'd be over there another time and he would tell you the story that you wanted to hear, but without any prompting—it would just pop up out of his memory.

I was driving along one day, along the levee which separated the two ranches, about a year, year and a half before he died. His eyesight was very poor at this time, and he was out right along the road, the levee road, trimming some ivy. Actually, it was quite amazing at this age, he was probably ninety-eight or something at that time. He was out there with his clippers, and he was clipping the ivy that was growing onto the road. I mean, it was just one of those funny little things that he decided he'd do, but he was one of those people that was up and out every day, as long as he was alive. It just was his routine.

So I pulled up and walked over to him, and I was fairly close to him, and I said, "Good morning Wally! How are you doing today?" He looked up and he squinted at me, because he couldn't really see, and he said, "Who are you?" I said, "I'm George Patterson." To him, this meant George Washington Patterson. He about fell over backwards; he just took a gasp of his breath, and if he could turn any whiter than he already was, he would have, and he said, "George Washington? But you died!" And I said, "Oh, Wally, no no no. I'm his great-grandson. I'm George Norton Patterson." It took a few minutes for him to regain his composure because it was like his old friend who had died in 1895 had come back from the dead, you know, and confronted him. He was quite shook up.

George P.: But anyway, when he got it all sorted out that I was the great-grandson, we chatted a bit. But that was very interesting. He said "You sounded like him," or something. Which was really interesting, that he could remember something like that, back that far.

Lage: Right. Because he must have been much younger than your great-grandfather.

George P.: He was. I don't know what the age comparison was, but he would have been a boy, a young boy, at the time. He wasn't his contemporary; he didn't grow up with him in that sense, but he remembered him because one of the stories that he told me was very revealing about George Patterson's character.

When he was a boy, and I don't know the year--he didn't know the year either--we used to have a navigable slough that came in from the bay, wound in behind the Coyote Hills, which is now the Coyote Hills Regional Park. It has since been dredged out and straightened, as part of the Alameda Creek Flood Control Project, by the Army Corps of Engineers. But at that time, there were sloughs that came in, and in behind the hills there was a landing there, Patterson Landing. It had some big barns and warehouses and wharves. They were private, for the ranch, similar to what a lot of properties along the bay at that time had. It was before the railroad was in, and to get produce to San Francisco and Oakland, you shipped it by scow schooners--shallow-draft sailing schooners. We have some very nice photographs of them that we got from the maritime museum in San Francisco. They happen to have a record of them.

The main one--I think there were three altogether--but the one we have photographs of is called the Broadgauge. Anyway, these schooners would come in behind the hills there to the landing, and they would load up with grain, and hay, and produce--whatever was being produced at the time--and take it up to San Francisco, to the wharves up there, and unload it and sell it. There wasn't any trucking at that time; to send something by wagon would be a terribly roundabout way, if in fact it would even be possible most of the year. And as I say, the railroad hadn't been developed yet, and to get to San Francisco, of course, there were no bridges; so these schooners were the ideal way, and there were lots of them on the bay. Any property that had landings on the bay would have schooners, so there must have been quite a crowd of these schooners plying the bay, hauling cargo to and from around the bay--across the bay, down the bay, up the bay, to San Francisco.

Anyway, one day Wally came out. It was midmorning, as Wally told it. The barns down at the landing had caught fire and were burning. People had run down there, you know--it was

George P.: big excitement, and it was down by the bay so you could see it from all around. So everybody was running down there to see what was happening. They were burning, of course, and they had no pumps or fire control systems and certainly no fire department. Everybody was running around frantically, wondering what to do and getting buckets of water and what not. Somebody ran up to the house and told George Washington Patterson that the barns were on fire.

He got on his white horse and rode down and took one look at the situation, just without saying a word, summed it up and assessed the situation as being totally hopeless. No need to get excited, no need to panic. It was going to burn to the ground and that was it. Start rebuilding tomorrow. That's what impressed Wally so much; here was this man whose all year's produce and what not was going up in flames, and he was just completely dead calm about it. Didn't say a word. Took one look at it and turned around and rode back and had lunch. [laughter.]

Wally was so impressed with that; George Washington Patterson had such a bearing, sitting there in the saddle with his hat--and he just was totally unmoved by the whole situation. And Wally said, "That really impressed me. The man was not without feelings, but he just was very practical and not carried away by emotion." He just assessed the situation and left. To Wally, the figure of this man sitting there on the white horse, watching this, was amazing. He remembered that like it happened yesterday. He described everything; he described the reaction of the people and the contrast between this frantic effort to put out this fire and the reaction of one person who should be concerned but was totally passive to the whole thing. He said he really admired Mr. Patterson. He was not--what did he say?--he was not a highly approachable, chatty sort of man; he was a man of few words. He was on the serious side, but you know--had everybody's respect, and a very fair and kind person. But not overly on the social side.

Lage: Not maybe as outgoing as your grandfather.

George P.: Yes, right. That was very interesting, that little picture from Wally.

Lage: That's good; it's nice to have the recollection of somebody who remembers firsthand.

George P.: Yes. Well, that was the last person alive that remembered him.

Lage: That's nice that you got to talk to him, and that your father interviewed him.

Great-Grandmother Clara Hawley Patterson ##

Lage: What about your great-grandmother, Clara Hawley Patterson? Your father knew her, as a child.

George P.: Yes. She died in 1916, and she was--oh, let's see what I've heard about her. She was quite a bit younger than George Washington. She was very interested in foreign countries, foreign travel. She was very interested in cultural things; did a lot of reading. In fact, a lot of her books are there in the library. She was very well-read and interested in the world at large, probably much more than George Patterson was. He was, from what I gather, primarily interested and concerned with the local community, his own ranch, of course, and the local organizations. Which, of course, Clara was as well, but she also had this very strong interest in the outside world, in a much broader sense. I know she had a fascination for horticulture and plants of all types from all different parts of the world. The garden over there at the Ardenwood house, the old house, reflects that. There are a lot of very interesting old trees and plants, I'm sure most of which have long since disappeared, but there are a few left that were planted by her.

She was also interested particularly in Asian culture. We have at the Pioneer Society picture albums that she took. Some of them were after 1895, when she did some travelling overseas. We have a lot of these picturebooks, showing her to be somebody very interested in another culture.

Lage: Did your father pass any stories down about her?

George P.: Yes, I'm trying to remember what they are, offhand. She was very interested, of course, in the Orient, and something that really applies to the ranch that was interesting--in 1915, they had the Panama-Pacific World Exposition in San Francisco; the Palace of Fine Arts is the remaining structure from that. It was quite an elaborate fair that had pavilions from all different parts of the world. She was very fascinated, as I say, with Japan. When the fair was breaking up, they were tearing down or selling off all the artifacts--in other words, if you wanted a building, or you wanted parts of it, they were being sold, and what wasn't sold or was too big was torn down.

Well, she admired this Japanese house. It was, I think, a typical Japanese residence, as I understand it, a domestic house. Quite a nice one. Quite a good-sized house. She bought that, had it disassembled. It had been made in Japan, thin walls and a wooden frame and rice paper, a beautifully built house. It was disassembled and shipped to San Francisco from

George P.: Japan, and then it was disassembled and moved to Ardenwood. It was about a quarter of a mile from the old house, out in the walnut orchard.

Lage: Is it still there?

George P.: No. It burned down, mysteriously, on December 7 or 8, 1941, as the story goes. Now, Sally Adams, who was living on the ranch and growing up, probably would know more exactly, but the story I got was that it may have been coincidence or it may have been by some other cause--you know, hoboes living it and setting fire to it accidentally--but--

Lage: The date [one day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor] would make one suspicious of arson.

George P.: Yes. The date would--yes. The story is that that's when it burned down. Now, I've heard conflicting stories, but I think it seems to boil down to the fact that it did burn down then, and that it was some resentment against the Japanese, which was running at a rather high pitch at that point. So, anything obviously Japanese was fair game.

So anyway, after the exposition the house was moved down; they poured a foundation for it; it was all set up. We have a nice set of architectural photographs of it at the Pioneer Society. They're nice, big, clear pictures of it, just after it was completed. It was intended to have all the oriental gardens around it, but that was never finished. The house, I don't think, was ever furnished, but it was finished as far as the structure itself and had all the fittings and fixtures. I've sifted through the ashes over there where it was and found all the brass fitting--little hinges and cornerpieces and what not, a typical Japanese house, and pieces of rooftiles--the ends of the roofs would have these tiles with a chrysanthemum on them. There's bits and pieces of that in the rubble there.

I don't know if it was just going to be like a summer house, or a tea house, or whether she actually planned to move into it. I have a feeling that she planned to live there at least in the summers because she had a very strong interest and a liking of the simplicity and the airiness, so to speak, of the Japanese house.

Lage: Very different from the old Victorian house.

George P.: Right; exactly. It would be a complete contrast from this old heavy sort of Victorian mansion; it would be a great, lovely thing in the spring to move out to that house and still have the old family, solid house there behind you, maybe for the winter, but in the summer it would be wonderful. And then with lovely

George P.: Japanese gardens around it, it would really be a nice place. Really a shame that it's not still there.

But anyway it was completed up to that point, and I think it was even plumbed and wired because I found plumbing pipes and electrical wires in amongst the ruins. And according to the photographs, it was pretty well finished. Then, she died in 1916, right in the midst of this project. So that put an end to that.

After George Washington died in 1895, then--here, I don't know the dates, because everybody's been pretty mum on this subject. She was, I believe, on a trip, on a steamer, to Europe or to the Orient, and she met this parson, or preacher, who was a very nice fellow. What was his name? [William H.] Layson.

Lage: Was he a local pastor?

George P.: I don't know whether he might have been local. I heard that they met on a trip, and I know they travelled together. He was by all accounts a wonderful gentleman, but there was a lot of friction there. You must remember that Clara Hawley was considerably younger than George Washington, so she would still be midlife when she remarried.

The boys, though, Henry Hawley Patterson, the oldest son, and William Donald Patterson, the younger son, were deadset against their mother remarrying. I guess they just didn't like it. So this guy was not appreciated; he was not received well. I guess at that time the boys would have been maybe away at college, or something. You'd have to figure out the dates and the times and who was where. But he was not liked. So that didn't last very long. I think most of the time they spent together was away from the house--it was on trips, or it was away, so that it didn't aggravate the boys. But it didn't last very long. I don't know if it was a year or two, something like that, and they dissolved the marriage. [Layson died in 1909.]

So I know very little about the person. There's been very little recorded in the family about it. Just one of those things that is just sort of mum.

Lage: It didn't get talked about in the family?

George P.: Yes. But getting back to Clara, I understand that she was a very attractive lady, very well educated, and interested in a lot of subjects that were completely outside the operation of a ranch. Whereas George Washington, I have the feeling, was more--well, he had a big operation to run there, and he didn't have the time, I suppose, to be interested in outside things.

II RECOLLECTIONS OF GRANDFATHER WILL AND HIS HOME

Christmas Eve Rituals

Lage: Let's move on to your memories of your grandfather. Tell me about when you visited the ranch as a boy.

George P.: The principal visit to the ranch was Christmas Eve. Everybody went over there. There was my grandfather and my grandmother, and the three boys: William Donald, my father, the oldest; and then Jack Patterson, the second oldest; and then David, the youngest of the three. At that time, my earliest memories would be myself and my two brothers; David and his wife, Jackie, and their children, Scott and Laura. David's children were very young at that time. Then there was Uncle Jack, and his children, Bruce and Mimi. They were younger as well, but a little bit older than David's children.

Every year, Christmas Eve was really, for me, the high point of Christmas. It was the Christmas. We went over in the evening, and the house was all lit up. It was very Christmasy, and there were fires going in all the fireplaces. It seems to me, as a child, it was always storming heavily around Christmas. It wasn't snowing, but it was storming, and sometimes there were even floodwaters that were over the roads going into the house, and that sort of thing, which all made it very exciting and interesting. It really was at that time very rural. There were the few big estates, principally the ranch, and then there were a few small farmhouses in the peripheral area, and then the small towns. But basically, going across the Dumbarton Bridge, and going into the ranch, there was really nothing. It was really out in the country. Going across the old Dumbarton Bridge and over to the ranch at night was a real adventure. Then you'd come across huge groves of eucalyptus trees--the whole setting of the place, and the whole atmosphere, was really magical for a child. It's something that's a high point of my memories as a child.

Lage: What was Christmas Eve like? Was your grandfather open to all the kids coming?

George P.: Oh, yes. He was a very warm person, very jovial. Always had his little pet jokes and tricks he'd play on you. He really seemed to enjoy his grandchildren. It really was, in my memory, a model Christmas, model family Christmas. I mean, it was right out of Norman Rockwell [laughter].

There would be this huge, big Christmas tree, which my dad and my uncles had set up. I think Uncle Jack was the one who was in charge of that, as I remember. He played the role of Santa Claus. Of course, it was in the big living room, and they had the tree in there, and of course there was the fire going, and it was just a beautiful old living room. Even then, it made such an incredible impression on me, this dark wood and the fireplace and that sort of thing. My grandmother all dressed up in a very nice manner--everybody was all dressed up. It seems then that people really dressed up for an occasion. I remember it clearly.

We would all be out in the hallway and the library. The dining room was closed off, being set for a big Christmas Eve dinner, and so we'd all sit around in the library and the entrance hall--where the front door came in off the porch. There was also a big roaring fire there; there was a fireplace. Jack and David would be in the living room; they had the big sliding doors, and they had velvet curtains that would go across too. They would be in there arranging all the presents and getting it all set for Christmas.

In all the excitement of those days, I can't remember whether we had dinner first and then went in to open the presents after dinner--I think that's the way it was--or the other way around, whether we opened the presents and then went into dinner. I can remember everything else really clearly, and I remember it was quite a banquet, quite a feast, in the old formal sense of the word, in the beautiful dining room with all crystal cabinets, and all the beautiful china and glassware and silver.

And there was a beautiful turkey brought out, and I remember that Uncle Jack was always the chef of the family. He really admired and appreciated fine food and fine wine, and he'd gone to school in France for a long time. I think he went all through high school in France, and spoke French fluently, and had quite a love of the French culture. So, naturally, he was very interested in cooking and seeing that a meal was presented just right. He would preside over the carving of the turkey and all that. My grandfather would sit at the head of the table, and my grandmother would sit at the foot of the table.

George P.: We would have a lovely big dinner, and of course, everyone wanted to go in and open the presents. We would put on this thing--"oh, Santa Claus is here!" Well, it would be my Uncle Jack, as I remember, playing the role of Santa Claus. He would come in, and everybody would be arrayed around the tree and the fireplace. The presents would be handed out by Uncle Jack. Of course, it seemed always that Christmas Eve, the atmosphere and the setting, was the nicest or the most authentically what you think of in your mind and your fantasy as Christmas. It was really a wonderful evening, and it always seemed that we had gotten the best presents, etc.

Then, late at night, after it was all over, we all piled in the old station wagon and drove home because we lived over in Atherton, which is directly across the bay. I have very warm memories about Christmas Eve at the ranch.

Floods in the Fifties

George P.: We'd go over quite often on weekends all during the year, I'd say mostly in the summer, the good weather, but also in the winter. In 1955 when it was flooding and the levees were washing out, all us kids were over there and my dad and my mom and my brothers. There was a National Guard encampment down on the hills at the time, or maybe they were brought in from outside, I can't remember. But anyway, they helped put sandbags on this levee, and we all went out to help, both my grandfather and myself, to help load sandbags on all these places where the water was starting to wash over. So we worked late into the night, totally soaked and piling bags up. Well, during the middle of the night, the flood peaked--crested--and the levee washed out anyway, and the lower part of the ranch was flooded. So it was to no avail.

The house wasn't flooded, because it was higher than the surrounding ground, but the roads leading in and out were awash, and there was quite a current of water, and it was difficult at night and everything--you couldn't see where the road was--so my dad said we'd spend the night there. That was really fun; that was a real adventure.

That was, I think, 1955--'55 or '58. There were a couple of times when there were floods like that, every few years. There isn't any more; that's the reason the Army Corps of Engineers put in that big flood control channel. But it takes a lot of the--what should we say--the adventure out of the place. And the place is now civilized; it's a city; it's no longer a rural ranch, that sort of thing. Times have really changed.

George P.: During the summer, we'd come over a lot, during summer vacation, and spend weekends there, or come over for the day, spend a long day. My dad always was very strongly interested in the ranch operation, and in the business end of it, and he'd always be in business sessions with his father. Just in the general running of the ranch. And also, the planning and--starting in the mid-fifties--the future development of the ranch, starting out on a small scale. But that was coming into people's minds at that time.

Lage: Were you aware at the time that development was coming?

George P.: Yes, gradually, a little bit.

Lage: I heard that in 1955, just before Henry died, they actually had had a plan with Jack Brooks to--

George P.: They had started working on it, yes. And some of the first land that was sold was by my dad, and Uncle David, and Uncle Jack, who each had a hundred acres across Jarvis Road; they could do whatever they wanted with it. It was part of the ranch operation, but it was their own land. Sally and Marjorie, my cousins, each had--I don't know--150 acres or 200 acres, something like that--on the same side of Jarvis Road. And that was the first land that was sold off for housing development. I remember that. Jack Brooks was the developer on that, and Wil and, I think, my brother Bill both worked during the summers on the construction crews over there.

But that was some of the first development over there, and they were small tract houses. One of the early tract developments around there. So at that time the ranch was starting to--on the outer fringes--be sold off and developed.

Will: His Jeep, Dog, and Colt .455

George P.: I'd spend most of the time with my grandfather in his old World War II surplus army jeep, open jeep, that he used to drive around in, and then he also had a 1939 Oldsmobile coupe--Opera Coupe, they call it. It had been his regular car, and then he just retired it to drive around the fields. It was a great-running car.

Lage: You must have loved that.

George P.: Yes! And it was great to have for the dogs to hop in the back. Then he had a later model, I think a 1954, '55 Oldsmobile, as his current car to drive on the road, although he'd take that out on the fields too, sometimes, if he felt like it.

Lage: He'd take you around with him on his--?

George P.: Yes. I would go around, on weekends, I would go around with him all the time, to check on this pump or that pump, or make sure the water was irrigating this field, or it wasn't overflowing onto this roadway. And to check that everything was running smoothly, and that there was no--another favorite pastime of his was to patrol the ranch for trespassers--either people hunting or just people trespassing on the ranch. At that time there weren't many people around, so that you really knew when somebody was there that shouldn't be. It wasn't bordered by all these subdivisions, at all. So there wasn't just constant people around.

He'd ride around in the old car, or the old jeep, and he'd have his dog in the back, his dog Trooper, who was a white--I don't know if it was a pit bull or a bull terrier--one of those ones, you know, with the deep set eyes and the long funny face. It was great, a real funny dog; this is the dog that I most remember all the time that I was there. I think originally it was Uncle Jack's dog, because Uncle Jack had lived there for a time, I think, after the war. It was a twin dog to the dog that General George Patton had in the Second World War. I think Uncle Jack was quite an admirer of General Patton, so he had a dog just like it.

Anyway, it became my grandfather's dog. So we'd go driving all around the dusty roads, all around the ranch, and down on the hills and all around, around the Indian burial mounds and all over the place, and every time there'd be a--

Lage: He was aware they were Indian burial mounds?

George P.: Oh, very much so; oh, yes. They were small hills there, and they were being excavated even at the time. They were just starting to do excavation by San Francisco State, San Jose State, Stanford University, University of California at Berkeley; they all had a little project there, eventually. Dr. Treganza, I believe, was from San Jose State or something and was the principal person, later, at least when I used to be over there all the time. But there were other people. And my grandfather would always go chat with the archaeologists about the digging. He was very fascinated by that sort of thing, and he'd always have long chats. It was, of course, fascinating for me, and I could go back to school on Monday morning and tell the class about my experiences at the Indian mound--and especially come back with a skull or something; it was quite impressive. I think they all thought it was a bit strange.

George P.: But anyway, it was absolutely great fun for a kid to have a place like this. My grandfather was a very warm person, as long as you were on the right side of the fence. I mean, he loved his grandchildren, and he was really warm and considerate, and he really did a lot of things--just being with him was really a lot of fun. It was different than being with your parents, because your parents are always under pressure about something--the grandfather, everything was always okay.

So we'd always be riding around, and every time a jackrabbit jumped out of one of the rows of cauliflower or corn or tomatoes, or something, Trooper wouldn't even wait for the door to be open. He'd try to leap out the window, if he was in the old Oldsmobile. If he was in the jeep, of course, it was open, and it just didn't matter how fast you were driving along; the dog would just leap out of this car, full tilt, chasing this jackrabbit. And he would sometimes chase them down; oftentimes he wouldn't because they would run down one row of a cultivated field, and then they would jump over, unseen by the dog, into another row or something, and the dog would lose it that way. Then it would run across the rows, and down and across, and the dog would be following straight down. But anyway, it was very comical to watch. The dog had a great time. My grandfather always let the dog out, when we'd be driving, twenty-five, thirty miles an hour, and the dog would want to get out just to run, run along side the car. We'd be driving along, and of course there would be a cloud of dust coming off the rear wheels, and it didn't seem to bother the dog. The dog would be just running through this huge cloud of dust. I don't know if the dog was short on brains, or what, but he just adored my grandfather, and vice versa. So that was really great.

And my grandfather was very good at explaining everything, you know. Why such-and-such was a certain way, and why this was that, and so on. A few times I saw the other side; his tough side. He was a deputy sheriff, which I suppose a lot of people out in the rural areas are; if they're a big landowner, they get a star. Anyway, he had this big old revolver, big old Colt .455. He carried it in the glove box of the old Oldsmobile. He had his badge pinned to the inside of the door. Occasionally, he'd come across some trespassers, and he'd come up and in no uncertain terms run them off the property.

They usually would turn tail and get out of there, once he told them rather gruffly that it was private property. But occasionally, they would see this little old man, and he wasn't a big fellow, you know. He was fairly small of stature. And they would give him some backtalk, because he didn't look like much. He had a little fedora hat, kind of crunched down on his head, and he just looked like a farmer in this old car. So he'd reach into the glove box and pull out this big, huge revolver,

George P.: and he'd point it at them, and generally that was the end of any sort of argument or resistance. People would high-tail it out of there.

I remember once--it was on a bridge trestle that runs through the center of the ranch, the old Western Pacific tracks. It originally was the old route of the South Pacific Coast railroad that went through--that's a whole other story, which you've heard, about my great-grandfather trying to stop the railroad. Well, it's the same track line, and there's these series of little trestles across the ranch where water courses go under the tracks. They're not very high, but you can drive a car under them. They're access through to other fields. These two guys were up on the trestle one time, and my grandfather pulled up down below, and they started giving him a bad time, swearing at him, and they threw a couple of stones off the tracks at him. And boy, he just stepped out with this big revolver, and I've never seen two people disappear down the tracks faster! But that certainly put an end to trespassing.

Lage: Must have made an impression on you, also.

George P.: It did. Made a very good impression. I realized he was a great, jovial, kind sort of person, and he was a small sort of person, and he seemed very kindly. But, if you crossed him, depending on which side of the fence you were on--. But anyway, a delightful person. Just nothing but the most wonderful memories about him.

Lage: Did you have any sense of an ethical code he was trying to pass on, or--?

George P.: Yes; oh yes, very definitely--a strong belief in the rights of private property! Just generally, yes, a wonderful person, and as I say, a person that was more relaxed than my dad, which, I think, is always true. Your grandparents are always more relaxed than your parents themselves because they don't feel so much that they have to always be a guide or always be correcting on something.

Grandmother May, Quiet and Genteel

Lage: How about your grandmother? Was she a memorable figure?

George P.: Very much so. But she was a sort of quieter person; all the time that I knew her she was a very genteel lady.

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George P.: There was the breakfast room between the kitchen and dining room, which opened onto a brick walkway lined with herb plants, and then it went out into kind of a brick patio and through a hedge, to kind of a secret garden, the magnolia garden. It had these big magnolia trees in the middle of it, great shade trees. Beautiful, surrounded by a very high hedge, completely isolated from everything else. There was a swing out there and chairs, and she'd have tea out there in the spring and the summer. And always I remember her with a sunbonnet, wearing these sort of hexagon-shaped glasses, old-style glasses, with a bonnet and sort of a springtime dress on. This is the picture that immediately comes to mind. She was very sort of proper, very much the old style lady.

Lage: More reserved?

George P.: Yes. I'd say a little bit more reserved, although she certainly had a good sense of humor, but it was a drier sense of humor, maybe. And she was very smart, a very shrewd person. And then I remember, in the winters and stuff, I'd come over, and we'd sit on the couch in the library, and she'd read stories to me, hour after hour. They were out of this big book--I'm sure it was probably some English story--about this world of animals. It wasn't any of the ones that I recognize, you know, like Wind in the Willows or something that you'd heard of.

She used to always read me chapters out of this book, and it was absolutely fascinating. I wish I could find the book, or remember it. Of course, I learned a lot of words, I remember, from that. I remember learning what the word menagerie meant. It seems to me that it must have been English, because there were a lot of words that sounded very English, looking back on it. But anyway, she liked to spend this time reading with me, and then, as I say, out in the garden, but always looking very much a lady. Wonderful person, but more severe--in a nice way, but a more serious sort of a person. And of course, I only remember her in the earliest memory, because she died well before my grandfather did. So later, when I used to spend a lot more time over at the ranch on my own, with some of my friends, down on the hills hunting--rabbits, and generally just shooting and hiking around and stuff--she had died by that time. That was during high school.

Boyhood Explorations of Attic and Carriage House

George P.: I spent most of my weekends and even some days after school during my high school years over there. I could just drive over after school because myself and my friends had a car, and I started an interest at that time in guns and gun collecting and shooting and that sort of stuff, which was something my grandfather was always very interested in. At that time, of course, Uncle Jack lived over there, and being an old paratrooper and cavalry officer, he was very interested in guns and shooting and military things.

Lage: Now, when would this have been?

George P.: This was, let's see, late fifties, early sixties. Now, the stories about my grandmother, of course, are earlier. Because she died—I can't remember what year she died. I remember staying over there for a weekend in the winter and staying upstairs, and I can really remember the big bathroom, with the big bathtub, and all of it had been done in little octagon tiles on the floors, and then the oval windows in the bathroom. They were leaded glass windows that looked out from the front of the house. It was the big master bathroom, and then there was a big bedroom on each side. I remember one day coming in cold and wet from being outside, and I remember my grandmother fixing up this huge big bathtub full of bath salts and all this sort of thing, and being thrown into the bathtub.

Really nice memories. And of course, my favorite areas were the attic of the house and the old barn—or really carriage house—out back, with the various rooms and the loft there. In those days, they had lots of room and they put everything that was no longer used up in the loft or in the attic or in the barn, rather than throw it out. They would put it away someplace, save it. So the attic was full of fascinating items, and so was the old carriage house, or barn. Now, this is all to do with my grandfather's house, not the other house.

There were all these racks of big old green bottles, and there was an old cider press, and then there was all these oak barrels. During Prohibition, they used to make cider, and ferment it—make hard cider. There was a lot of this left over in these big green, champagne-type bottles, all dusty and everything, on these old racks. It was really fascinating. And then the old cider press—it would grind up the apples, and then there was a press on it for making cider. That's an interesting thing, because they had cider parties over there. I remember some of the later ones, but apparently we have quite a picture album of them. Of course, it was before my time, so I wasn't there.

George P.: But they started in about 1938, going all the way up until the early fifties. Every year at apple harvest time, they'd have a whole gathering of their friends over, and of course my grandparents would be there, and there were lots of friends. I think at that time my parents were living in Berkeley--the Berkeley hills. A whole group of their friends and they would gather over there for these big cider parties. They would all go out and pick sacks full of apples, and then bring them in, and put them in the grinder, and make it into pulp, and then press it. On the other end of the cider press is this big--like a wine press--and you press all the juice out, and then they bottled it in gallon jugs. There would be gallons and gallons of this cider, and it was absolutely delicious because it had all the ingredients of the apples. It wasn't filtered or anything; it was just great.

So, they were quite a social gathering. I personally remember the last one or two of these parties. But they have them quite well documented with photographs, so if anybody wants to get the feeling of what it was like.

Lage: The park district has the albums?

George P.: Yes. They're absolutely fascinating. That cider press--and I remember one time, the day my grandfather had it all rebuilt and everything. Then after he died, and the house was burned down, and it sat around and kind of got kicked around there, and then it was moved over to one of the outbuildings over at the Ardenwood house. It was in need of renovation again, but it could have been fixed up, and somebody filched it. Somebody ran off with it; somebody came along with a pickup truck or something, a couple of guys, and got rid of it.

Five years ago, I was wandering around this antique cooperative--you know, these places where all these people have all these antiques to sell. It was kind of a grand opening thing, and everything was on sale. There was an exact, almost an exact replica, or same type of cider press, as the one that had always been on the ranch, made by the same maker, same company, and in beautiful condition. It was a little bit smaller model; it was probably the next size down. So I bought it and took it over to the ranch and gave it to the people at the Ardenwood Park. So they use it now and have these cider-making gatherings over there. Cider making was a major part of the life around the houses over there. Certainly around my grandfather's house. I didn't know that much about the people and what went on at my great-grandfather's house, the Ardenwood house.

But anyway, they do have a cider press over there. Of course, by this time, all the apple trees have died. [laughter]

Lage: They have to import apples?

George P.: Well, they do now, but they've replanted the orchard, part of it, and eventually they'll have their own apples.

But as I say, I had a great time in the attics and lofts and everything over there, exploring all this stuff. And of course, I had all these questions--I'd come down and I'd ask my grandfather about this and about that, where did this come from, and what is that--you know, a lifetime of things that he'd collected.

There was the gun room, with the racks of guns, and it had all these Indian artifacts from the burial mounds, and it had a little jar full of gold that he'd saved, panning, when he was spending time in the Sierras. He went on the Alaskan gold rush, in 1901. He went up there, and he went bear-hunting up there a few times. So he had all his equipment from that, and snowshoes, and his ice axe, and the big bear rifle, and all his camping gear that he took with him. He was a great one for adventure. His brother, Henry, was the one that stayed home on the ranch and minded the farm, I think pretty much most of his life. My grandfather, of course, worked with him and helped him, but when he could, he went off on adventure trips. He was much more of an adventuresome person, in terms of hunting and mountain climbing, looking for gold, whatever. He was a real adventurer at heart. When he could get away, he would do that.

The Two Family Branches and the Direction of the Ranch

Lage: Do you remember your uncle Henry at all?

George P.: I do; yes. Not nearly as clearly as my grandfather, because he was a quiet sort of man--to me, he looked like a little Italian wine-grower, sort of. He had that little fedora hat, and he was a short sort of fellow, in a dark suit. I'd see him usually with my grandfather; when we were out patrolling around the ranch, we would come across him, or we would go over to the house and see him. He was a kindly person. As I say, I didn't get to really know him very well. Just, you know, the pleasantries that you'd exchange with someone like that.

Because, the two families were not close--they worked very well on a business level, and in terms of running the ranch, it worked very well. But socially, they had completely separate social lives, and pretty much separate groups of friends, and the two houses were separated by about a mile or a mile and a half of woods and fields, so they really were not in each

George P.: other's way, by any means, and I think it was a respect and, above everything, it was a respect for their privacy and individual lives. But, I think, the two that got along well were, of course, my grandfather and his brother. That worked well. That's the family--there's always been a distance between them that, I think, to a certain degree exists to this day.

Lage: Do you see differences within the family today as dividing along those family lines, or--it seems like there's a lot of crossover.

George P.: Well, there's a lot of crossover because both sides of the family are jointly owners and tied together by this ranch. Everything was jointly owned, together, so everything had to be run together. Of course, now, as Wil explained, it's all been set up in corporations and that sort of thing.

Lage: But the differences of opinion, say, that exist today in how the ranch should be developed--do you see connections back to the differences between the Henry side of the family and the W. D. side?

George P.: Yes, I suppose so. I wasn't really a party to the differences going back to Henry and Will, but there the development didn't really come into the picture that much because Henry was strictly concerned with running the ranch, and the development thing had just started to come into play when my grandfather was alive. So, it's really been the next generation that's had to hash out the pace and the direction of development. But it's really been guided pretty much on our side by--well, our desires, but Jack Brooks and his planning and his ideas; he's the expert in that area. And his ability to interface all of that with the city of Fremont and the city of Newark. He works very well with the city and the government people and the park people, but in the final analysis, it's really what the city and the city council and the planning commission of the City of Fremont, principally, what they want to see done with what they call the northern plain, which is that whole lower part of the ranch. It's just hashing out the different ways of developing it, really, coming to the same point.

That's why I say Jack Brooks is such an expert at that. He knows, and has worked with, and gets along with both sides very well. So he's a wonderful person to see these things through.

Lage: Did you work with him as often as your brothers?

George P.: Not as much. I did have a number of sessions with him, jointly with him and my father, a number of times, and then, since then, I've met with him with other family members; with Wil, for instance, and with my Uncle David, to sort of plan out the

George P.: strategy and direction and where things go. But more and more it's become what the city of Fremont wants, and the East Bay Regional Park District, because large areas were initially taken into Coyote Hills. There was a thousand acres there that were taken for the East Bay Regional Park District, and then there's the two hundred acres that's the Ardenwood Regional Preserve, and then the cattle ranch behind Livermore, which was an interesting story how that was acquired, and I think I'm telling the right story if I tell you that. But anyway, the state took a large piece of land up there--somewhere around thirty-five hundred acres for the Del Valle Reservoir and the park surrounding it.

History of the Livermore Ranch

George P.: I don't have all the figures on the story behind the cattle ranch in Livermore. It could be researched out at the Pioneer Society because, I think, all the deeds are there. My great-grandfather was a great one for loaning money, and that's how, after the gold rush when he came down to Mission San Jose, he started out in farming, but just renting from the Spanish landowners. But I think he did pretty well in loaning money. He did okay in the gold fields in the American River. In fact, we have a little envelope with the first gold nuggets that he dug. But I think he did better in loaning money, and land deals and that sort of thing.

He had a brother, named Andrew Jackson Patterson, who came out from Indiana sometime after he did. He came out here, and was married. He was fascinated with race horses and horse racing, and he had a place not too far from the old home ranch there, and he raised these race horses. Then he had this land up in Livermore, which is now the original part of the Patterson cattle ranch. Sometime along the line, he got into debt, or needed money, and so he borrowed money from his brother, George Washington Patterson, to--I don't know what. His story is very vague and very sketchy, and I don't know very much about it. My father didn't know much about him, and he was sort of considered the black sheep of the family.

As my father always summed it up, he liked fast horses and faster women. So, he ended up--he just disappeared. Anyway, the original part of the ranch went to his brother George, who was much more serious, much more of a businessman, and always tried to, whenever he could, acquire adjoining lands. Whenever he was able to, he would buy or manage to somehow get adjoining land to build larger and larger--because both ranches are made up of a lot of individual, smaller pieces that he was able to buy out.

George P.: Anyway, on the cattle ranch thing, George had loaned Andrew some money, and he couldn't pay it back, but for collateral, he had that ranch, which, I think, he used to run his horses, raise his horses or something, up there behind Livermore. And so when Andrew defaulted on the loan, or whatever the circumstances were, George Washington ended up with that. That was the basis of the cattle ranch, and he bought adjoining land to make that into a holding of ten thousand acres. He did the same with the lower ranch [in Washington Township], starting out with maybe a couple hundred acres, and then eventually ending up at its peak with about thirty-five hundred acres, all told. It's, of course, considerably less than that now, and the cattle ranch is considerably less than it was.

And then another adjoining ranch that he bought up there in Livermore was the Pope Ranch, and Pope Flat, which is now all underwater. It was nice bottom country, with a beautiful creek with sycamore trees, and in the spring we used to go up and have great picnics up there.

Lage: Is that now Del Valle Reservoir?

George P.: Yes. The Del Valle Reservoir is there now. I remember the old house; it was an old pioneer, two-story house. Beautiful old place, totally weathered, and riddled with woodpecker holes, full of acorns and pine nuts. We have some photographs, fortunately. That's gone, that was destroyed. They destroyed all that; cut all the trees down and everything before they filled the reservoir. And there were all these woodchopper's cottages on the property.

But that main old house was very interesting. Old man Pope came out in the gold rush, and he settled there, and lived in this cabin. I think he lived there by himself. Quite a substantial old house; two stories. And as I say, even when I saw it, it was in a severe state of disrepair. It was a classic abandoned house, something you would expect to see out in the prairies after the Dust Bowl or something. The windows and everything were gone, but it was a very nicely made old house. It was, of course, all made with clear redwood with square nails, and very early. It was probably built in, say, around 1860, I would imagine. But as I say, it was a shell of its former self when I had seen it, and it had an old stone foundation, nicely made stone foundation, and then the rest of the house was wood. It was full of barn owls and swallows, and the walls were full of honeybee nests. But it really had a classic picture of an old house, abandoned house someplace. If it ever was painted, there wasn't any paint on it; it was completely weathered down to nothing.

George P.: But anyway, when my great-grandfather had bought that piece of property and paid old man Pope the money, he just walked away and left everything in the house untouched. Just took the money and, I think, headed to San Francisco, or something. Laying on the table--my grandfather used to tell me this story--was a matched set of 36-caliber dueling pistols, long-barreled dueling pistols or boot pistols, as they called them sometimes. Very simple percussion--you know, 1860s vintage. They were--oh, I can almost remember the make on them; Allan and Thurber, I think, was the make.

And then, there was a Hawkin rifle, completely original and in darn near immaculate condition. The Hawkin rifle was the pattern after which all the frontier rifles were made. It is the beginning, the model after which there were lots and lots of copies. But it's a very, very famous rifle. It's sort of a development of the cross between the small-bore Kentucky rifle and the heavy gauge buffalo gun type thing. It was ideal for the purposes out West, here. But this was a true, original, authentic Hawkin rifle, in, as I say, immaculate condition. My father had always said, and my grandfather even said, "It's on loan to the Pioneer Society." So I'd never seen it.

A few years ago, after my dad had died and my grandfather had died, I went up and saw it with the gun expert at the Pioneer Society--one of the members who's quite an expert on guns. We looked at it, and he was absolutely amazed. Apparently, it's become a very, very valuable gun, and this is just a beautiful example of it.

Lage: Have you told this story to the Pioneer Society?

George P.: I've told them the story; whether it's been recorded or not, I don't know. Yes, it should go with the gun, shouldn't it? It's in the vault at the Pioneer Society, for good reason, because it's a very valuable gun.

It's in such good condition because when Pope walked away, my grandfather walked in to take over the property, and there it was, laying on the table, and he gave it to the Pioneer Society. Well, I was always told he loaned it to the Pioneer Society, but on their catalogue it has it was given to them. So, maybe my father had the story mixed up. But it was in 1933 or something, so it was way back that it was given. But that's just an example of some of the memories I have about that particular place.

III DIVERSE USES OF PATTERSON RANCH LANDS

Coyote Hills as Nike Missile Base and Site for Biosonar Research

Lage: You mentioned earlier about the Nike base on the Coyote Hills. Why don't you tell me more about that?

George P.: The Nike missiles were one of America's very first operational ground-to-air defense systems. It was a relatively short-range ground-to-air missile that they would put around in a perimeter around important areas. The San Francisco Bay Area being an important area, I believe it was about 1955--or just roughly about that time--they decided to situate thirteen sites all around the San Francisco Bay. The Coyote Hills were the only hills that were actually right on the southern part of the San Francisco Bay, rather than back quite a ways. And since these were relatively short-range missiles, they needed them pretty close to their anticipated target.

They negotiated with my grandfather about situating this base. They knew, of course, exactly where they wanted it; the question was, would we sell that land to the U.S. Army so they could build this base? It was three underground silos, with iron doors that would open, and then the missile would come up and it would be fired, and the whole thing could be hidden away. That was on the highest point of the furthest north of the hills--the crest of the hill up there. Not the highest hill, but the furthest north of that line of hills, with a clear line of sight out over San Francisco, essentially.

Then, in that hollow where the old duck-hunting club was--it's gone now, but there was a lovely old duck club in that hollow. There was a woods there, and my grandfather had planted the trees and built the duck club there, in 1933, right at the height of the Depression. He and all his buddies from the Bohemian Club built that. He had it moved up there in two sections and put together. Below that, there [was] what they called the house pond, which was a duck pond where the family

George P.: would shoot ducks. And there was where the barracks, and the mess hall, the recreation facilities were--everything for the men that would be stationed there--and then on the far hills would be the guidance radar system; the scanning radar and the guidance radar system for the missiles. They were radar-guided, and they'd pick up the plane, hopefully, like thirty miles out beyond the Golden Gate, and then be able to intercept with these missiles, from all these different locations.

That was the radar station, which was up on the crest of the far hill, which was just across the line, and it was really on property that belonged to Leslie Salt Company. So, the army wanted to buy this land from us, and they wanted to buy it in the worst way. My grandfather said, "No, absolutely not." Then they said, "Okay, we'll lease it from you," because they were going to get the land one way or another. My grandfather's theory was that the way weapons systems become obsolete as time goes on, in a probably fairly short number of years it would become obsolete, and they would leave. Or at least deactivate the place.

So they said, "Okay, we'll lease it from you for a dollar a year." So that's what they did; they built this big missile base, and they ran it as an active base for probably about ten years. It was surrounded by a high cyclone fence, top security, and there were guards at all the gates, and what not, so that meant we were excluded from anything inside that fenced area, which took up--

Lage: Would that be the Coyote Hills park area now?

George P.: No, no. Far less than that. I don't remember how many acres, but, really, it was just the hill land, didn't really cover out into the flats. Now, the Coyote Hills Regional Park covers all that marsh area, what was the old duck ponds, the old hunting-shooting ponds, and a lot of marsh area that really to us was waste land. It wasn't--the hills and the lower part of the ranch was pretty much cattle grazing because the hills were just dryland grazing, and then the flatland, it was too wet in the winters; it's the absolutely lowest part there. It's where all the water collects. It was fresh water, but it was sometimes brackish. It just wasn't used for anything, except maybe some cattle grazing. So it wasn't productive land that they were taking out of production.

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George P.: Anyway, they leased it from us, and they went ahead and built this big project. It really didn't interfere with the ranching operation that much. They built a big all-weather road along the existing Patterson Ranch Road, all the way out to the hills. Actually, they built that up so that it would be out of water even in the height of winter and the flood times. So there was some advantages to it. It was an all-weather, paved road--it wasn't paved, it was gravelled, I guess, but it was fully passable year round.

They fenced it all off, and for about ten years it was an active base. As happens, it became really obsolete; my grandfather was absolutely right. In other words, it wasn't the days where they build a fort, and it's good for a hundred years. I mean, it was very short term.

But then the local National Guard took it over, as a National Guard base, for another few years. Then they finally said they wanted to trim their budget and get rid of it. So they turned it back to us. They turned the land back to us, but there were the cinderblock buildings, and there was a water system with a big water tank on the hill, and there was all the roads, and there was a lot of stuff. Of course, a lot of it couldn't be removed; it was just there. But they had really put a lot of improvements into the land; it must have cost a tremendous amount of money, as most government projects do. They really go first-class. But basically the buildings, and all the plumbing and electrical system and all that, they said, "We're going to put that up for salvage bid. Somebody's going to come in and strip these places, and then they'll just leave the concrete buildings there. But they won't be much good; all the useful stuff will be taken out."

My dad said, "Wait, look." (This was after my grandfather died, by this time.) "How much do you want for everything in place?" They said, "Well, we really wouldn't get that much for salvage. It's worth a lot more in place to you." My dad didn't have any idea what he'd use it for, but he figured, all of those buildings and stuff, the whole layout was perfectly intact. It was an operating unit. So they settled on a thousand dollars for the whole thing. That cleared the books, a thousand dollars.

Then my dad went shopping around, with this completely separate, isolated facility that was way away from everything, ideal for research, or something that you don't want neighbors close by that are going to complain. He knew Dr. Poulter over at Poulter Laboratories, which is an offshoot of Stanford Research Institute. I guess, at that time, he still was with Stanford Research Institute, doing biosonar research, using seals. They had a big grant from the Department of the Navy,

George P.: Bureau of Ships--Undersea Warfare Department. So they leased the whole outfit, as it sat, just everything, for \$24,000 a year.

Lage: That was a good business deal!

George P.: It was--yes! If we had a few more like that.. It was a stroke of luck. Poulter Laboratories or SRI was looking for an isolated site. They had one, but it was way far away--it was too far away. People couldn't go over for the day, do their research work, and then come back to Menlo Park or Palo Alto. It was just geographically far away. This was ideal. It was twenty minutes away.

They leased it; they set up several operations there, but mainly Dr. Poulter's Biosonar Laboratory, where they used seals and sea lions to do underwater communications and detection experiments. In other words, figuring how seals and other marine mammals communicate under water by using low frequency sounds and vibrations, so that they could develop better methods for submarine communication.

They built all these tanks there for their seals, but essentially left all the buildings and everything. Then, the missile pits--of course, the army took the missiles out and they took the launchers, so essentially, they were just big pits with steel doors, and all the hydraulic equipment that operated things, but the actual launchers were gone. Those were subleased to another division of Stanford Research, I think, that was doing experimental work in explosives that separate the sections of rockets as they go, as the stage burns out. There's an exploding band that separates the two sections of the rocket. Also, with bullets, for use in Vietnam, high velocity bullets, but they split up into three little darts, rather than one projectile. Anyway, that's just an aside. Then they also had a program working with the deaf over there, also to do with the biosonar thing, to try to see how communication with low frequency sounds can possibly be used by deaf people.

Sale of Coyote Hills and Del Valle for Public Parks

George P.: So that went on for a number of years, very successfully, and my dad and I met and became friends with a lot of the scientists and people over there. It was quite a good-sized organization. That went on all the way right up to when the East Bay Regional Park decided they wanted that land as a park. So at that time we negotiated with them, and then they purchased the thousand acres. Now, because it's obviously for park, they have to

George P.: purchase it; they have the right to do it, the right of eminent domain, so they can take it. It just means coming to an agreement--a settlement that's agreeable to both sides.

I don't remember the mechanics of it, but it was a very pleasant deal. Because the land really wasn't worth much in terms of productivity. It was not an area that you could develop; the land was too low, and I'd certainly hate to see buildings on the hills there. So the park bought it, took it over, cleared--got rid of everything to do with the missile base--everything--roads, fences, buildings--everything except a couple of buildings at the headquarters, which is their museum and their headquarters there.

Lage: They're still using those buildings?

George P.: Yes. Those buildings were part of the missile site buildings. But they knocked down, and they filled in the missile pits, so you can hike up the hill; there's no vestige at all of anything out there. In other words, their idea was to put it back to its natural state. They took a lot of the roads, and they completely ripped them up and reseeded with grass.

Lage: Did you get involved at all; were you in touch with your father about the negotiations with the park district?

George P.: Not that much, because I was away at that time. I was overseas for a couple of years, travelling. So I really didn't get involved in that. But I remember him telling me about it, that it worked out very smoothly; as opposed to the Del Valle, the state acquisition of the Del Valle area.

Lage: That wasn't smooth?

George P.: No. That wasn't smooth at all; it was a couple of years in court. The state really wanted to play hardball with that. They only wanted to pay us what my great-grandfather had paid for the land. It was up to us to prove that, in fact, it was worth more than that. So we had all these consultants, and my dad worked for a couple of years, finding comparable sales in the area, getting gravel quarrying companies to agree to a contract of X number of millions of yards of gravel, at a certain price per yard, and establish these values. Also, it would completely cut our cattle operation in half, so that you'd have a thousand acres on this side and the balance on this side, and in the middle--the full length of the property would be cut in half by the reservoir, with no way across.

Lage: Did you object to having that taken, or just wanted a fair price?

George P.: Oh, both. I mean, we objected to having it taken, because it upset the cattle operation, which was running very well at the time, going full blast. But they were going to take it whether we liked it or not. It was the eminent domain thing.

Eventually, after all this time in court, we came to a price that was, I guess, fair at the time. We spent a great deal on lawyer fees--lawyers and consultants and people to build our case, to prove our case--but it paid off in the long run. We got a fair price, plus covering all the legal costs. But my dad spent about two years of his life doing practically nothing else.

Donald Patterson's Style: Inspiring Trust in Dealings with People

Lage: Now I'm getting a picture a picture of what your dad had to do!

George P.: Yes, he did. And it was partly because he was the oldest. There were the two daughters on the Henry Patterson side. Actually, there was a third daughter, but she was killed in 1928. But, essentially, two daughters on that side, and then there were the three brothers on the other side. My dad being the oldest, I guess he took it on himself, and he had a lot of business background. He'd had an industrial career, which he was sort of winding down, and while my grandfather was still alive but ailing, he really got involved fully in the ranch.

I think, principally, the main strong point that he had in working with the ranch and why he was so successful was because of the way he dealt with people, on all levels. He had a very good way of dealing with people: with the tenants on the property, with the city, with anybody that he had to deal with. It was a very business-like manner, yet it was open and friendly. Absolutely above reproach, in terms of integrity and honesty, and he was very widely admired for that. Just a nice person to do business with. I, of course, spent a lot of time with him, in his dealings with other people. In fact, that was his high point. He was better at dealing with outside people than he was, say, with us kids in the family. He was trusted, people felt comfortable with him, and also he might have represented the owners, but yet he was able to deal and negotiate with people on any level and make them feel comfortable, as though it was a one-to-one, and he wasn't talking down to people. Providing it wasn't in some conflict with somebody.

George P.: He always had a really nice manner and way of dealing with people which instilled trust. For instance, the Alamedas. He was held in very high regard, just his way of dealing. So consequently, things ran pretty smoothly with the people that were on the ranch. There were the principal people--the Alameda family, with the L. S. Williams Company, owned by Gene Williams, but the Alameda family, the three generations of them, worked there. Then the Fudenna brothers, and then there was, of course, people like the Chinese flower growers that grew the asters, and then the Italians that grew the gladiolus. You know, five acres, ten acres at a time.

Joe Lunghi was the Italian guy that grew the gladiolus. Everytime we'd go over there, I'd get armloads of flowers. You know, "Oh, for the missus, for your mother, for your girlfriend!" I'd say, "I'm not married!" "Oh, take it to somebody!" Great armloads, jeez, a fortune in flowers. A very generous, warm-hearted guy.

And then, of course, people like Bob Farnsworth, who had a little experimental sort of station there, which--well, I mean, it was commercial, but it he died before he was able to get it into a large scale--hydroponics. He was growing lettuce, several varieties of lettuce, using hydroponic methods.

There were a lot of other little side projects and people that wanted to use a couple acres here and a couple acres there. Regardless of how bizarre or how mindless some scheme was, or how insignificant--I mean, if some guy wanted to borrow a ten-foot piece of land to do something, to put a trailer on for a month or something--my dad would give that person his undivided attention and work with the person, just as though it were a big major project.

Lage: That's a nice quality.

George P.: Yes. People felt that they weren't just being brushed aside or that there wasn't any importance here. Because basically, the real thing was that he was fascinated with putting together things. He liked working with people and with projects, and he liked to see things happen. But of course, the more things and little projects and people that wanted to do something on the ranch, it all had to be balanced and worked out in an agreeable way with the people who were already there. If all these little people wanted a little bit of land here, little land there--well, how does that affect the Alamedas? They were first and foremost and primarily our whole allegiance--it was to the Alamedas because they were the principal people, and they were good family friends. They had been friends for three generations. The old man [Tony Alameda] with my grandfather,

George P.: were contemporaries, and Mel Alameda* was younger, but sort of contemporary with my dad, and then there's the boys that are all over there now. They're Wil's and my age. They've all stayed on the Patterson Ranch, all these years.

* See interviews with Mel Alameda and Gene Williams in this series.

IV THE RANCH AND ARDENWOOD HOME IN THE SEVENTIES AND EIGHTIES

Intergenerational Interest in History and the Society of
California Pioneers

[Date of Interview: May 20, 1987] ##

- Lage: There was one thing that I, in looking over the transcript from the first interview, I neglected to ask you, just in brief outline, where you grew up, where you went to school, things like that.
- George P.: Oh, yes. Just a brief on myself. I was born in Palo Alto, and then when I was about one year old, moved to a house on Glenwood Avenue in Atherton, where I grew up. It's right outside the main gates to the old Flood estate, Lindenwood. So that was the neighborhood that I grew up in. I went to Ensign Grammar School, and then Menlo-Atherton High School, and then was in the Air Force and stationed in Hawaii, in Hickam Field and Honolulu, and attended the University of Hawaii. Also, when I came back here to the Bay Area, Foothill College. My connection with the ranch is weekends or several weeks in the summer, and various holidays, spending at the ranch.
- Lage: As a young person.
- George P.: As a young person, as a child growing up.
- Lage: Was your connection with the ranch more of a job or a career thing, or did you have other jobs?
- George P.: Originally, out of school and out of the Air Force, I was involved in electronics. I was an electronics technician in several companies in the Silicon Valley area, mostly in Palo Alto. I did that for a number of years, and gradually came to work more with my father in working with the ranch. Gradually learning, sort of as his apprentice, if you will, starting while

George P.: I was still working for the electronics companies. Then, as it became busier and more things to do with the ranch, I phased out of the 8-to-5, Silicon Valley, into working with my dad, with the ranch and other commercial properties. This eventually turned into pretty much full-time employment, looking after the various interests.

Lage: I see. And what other interests have you pursued? I know you've been involved with the Society of California Pioneers. Are there other kinds of things we should mention? You've been on the board of the Pioneer Society?

George P.: Yes. That was also sort of connected with the ranch, and my interest in family history, really, and interest in history in general. I have kind of a fascination with old things, especially old buildings. My dad introduced me to the Society of California Pioneers. I'd always been a life member; the boys in the family were given life membership by my grandfather, as a gift, at quite a young age. But I hadn't really been very involved with the Pioneer Society; I'd been to a few of their annual gatherings.

But then my father did his two-year period—I think it was two years—as president of the Society of California Pioneers. Of course, my grandfather and my great-grandfather had also been very active in the Society of California Pioneers. In fact, my great-grandfather was one of the very early founding members, as I understand. So my dad was very, very active with the Pioneers, and of course he did this period of the presidency, and then he was very involved with their project—their ownership and their running of the Father Serra House, in Spain. I believe it's in Majorca.

Lage: Did the society run that, in Spain?

George P.: Yes. The Father Serra house, his birthplace and house where he grew up, was given to the City of San Francisco, I believe in the 1930s—just a very small little stone house in a village. The city, of course, didn't really have the facilities to take care of it; it wasn't their type of project. So it was turned over to the Society of California Pioneers, and it was run by them as a museum, and they supported it, and they paid the caretaker's wages and any sort of maintenance that occurred since, I think, 1932 and all the way up to about five years ago, when it was given back to the Spanish government, and they continue to run it as a museum. But they wanted it back, and it was costing the society a fair bit of money every year. So we turned it over and presented them with a bronze plaque, stating that the Pioneer Society was responsible for the restoration and management of it for many years. So it was all very nice; it was all a friendly sort of exchange.

George P.: My father was very active in the last few years of the running of the Serra house and was responsible in generating a lot of interest in the house. They did several tours over there; the Society of California Pioneers would take groups over there. I think they went over three or four times, different years. Of course, they met with all the officials--the mayor, and all that sort of thing, and it was quite a deal. That was a little bit before I was involved with the Pioneer Society, but it was a favorite project of my dad's. I know he was very involved with that and enjoyed it very much. My mother went over with him as well.

But anyway, that era passed. Then, I went up to do some research in the Patterson papers and the Patterson archives there; mainly looking at old ranch records and old photographs, to do with the restoration of the house--George Washington Patterson's house. There's a lot of old photographs and records. In the process of that, I was introduced around to the director, and the librarian, various people up there.

They had these social gatherings, and they still do, called conviviums, where it's just kind of a social gathering for all the members, and all the people on the board of directors. There were a lot of people my age; it was a whole younger group that was starting to come into the Pioneer Society. That was partly one of my dad's projects, to get younger members involved in the Pioneer Society, so it wasn't strictly an old man's organization--really get some young enthusiasm in it. So that's about the time that I became involved with the Pioneer Society, and it's been a lot of fun and very interesting. I go to all their gatherings, as well as being on the board and going to the board meetings, luncheon meetings that they have once a month. There are monthly conviviums and the annual celebration commemorating the discovery of gold; they have various other special events, an opera supper, and things like that--quite a nice social side of the organization.

Then I was appointed, or selected, for a county vice-president, of which they have one for each county in the state, and then from there I moved up to vice-president, and now I'm a full director. So it's very interesting, and a lot of really interesting people--

Lage: Are these positions elected or appointed?

George P.: Kind of a combination. They are suggested--you're put up for the position, and then you're voted in on a ballot. But it's pretty much always whatever the nominating committee recommends is approved. It's not really a contest; it's just that if they think you're ready, you're involved enough in the society to fill that position. And then, of course, they have various

George P.: committees, and I know my father was on a number of committees, the Father Serra house being his major one. But there was all sorts of other committees.

Working with Donald Overseeing the Ranch

Lage: Let's talk a little bit about your work with your father as he managed the ranch. We got some of that last time, but sort of stopped in the middle.

George P.: Oh, yes.

Lage: He was heavily involved in managing the ranch, and yet he did travel a lot. Did you fill in for him when he was travelling, or did things sort of run on their own?

George P.: Well, they could run on their own, day-to-day, if there was no crisis or no problem.

Lage: What kind of crisis would there be?

George P.: Well, I suppose first and foremost with the ranch, of course, in the summer, would be making sure there was an adequate supply of irrigation water to all the fields. Now, this is on the lower ranch, the agricultural ranch, not the cattle ranch behind Livermore; that's different. But mainly, it would be the water. There were somewhere between twelve and fourteen deep water wells, which had big electric pumps which pumped somewhere around five, six hundred gallons a minute of irrigation water from the underground gravels. Those are all interconnected through a network of pipelines and valves, which is quite complicated. There's a chart that pretty much shows where everything goes, but there's always little surprises and pipelines that nobody knew about or a valve that was hidden somewhere. The water can be shifted around from one field to another and mixed—for instance, some of the wells down in the bay have a higher salt, or saline mix in the water, which is not very good for agriculture. The plants will die if the saline content gets too high.

So lots of times they mix the water to bring it up to an acceptable level of purity, by mixing water from a high-quality well with one of lesser quality, and the mix averages out and is acceptable water.

Lage: Were these devices that your grandfather and Uncle Henry developed, do you think?

George P.: Well, the water system was always interrelated, because lots of times a pump would fail--the motor would burn out or the well casing would collapse, or the bowls had to be raised or be adjusted from damage from gravel or whatever. The system was always designed so that the water could be shifted around and supply a certain area or certain fields from several different wells, because there were always things that came up. They had to have an adequate water supply because in the hot summer they had to have irrigation.

Lage: You had tenants actually in charge of the farming on their own, but you had to be sure they had the water.

George P.: Yes. They knew the irrigation--obviously, they were the ones that were using it--they knew the irrigation system quite well, and knew how to operate it. But I'd work with them, especially when it came time for repairs or some sort of emergency work, to make sure that we got the repair crews out there, the pump company to take care of the problem. This was, I think, one of the important things about the position of being on the ranch a good deal of the time and working closely with the growers, which, by this time, were mostly the Alameda family, Gene Williams, and the Fudenna brothers, who later phased out, and it was entirely the Alamedas.

And then there was the flower growers, both the Chinese growing asters, and the Italian flower growers growing gladiolus, for market. They would have anywhere from five to fifteen acres of flowers for which they needed their own separate water supply, and they had to have certain land, certain conditions. Some of them had to be rotated every year. They could only plant them one year at a time. So that was just a little side business; it was a minor part of the agricultural operation, but it was very interesting. Of course, every time we went over, we got armloads of fresh flowers to take home. That was great. The house was always full of flowers.

Water, I'd say, was probably the most important thing. But there were other things. There were culverts to be maintained, and roads and fences. Of course, at this point, all the equipment was owned by the Alamedas or the Fudennas--most of the equipment. We still had some of it. The buildings were ours, so we were responsible for seeing that they were maintained. But more and more, as time went along, more of the responsibility was taken over directly by the growers, whereas now, they pretty much completely run their own operation. The family is less involved, on a day-to-day level.

Donald's Goals: Gradual Liquidation, Productive Farming

Lage: Did your father, as you were working with him, express some idea of what he thought the direction of the ranch would be, or what he wanted it to be?

George P.: Oh, yes. For quite a while back, dating back to, I suppose, the mid-fifties, he had worked with Jack Brooks, who is a major old-time developer in the area, on future plans for the ranch. He could see that agriculture was gradually going to be phased out. He had always planned for an orderly liquidation of the farm lands, over a long period of time, as the land was needed either for industrial, commercial, or residential use. Being the outer fringe of Fremont, what they call the Northern Plain, it was kind of on the edge, and it bordered the bay, of course, and that's the reason the county took the park here, the Coyote Hills, for the Coyote Hills Regional Park, which is a thousand acres of the Coyote Hills and the fresh-water marsh lands in front of the hills. It was the old duck ponds, and duck-hunting area, and now it's a wonderful wildlife sanctuary, especially for birds, marine birds. It's quite a nice, protected, sheltered area, for ducks, etc.

But besides that park, planning for the development started quite a ways back. As far as I'm aware, I'd say it was the mid-fifties, really. But it was a really low-key sort of thing, and it gradually became more and more active, as the city of Fremont grew and needed the land. Also at the same time, Dad was pursuing new ideas in agriculture. In other words, it wasn't like, say, "Okay, agriculture's on the way out, let's kind of put it on low priority." A lot of emphasis was put on making the farming operation--in fact, I'd say that was my father's main interest, doing everything he could, and of course working with the Alamedas and the Williams, to make the farming operation more efficient, more productive per acre. We were farming fewer acres, and costs were increasing--costs of water, costs of all the services that go with it. So to make it competitive and make it worthwhile to continue farming, they had to try out new advanced methods and new advanced equipment. Of course, the Alamedas are very innovative that way, adapting conditions and equipment to fit exactly that type of land, the conditions and the crops that they were growing.

The Farnsworth Hydroponic Operation

George P.: One of the most interesting sidelights on that was this guy named Bob Farnsworth, who was a real devotee of the future potential of hydroponics in agriculture. He came from an

George P.: engineering background; he wasn't a farmer, but he had this idea that you could have very high productivity all year round. His specialty was lettuce, various types of lettuce. But it could be used for other things--tomatoes, melons, whatever.

He and my dad worked together, and I worked with him quite a bit. I worked one summer with Bob Farnsworth off and on, a week here, a week there. As I say, my dad really took this project to heart and helped Farnsworth a great deal with it. What we did, essentially, was lease him an area of land that we really weren't using for anything; it was around the old feedlot barns. It was a couple of acres of waste ground. It didn't matter, because it was hydroponics, and his lettuce would be growing floating on styrofoam rafts in shallow tanks of water and nutrient solution. He was very, very innovative, and he was really a mechanical engineer, of very high caliber.

The farming aspect of it was something he'd learned much later. He applied the combination of his mechanical knowledge, because it was a very mechanized operation, with the agricultural to grow a high-intensity crop that had a high market value. It was specialty lettuces for finer restaurants in San Francisco. It worked out very well, and he expanded and had a series of six greenhouses all together, and it was all heated and ventilated. He did it all himself; he built the whole thing himself; it was a one-man operation. He had his son help him and a couple of workers to help him, but he was down there ten, twelve hours a day, seven days a week, working on this and perfecting it, and every day he was trying some new ideas. And with beautiful results; the produce that he grew was beautifully uniform, and as I say, it was equally as good in summer or winter.

Lage: How long did he do this operation?

George P.: Let's see. He was doing this altogether for about five years.

Lage: In the seventies?

George P.: Yes, late seventies. I'm trying to recall the exact years, but it would be late seventies, early eighties. I'm trying to think when he died. The operation came to a sudden end, unfortunately. Wonderful guy, he lived up in Piedmont, so he'd drive down every day. The thing is, he was a heavy smoker. His one vice, I guess. He really smoked a lot of cigarettes, and he started looking not so well there toward the end, and he went in for a medical check-up, and he had major lung cancer. He rapidly went downhill from there, and it seems to me, looking back, in a matter of a few months he died. Yet, he was so devoted to this hydroponics that right up to the end, and it seems to me the last couple of months, he would come down every

George P.: day and put in as much work as he could. It was difficult for him; he was obviously suffering and at the end of his life. He knew it was terminal. But he really was dedicated to it, and he tried to get people interested, like his son, for instance, to carry this on. But he was unable to find anybody to take it on.

Lage: Did you have a sense that it was financially viable?

George P.: Well, it was with him, because he was donating all of his time, essentially. If he worked all the numbers out, and he paid himself a salary, I don't know how it would work out. But I know he made money because he just was so dedicated. But as a going business, selling it to somebody and having a profitable business, I don't know whether it was a large enough scale at that point. His idea, of course, was to expand it and make it quite a large operation--to supply, say, all of the metropolitan area. All of Oakland and San Francisco.

It was unfortunate that his son didn't follow on and take an interest. Rather than tear down the greenhouses and everything after he died, the son came to an agreement with the Alamedas, and they took over the operation. But they didn't use it as a hydroponic operation. They just used it as greenhouses, and they still do. They tried for one year, they tried growing mushrooms, which worked quite well, but it was too labor intensive, and it was sidetracking their main operation of lettuce and cauliflower. So now, they use it just as a greenhouse for starting their little seedlings, for the cauliflower.

But the hydroponics was very interesting, and my dad spent a lot of time over there with Farnsworth, discussing it. I know my dad, especially when he went to England--there's a lot of hydroponic farming done in England--he went and talked with and interviewed a lot of these hydroponic operations, and they, of course, all had slightly different variations of it. Dad brought all these ideas back and discussed them with Bob Farnsworth.

So, it was a real interesting thing for my dad, and for myself, to watch this. But, as I say, at least as far as we're concerned, that's where it ended. Other people are doing it successfully, but it was not something that the Alamedas wanted to get into. It was a whole other field, and a whole other area.

Family Contribution to Preserving the G. W. Patterson Home

Lage: Now, what about your dad's relationship to his cousins, and brother, as he ran the ranch? Did he consult with them, or did you have a sense of that?

George P.: Well, he did, yes, of course, on all major matters, anything to do with real estate--selling land or right-of-ways, or permission for somebody to do something on the ranch--anything that affected the other owners of the property. On a day-to-day level, operational level, there wasn't a lot of interaction, because I think other people in the family had their own activities that they were involved in, and it was running smoothly, and they were certainly there to lend a hand. But it really was a one-person operation, at least while my dad was alive and active. At the same time that I was sort of helping with the field operations--

Lage: Just let me get the dates on that. I don't think we ever had a clear idea. Do you remember when you started working on sort of a regular basis with your dad?

George P.: I couldn't--I'd have to look it up. I couldn't tell you exactly the year, because it kind of phased in. It wasn't like all of a sudden I stopped working in electronics. It was kind of a gradual thing, that I phased into it.

Lage: Mid-seventies?

George P.: Yes, I would say it was in the mid-seventies.

Lage: We don't need an exact date.

George P.: Yes, early or mid-seventies, because I went off on a trip for a while, a long extended trip overseas--two extended trips. When I came back from, I guess, the second one of those, I went back to work in electronics, but I also started working more and more with my dad. And, also, I became interested in the historical side of it and wanted to find out more of the family background and history--just what went on on the ranch, back before my time. You know, details, and where various buildings were, and just what it was like in the old days.

Lage: Was your dad interested in preserving the family house?

George P.: The house that he grew up in was destroyed, the William Donald Patterson house, because in the will it was stated that if nobody in the immediate family wanted to use it, it was to be destroyed, and that was carried out. Looking back, it's unfortunate that it was, because now it would have made a

George P.: wonderful addition to the Ardenwood Park. They have the original old house, but at that time, the family, I guess, just didn't see the other house as being a historic resource. It wasn't that old—it was 1904, which certainly, in my opinion, is old enough, but it depends on what generation you are. So they didn't think of it as being that historically significant.

But now, it really would have been wonderful to save it, to have had a caretaker to look after it, but at that time they didn't know that it was going to be eventually a public park, and that sort of thing. It was still just the ranch, and it was a house they didn't have a use for, and if they didn't have it taken care of, and caretakers living there, it would have been vandalized and wrecked anyway. They kind of wanted to remember it, and have people remember it, as it was in its heyday.

So, as far as the W. D. Patterson house was concerned, no, there was no interest in keeping that, and the other house, [the George Washington Patterson house] of course, was still being lived in by Marjorie Patterson. She lived there for many, many years, until she finally moved to Palm Desert. I can't remember the year exactly. But, at that time, a caretaker was found to live in the house and at least take care of it. I think he was a Fremont police detective. He and his family lived there for a few years and looked after it and kept the place intact. Of course, it had all the furniture with the house; everything was in the house, so it was all original, or at least quite original, with a lot of the original Victorian furniture, especially in the principal rooms, the parlor and the principal bedrooms.

I think people really started having an awareness of keeping the house and preserving it as a historical resource about the mid-seventies, when that part of the ranch was included in a land deal with Singer Housing, originally.

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George P.: It was kind of a roundabout sort of thing, that part of the deal was. To get permission from the city of Fremont to develop the surrounding lands for residential, the developer or the family or the combination thereof, donated park land to the city of Fremont, which included the old house and the site of my grandfather's house, the one that was burned down. And the eucalyptus groves surrounding the two houses, and all the barns and outbuildings--the whole original old farm area. This was the least desirable for farming because it was heavily wooded, with the eucalyptus forests, and it, of course, had the old house there.

George P.: So that was donated, or given to the city of Fremont by the developer.

Lage: Did your father express an opinion about that?

George P.: He thought--no, he was in favor of it. I mean, well, it was just part of the deal. At that time, Fremont didn't really know what to do with it. It was a growing community, and they really hadn't--this area was a thing that they knew they wanted for a park, but they weren't really ready to develop it. So, they said, well, we'll take it and just have a caretaker and not do anything with it until such a time as we have the funds and the public interest to develop this into a park. So it kind of sat in limbo for a number of years, with a caretaker living in it, and nothing--the land was being farmed, but the park wasn't being developed at all. It was kind of just in a holding pattern.

The house obviously needed some immediate attention, mainly exterior restoration. It needed a new roof, painting. A lot of the woodwork, the Victorian scroll work and railings and banisters and rain gutters, were beginning to rot away and needed restoration. There were some trees growing up close alongside the house, which was causing damage to the foundation and to the porch.

The city did not have the money. Dr. [Robert] Fisher, with his Mission Peak Heritage Foundation, was very active--has been for years--in trying to preserve the house, trying to get the city to allot funds to restore the house, or at least prevent further damage. So, the city just didn't have the money. I got together with some of the other family members and the city and Dr. Fisher, and Jack Brooks, and I went around to everybody. We first got an estimate through a company that Jack Brooks had some involvement in, and their specialty was building Victorian houses, reproduction of Victorian houses, or restoring Victorian houses. So they had the expertise with the carpentry work, and all that.

So, first I got an estimate and met with the people on what it would cost. Now, this was just for exterior work; it really didn't include foundation work or any of the interior, which was still in quite nice, original shape. There were a few leaks in the roof, and there was some damage to the plaster and the woodwork inside, but still fairly minor. But it obviously needed immediate attention.

When they came up with an estimate, a bid for the job, and I contacted everyone in the family--what I did was, based on their ownership share of the ranch, approximately, we would divide the cost of this restoration based on their share. I

George P.: called everybody and met with people, and, essentially, presented them the whole plan, and what it would accomplish. Essentially, it would preserve the building, until such a time as they could really get into a full restoration, as part of the park.

So, I went around and got a commitment from everybody for their share. As I say, most people in the family, as well as Jack Brooks and the city of Fremont, all contributed their share.

Lage: Was the family very receptive?

George P.: There were certain members that had their own life elsewhere and were not interested. Frankly, they just didn't care one way or another whether the house—I mean, they essentially said, well, why doesn't it go the way of the other house, of the William Patterson house? Why don't you just burn it down and forget about it?

Well, at this point, the family didn't own it, for a start. It belonged to the city of Fremont. They had a long-term plan to restore it and use it as a centerpiece for this Ardenwood Regional Park. Which they've done, and they've done a very nice job. But at that time, there really wasn't much interest in the house, outside of a few people and Dr. Fisher.

Lage: Do you think the people that were most interested were the ones who had had childhood connections?

George P.: Not necessarily; no, not necessarily. It was people that were interested in history and old buildings, more than anything. You can't really make a general statement because it was partly what each person was doing with their life at that time. I mean, some people lived out of the area; they really didn't have very much connection with the ranch any more. And in some cases, that's now completely changed, and those people have developed quite an interest in the family. It's really gone full cycle. Because that was kind of the low point of the family involvement with the ranch, I guess.

Actually, this was after my dad's death. So he really waan't a party to this--

Lage: So it was about 1980?

George P.: Yes. So anyway, we collected the money, and the house was all completely scaffolded, which was a major, major project. I think that was the city of Fremont's contribution. Oh, they worked there, it seems to me, for a couple of months, and completely re-roofed it, painted it, replaced all the woodwork that needed replacing, took out the trees that were damaging the

George P.: house. When they were finished, it was almost too bright. The trees had been stripped away, and it was sitting there, just this gleaming white--and on a bright day it was almost too bright to look at. It was just all white; there was no contrasting color.

Ardenwood as a Living History Museum

George P.: Anyway, that really got the ball rolling, and then the city after this realized, wow, with this investment, and it really is a fine place, a centerpiece to the park, and more and more interest started developing in the park, and there were organizations that got involved in donating time and money. Now, of course, it's really come into it's own. The city of Fremont leased the park, which is a total of 205 acres, to the East Bay Regional Park District, for I think twenty-five years. They run the park, and the city of Fremont and the East Bay Regional Park District run and administer the house.

Dr. Fisher has been very active in the restoration of the house and donated a tremendous amount of time and expertise in restoring it. A lot of items that had been removed from the house through the years have been returned. Some nice paintings, some furnishings, and just mainly a lot of interest and a lot of energy. Then, the city came in later and has spent a lot of money on various things--insulating the house, fumigating it for termites, doing a lot of foundation work, putting in a very involved alarm system, fire protection system, as well as the park, doing the grounds: the gardens, the fountains were fixed up, the pool, all the buildings, the outbuildings, the barns. The ones that were salvageable have been restored; the ones that were too far gone were torn down.

Now, it's pretty much a working farm in the 1880s, 1890s. During the summer, they have all the farming being done by horse-drawn equipment, as it would be in the Victorian period. All the workers and the docents--they have quite a group of volunteer docents for the house, and they're all in costume for that period. Of course, they have quite a story about the house and the Patterson family that the docents will recite.

Lage: How do you feel about that?

George P.: Well, it's interesting. I go and listen sometimes. I always learn something. There's always bits and pieces, facts that I didn't know, and sometimes it gets a little bit embellished to make the story more interesting. People are always interested

George P.: in the little odd sort of things, especially scandal or anything like that makes it more interesting. Or ghosts, you know, the usual.

But on the whole, it's done very well, and the restoration of the interior, especially, is ongoing. It looks very well, they've done a lot of work, but it's one of those things that's probably never ending. It's an ongoing project, and pretty much has been under the guidance of Dr. Fisher. I've helped out pretty much consistently through the years, mainly with just ideas and advice, and information about the house that I've learned either from talking to people, the family and my father, and information that I've gotten researching the records of the Pioneer Society.

Lage: You're on the house advisory board, isn't that right?

George P.: Yes, the Patterson House Advisory Board. It's a committee or a board that is answerable to the city of Fremont. Just on ideas, and what they think should be done with the house, how it should be run, how the house should be shown--you know, the uses of the house. They want to keep it a very limited use; they take limited groups through, and they're all guided with a decent. It's not a free-run sort of place, because it's very much of a, what you would say, living museum. Things aren't roped off. Rooms aren't cordoned off; you pretty much can go through the house, at least the part that's on show, to give the feeling of being a house where the Pattersons lived, in the 1880s. And not be a static museum.

Part of the house, the newer part, has been converted into quarters for the caretaker for the house. So they live there at the back of the house, and the kitchen is being restored as an old farm kitchen, and all the principal rooms, of course, are open to show. It's very nicely presented. But you can't say there will be a certain date when it will be finished, because there's always improvements or other pieces of furniture that they're coming up with, or they're changing the light fixtures to make it more authentic. It's interesting; they picked the period of the principal Queen Anne-Victorian addition, which was built about 1880, or something. The part of the house that's on show is of that period.

That meant undoing some things that had been done later, for instance the front rooms had electricity put in. They had these old electric chandeliers from around the turn of the century, which were very interesting and very beautiful in themselves, but they weren't the original kerosene lamps. Originally, they had kerosene, and then it went to electric. So, the electric ones were taken out, and they put in reproduction kerosene lamps, which are fine in a way. It's

George P.: brought it back to how it would have looked in the 1880s, but there's another way of looking at preservation or restoration of a museum house. The other idea is to leave those transitions in place, to show, yes, it's Victorian, but this was added--this was changed at such-and-such a time, and you see the whole progression of the history of the family living there. Then the newer parts of the house that were added, say 1900, 1910, that also is part of this progression.

Lage: Now, would that decision have been made by the East Bay Regional Parks or your house advisory board or--?

George P.: Mostly by the house advisory board, and the city, and Dr. Fisher. Dr. Fisher is one of the people involved in the board, as well as being--or, he was the head of the Mission Peak Heritage Foundation. But it seemed to be the general consensus that the Queen Anne-Victorian part of the house would be the part that's really on show. The really early part was built, I'd say, in 1854--nobody knows exactly, but that's a rough estimate. Then the 1910 kitchen wing was built out back.

Lage: Dr. Fisher told me that the house advisory board became kind of a political football for a while.

George P.: Well, it did because in Fremont, there's, I guess, a lot of that, a lot of politicals. I'm not involved in that at all because, first of all, I don't live in Fremont; I live in Palo Alto. I was also a family member, a non-voting family member. There was a lot of politics. There were two historical organizations, the Mission Peak Heritage Foundation, founded and headed by Dr. Fisher, and then there's the Washington Township Historical Society, which is the original historical society in the Fremont area. They don't get along at all. There's quite a quarrel, and I think it's principally Dr. Fisher being in a disagreement with the people of the group that run the Washington Township group.

So, he split off from that and formed this other group, the Mission Peak Heritage Foundation. So those two groups have always been at odds, and I think that's been resolved now, but it was that. Then there was the political side of it, and Dr. Fisher always felt that the city of Fremont was not really that interested in preserving the house, and that it was just used as a political thing. Now, as I say, I wasn't involved in all that, that's not my interest. I was mainly interested in seeing that the house was authentically restored and done in a sensitive, authentic way, and not made a commercial venture.

Lage: Are you happy overall with the way the park is developing?

George P.: Yes. I'd say so. My only reservation is that I am sort of biased, because I knew--I grew up with a close association with it. I knew it as a private house, a private estate, a private ranch, and pretty much a family thing, and it was a lot more--oh, what should we say?--informal, less structured. I mean, it was just there; it was a funny old house, and it was full of all this old stuff.

Now it's a park, and it is run by the rule book. It's run as a government agency, and as a park, by necessity. I mean, it has to be open and accessible to large groups of people, it has to be all visible for interpretation, and it's a showplace. So the feeling and the character of the place in that sense has changed. But it's of necessity. It has to be. I think they've done a good job, and I think it's turned out very well, the way they've done it.

Ranch Management After Donald's Death

Lage: The one thing we didn't get to was the changes in management of the ranch after your father died. I wanted you to comment on that sort of interim period. You father had pretty much run the show--

George P.: Okay. Well, then I continued and became more actively involved. My brother Wil became quite actively involved. My Uncle David, my dad's youngest brother, who had always been on the fringes, on the sidelines, and very much involved but in a lesser way than my dad, he became very involved. On the other side of the family, on the Adams side, Sally and Marjorie Patterson--well, Sally and her husband, Dr. John Adams, became very involved with the ranch property, and they more or less looked after the interests of Marjorie Patterson as well because she was living out of the area and not really involved in the ranch. She hadn't been for quite a few years. She had been the most involved years ago, but she had completely withdrawn from the ranch. So her interests were looked after by Sally and John. They became very involved, and also Bob Buck [David Patterson's son-in-law] became very involved, especially with the legal--with the founding of the corporation. Abby and Leon Campbell became very active.* Several other people became quite active. So what really happened, it went from my father really running the whole show, and myself helping him, to a much broader family involvement, a much broader management, involving the two principal sides of the family and a larger group of people, members of the family.

* See interviews with these family members in this series.

Lage: And did you continue with some of the field operations?

George P.: Yes, I did. For a while there, for a few years, I was still quite involved, especially from the time my dad died up until fairly recently. But as I say, in the last few years, the corporation has been set up, everything runs very smoothly. My interest now and my involvement is principally with the historic side of it, the house--with the Patterson House Advisory Board, the East Bay Regional Park District, city of Fremont, the people who are running the park. I meet with them and see them fairly often and talk about details of restoration of the house and the farm and the grounds. Just little bits and details that I have learned about or remembered or found at the Pioneer Society. Also, talking to people that have grown up in the area. I know the park has done this too, and they've interviewed a lot of old-time people. For instance, Joe Perry, who is an old-time farmer in the area, is now doing the farming for the Ardenwood Regional Preserve. So I kind of just keep in touch with these people, and meet with them on an informal level, and discuss restoration and the various little details of the house--kind of as a liaison between the Patterson family and the park people, but all on a very informal basis.

The Family Corporation

Lage: How do you feel about the direction that the property management corporation has taken? Are you satisfied?

George P.: In terms of the development and all that? Well, yes, I would say so, on the whole, because it really was the outgrowth of the master plan for that whole area, for the Northern Plain, which meant that the city of Fremont and the planning commission, all those people were heavily involved. Jack Brooks representing the developers and the family--they all came together and hashed this out. While the corporation was being formed or put together in a formal manner, these plans were being worked out: just what area will be residential, what area is industrial, what area is going to be the town center, shopping center. All this was planned over a period of several years, and everybody approved it, and essentially what's happening now is it's being put together. The plan is being followed, being carried out.

Lage: Do you feel that your point of view or your interests are represented on the board? How are they represented, with yourself not being a member of the board?

George P.: Oh, you mean with the family corporation?

Lage: Right.

George P.: Well, I and my brothers and sisters meet with brother Wil, who is on the board, and discuss all the goings-on of the ranch and how it's being run and managed, and the property. Mainly, a lot of the discussion involves the reinvestment of funds that are generated as this development is moving forward. Each time they take a block of land for development, this has all been preplanned out so we know pretty much exactly for how much and when each block will be sold, and the monies that are generated from that then are re-invested in other real estate. Either as a trade into other properties, and some of them on the Ardenwood Development, some of the residential part, we just trade right back into residential units that are built on the land that we sold. So it's kind of putting the money back into the property. That's really mainly what it involves now, is the placement, the reinvestment of the money.

Lage: So the board members, like Wil, sort of represent your branch of the family?

George P.: Yes. As far as the business end of things, yes. I think, to sum it up, for years one of the main or most important things my dad did in running the ranch was to keep a day-to-day ongoing connection between the Patterson family and the various tenants on the land, principally the Williams and the Alamedas, and up at the cattle ranch with the Bankes. Just keep a family presence there, as opposed to being absentee landlords that just, you know, "Send the check somewhere and take care of your own problems." We wanted to keep a very close family involvement in what was going on, even though we weren't actually doing the farming, or the ranching. But just keep on a really close basis with the operation, close contact with the people.

Lage: How did you find working with the Alamedas? You had some dealings with them.

George P.: They're wonderful people to deal with, yes. The Alamedas are wonderful. There's Mel, the father--these are the people that I've dealt with mainly. There was his father, Tony, which would be the grandfather, and I remember him, but I've never really dealt with him. But there was Mel Alameda, and then the boys that worked on the ranch, principally Steve Alameda, and the other boys. I worked with them for quite a long time, working with my dad, and then that whole period afterwards, during the restructuring of the ranch, and really that period where all the development really started to take off. We were trying to balance the farming needs of the Alamedas with the demands of the development, which really cut up the ranch, cut up the roads, the irrigation systems, all that. That all had to be

George P.: worked around and adjusted to because the farming had to go on, the irrigation had to go on, but at the same time, they were cutting trenches and ditches, and they were cutting through pipelines, and they were doing all this stuff--and wells were being taken out of service, so water had to be routed from other places.

So it was an awful lot of shuffling around and day-to-day sort of emergency situations, if you will. That's all been resolved now. Everything's in place, pretty much, except on a small scale. So it's pretty much settled in. There are some other areas that will go into development, but the farming area has pretty much been delineated out on a permanent basis, at least for the foreseeable future. There will be certain lands that will remain farming, and it's already planned out. We know what is going to be built on the remaining lands, and somewhat of a time frame. As I say, all the pieces are in place, and it seems to be running pretty smoothly.

[End of Interview]

Transcribed and Final Typed by Shannon Page

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University of California
Berkeley, California

THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

Bruce Patterson

Youth on the Patterson Ranch,
1950s-1963

An Interview Conducted by
Ann Lage
in 1987



BRUCE ROBERT PATTERSON

and Oz

on ranch in Horton, Oregon, 1986

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INTERVIEW HISTORY -- Bruce Patterson

Bruce Patterson is the only interviewee from the younger generation of Pattersons who actually has lived on the ranch. From 1957 through 1962 his father, Jack Patterson, lived with his family in the William D. Patterson home. This was the period after Jack's uncle, Henry, had died and his father, William, was in failing health. (William died in 1961.)

The experiences on the ranch in his teen years made a lasting impression on Bruce Patterson; with his share of the income from sales of Patterson ranch properties he purchased a cattle ranch in Oregon and lived and worked on the ranch with his wife and two children. At the time of this interview, he was the only Patterson family interviewee still active in a farming/ranching enterprise.

Bruce's interview is valuable for the information it provides about his father, Jack, and his perspective on how the course of the ranch's development was influenced by the relationship between the three sons of William Patterson. He also gives an engaging portrait of his aunt Marjorie, some humorous reminiscences of his grandparents, and vivid recollections of the ranch on the eve of its capitulation to the forces of change and development in southern Alameda County--stories of capturing the escaped pigs as a visiting mayor looked on; of the cook, Nora, and her kindnesses to vagrants; and of the ranch's rich bounty, when he could set out in the morning and "eat my way all the way across the ranch."

Bruce Patterson was interviewed on April 10, 1987, at a picnic table on the grounds of the Ardenwood Regional Preserve. He was in town for a meeting of the Patterson family corporation board of directors and had just returned from a visit to the family's cattle ranch in Livermore. The morning of the interview he had walked around the site of the William D. Patterson home at Ardenwood, reviving old memories. The tapes of the interview, complete with sounds of school children visiting the park, are in The Bancroft Library.

Ann Lage
Interviewer/Editor
Project Director

September, 1988
Regional Oral History Office
The Bancroft Library
University of California at Berkeley

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name Bruce Robert Patterson

Date of birth Nov. 24, 1946 Birthplace San Francisco, Calif

Father's full name John Bird Patterson

Occupation Rancher Birthplace Piedmont, Calif

Mother's full name Joan (Gentude) Meek Patterson

Occupation Housewife Birthplace NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Your spouse Alene

Your children Kris, Derek, Max

Where did you grow up? Patterson Ranch, S.F. Peninsula

Present community Blachly, Oregon

Education Cabrillo College, Santa Cruz Calif

Occupation(s) RANCHER, PRIVATE INVESTOR

Areas of expertise CATTLE, MUSIC, STOCKS - BONDS

Other interests or activities TRAVEL, PHILOSOPHY

Organizations in which you are active Society of California Pioneers,

Lane County Livestock Ass'n.

I A PERSPECTIVE ON THE PATTERSON FAMILY

Running the Ranch as an Economic Unit for Three Generations

[Date of Interview: April 10, 1987] ##

[Discussion about historical document by George Washington Patterson in The Bancroft Library, included in this volume.]

Bruce P.: I've only heard it, you know, through my grandfather, but George Washington Patterson was really the guy who put it all together; later, my grandfather Will and Henry were essentially the main managers. Henry was really a financial wizard, and Will would go out and make things happen; he would get the job done, and Henry would say, "This is the way it's got to be done." So there was the enforcer and management there. The relationship between them was equally as--almost combative, you know, they always had something going; there was always a lot of tension.

Lage: I want to know what you saw between the two of them.

Bruce P.: Okay. Henry died in the fifties, and my recollections of him are very, very vague, but I lived with my grandfather, so recollections of him are very, very vivid.

Lage: Give me the years when you were living with him.

Bruce P.: I was living here with him from 1957 to almost 1963. So I was here on the ranch for six years.

Lage: And you were how old?

Bruce P.: Let's see, I was between the ages of ten and I guess it would be almost sixteen, fifteen.

This symbol indicates that a tape or segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes, see page 377.

Lage: Did you go around the ranch with your grandfather?

Bruce P.: Oh, yes, sure, he showed me where all the irrigation lines lay on this whole ranch. It was crazy, because all through my family, there had always been a desire to run this ranch as an economic unit. There are three brothers, my oldest uncle, Donald, was the first born; my father, Jack, was the second, and David was the third born. Just as Will and Henry ran things their way, in each of these three boys there's a very, very strong desire to run things their own way, which made it difficult for them to cooperate on a joint venture.

Three Brothers: Donald, Jack, and David

Bruce P.: After my grandfather had his first stroke, Jack was essentially managing the place, because we were living there.

Lage: Do you remember when that was?

Bruce P.: Oh, it was probably '58, or something like that, because my grandmother died in, I think, in '56 or '55, and that was sort of a pretty traumatic time, and I think that was soon after that. But my father, all he wanted to do was to run the ranch, and all Donald wanted to do was run the ranch, but they could never run it together. They were always at loggerheads.

Lage: They were different types, I understand.

Bruce P.: Totally, absolutely different. My father was a cowboy, and my Uncle Donald was a Harvard graduate--it's a positive point for both sides, I would say--but they were very strong individuals in their own way. When Donald decided that he had other things to do in life, then it was time for Jack to start managing things. My grandfather died in 1961; my father died in 1965, and things just pretty much lay in limbo. Donald came back between '65 and '80 and essentially just let the place be an absentee landlord kind of a deal. He just leased the plots of land out and got the money from them. Donald died in 1980.

Lage: Was your father actually in charge of the ranch when you lived here? That hasn't come out in other interviews, so let's try to bring that out. The story I've pieced together was that when Henry and Will started to fade or not be quite as strong, that Donald decided he should step in and came over and essentially ran it until he died.

Bruce P.: Yes, there was the interim in there, when we moved over after my grandfather's stroke, since my father was here, that freed up Donald to do a lot of other things, and he did incredible things. He was one of the people that brought back the snow leopards from Nepal for the San Francisco Zoological Society. He was an honorary member of the Royal Explorers Club in London. Just a really dynamic kind of a fellow, always alive. I mean he just had so much life in him. So when my father was here I would go around with him. My main job, really, was to just sort of learn everything I was expected to know when it became my turn, right?

Lage: So they were really grooming you?

Bruce P.: Well, yes, my father was grooming me because he had been groomed, and yet the cooperative effort of the three brothers to make this again a family farm never came together. My father went and worked for years for Libby, McNeill, and Libby as a field inspector, and he would go around and look at crops, and see what was worth buying and what wasn't. Because of that, he knew what the vegetable market was demanding from the grower, and he knew better varieties to plant in one place and another; he was really sort of fine-tuning his brain.

Lage: When did he do that?

Bruce P.: All during the fifties he worked for Libby, and David, and my father, and Donald, I think, all sort of generally agreed that "Okay, Jack, you take care of the crop area part of the deal; David, you do something else; and Donald would be doing something else." Generally they agreed that this was the philosophy, but personally, you know, it just never came together. I guess what I'm seeing now is that this is David's turn now, and David, bless his heart, has always been a land developer. You know, it's made us all very wealthy people, and at the same time, it's really robbed us of part of what we really are.

I feel that all the time because all I wanted to do was to ranch, and that's why I went to Oregon because there was no room for me to get integrated into this situation, and it was more personality than anything else. But I had to do what I had to do, and so I went and did it. I look at it as very karmic, too, because I made a lot of money out of this deal, and I feel that if I take that and put it back into the land, or put it into something that is really, spiritually, what I want to do, then I'm not just some sleazy land developer who sits around and goes to the country club. I kind of want to remove myself from that because it's very, very hard for me to see this happen. Like in everything else, there's a trade-off. But anyway, so much for personal philosophy.

Lage: That's important to record.

Aunt Sarah, A Forceful Woman

Bruce P.: Well, I remember, getting back to the relatives, I used to pick up the mail every morning and drive it around, and I would drop off Henry and Sarah's on the lawn there. The kids usually never went up to Sarah's office, which were the four lower windows there all in a row [pointing to the house]. That's Sarah's office. Sarah was a very forceful, very, very strong woman.

Lage: She scared you, I can see!

Bruce P.: We would see Aunt Sarah, and we would just, you know, "Hi Aunt Sarah, how are you?" And all the kids would just sort of stand there, and she was just one formidable woman, and she ran Henry's half of the deal after Henry died. So she was maybe not as astute, businesswise, as Henry, but there was nobody that could out-buffalo her. We would get together, oh, once every couple of years with the H. H. side of the family--like Thanksgiving, all the families would come together, but when we had Christmas at the W. D. house we never came over here, and vice versa.

Lage: So they would get together but at separate houses?

Bruce P.: Yes, and there would be phone calls, or something, or maybe John--Dr. Adams--would come over and say hi, because he and my father were really good friends, and it used to mean a lot to them to meet together. They went through the war together. My father was in O.S.S. in France, and John was a paratrooper in a commando unit, so they had that sort of camaraderie. There wasn't a lot of give and take, businesswise, between the families, and that's what we see now in the Patterson Properties organization, is that these old prejudices and suspicions have transcended generations

Lage: Is the family still divided along the lines of the two family branches?

Bruce P.: Pretty much, yes.

Lage: Because you seem to be environmentally concerned, like John Adams, more of that frame of mind.

Bruce P.: Well, yes, sure. The ranch had kind of--it's sort of dead, I guess, because everybody else in the family went on their own in business and has sort of made it. Well, now everybody's a businessman, and the ranch is just another business. John's always been very environmentally oriented, a very open-minded, compassionate person. I'm very "simpatico" with him because he wants to keep open space; he likes the green things in the world,

Bruce P.: you know, and I do too. And yet property is a commodity that people are going to exploit if they can, if it's to their own best interest.

Pressures to Develop--From Within and Without

Lage: What about the argument that I've heard that the pressure to develop came from outside, from the city of Fremont, which wanted to see this land developed?

Bruce P.: Yes, well, that's what we've seen around here. We went through a lot of trouble to get this whole development set up the way we could live with it and, of course, to benefit us in the long-run. Land development is such a weird deal that it's all very subjective, and it always changes. What was your question again, I'm starting to wander a little bit.

Lage: My question was whether you agreed that there were outside pressures to develop? That if you didn't develop, you would lose your initiative because they were going to force it by changes of taxation, and soon?

Bruce P.: Well, we were all under the Williamson Act, as an agriculture preserve, so they couldn't really do anything to us, except come in and condemn the land, release us from the tax liability because of their condemnation.

Lage: They could cancel the Williamson Act.

Bruce P.: Yes. I think that it's outside pressure to a certain extent, and I feel that it was inside pressure from the family to sort of get everybody some money along the way, but I think that we could have kept this land and farmed it and not had to develop, and still been okay as people.

I think, though, that agriculture is really shifting. There's more emphasis down in the Central Valley for more intensive farming. They're going to Tucson. There are a lot more vegetables and crops coming out of Mexico, and especially just because the balance of payments deficit, and just because of the market.

So agriculture here--I think if we had kept it all in one piece, that it would have worked, but I think that now that it's been broken up into smaller pieces less profitable to manage and to operate, it's not working anymore. We're subsidizing the Alamedas over there, and they're not making any money anymore.

Bruce P.: The Pattersons are picking up the taxes for that, making all the improvements, and forgiving them a lot of debts, because vegetables just aren't making it anymore.

Lage: And they're working now on the poorer agricultural land.

Bruce P.: Yes, they are, exactly. It's always been so incredible to me-- I've done a lot of travelling, and all around the world, especially in Europe, but people will build on the side of something, and leave the best land to be used. Civilization comes to a point where they see, well, you can't farm concrete. You've got to have something else. That's always bothered me that that's been the mentality of the Americans. Put it down where it's nice and flat, because it's easy, but--

Lage: I interviewed Mel Alameda, and he really kind of choked up talking about how people could put houses on this land--a God-given beautiful piece of land.

Bruce P.: Oh, yes, sure. It's a tough one, it really is. I guess we all deal with it in our own way, but yes, it's tough. I don't like it. But anyway, you had asked in your letter how this ranch maybe fit as a microcosm of the area. I would say that this was probably the end of feudalism, the end of the large landlord and the indentured serfs. I've just been reading Bancroft's history, coming from 1600s and compressing California down. I've just gotten past the 1800s in his book, but you can just see the change is slow and then, boom, there's a point where it explodes. And we reached the point here, too, but, like we were making two hundred dollars, \$210 per acre, per year, off of crops.

Lage: Now when was this?

Bruce P.: Well, this was just within the last five years, and that was one of the reasons to sell the place, because we sold the land for a hundred and some thousand dollars an acre. Can you believe that? I mean, that's incredible.

Lage: That's one of the pressures then.

Bruce P.: Yes, it is, that was the economic pressure from the heirs. I think, and in all--you know, I mean I like my Uncle David, but this was David's chance to do what he was going to do, and what he wanted to do was develop it. He wanted to leave us all rich, which he did, but, like I said earlier, there's always a trade-off.

Lage: David implies in his interview that he actually has a more balanced approach than many of the family, particularly some of the younger members, because he goes for a balance, leaving open

Lage: space, supporting the park, but some of the younger generation wants it all developed. Do you see it that way?

Bruce P.: I think that it's really important for David to have this [the park] left as it was because I think that, in his own soul, he's trading off what used to be for what he can keep tangible for now. John and Sally saw, and still see, really no reason for development. That's from their point of view. I guess I have to say that the W. D. side of the family had always been quite a bit poorer than the H. H. side of the family, and so that enters into what happens, too. I know that, with my cousins, the ones that I see on a regular basis, every one of them would rather see the ranch as it had been twenty years ago, okay, and yet we're all reaping the benefits of what's happening.

Lage: It's hard to remove yourself from that.

Bruce P.: It is, because there is no black and white anymore, it's all gray. I think David feels that he is being balanced in it, and I couldn't disagree with that. I guess every person's fulcrum is at a different point. I don't know, I think we should have built down where the Alamedas can't grow.

Lage: Yes, that would have been ideal. But that wasn't as good a situation.

Bruce P.: No, not at all, and as far as what we could get through to be developed--they didn't want to be in the wetland, the marginal land, the developers wanted to buy this land. So there it went.

Jack Patterson: Wild Youth, Paratrooper, Rancher

Lage: Let's go back a little. We started off kind of plunging into the middle. Did we get your birthdate?

Bruce P.: I was born November 24, 1946.

Lage: And give me your father's and mother's names.

Bruce P.: My father is John, "Jack", Patterson. He was born either 1912 or 1914, depending on who you talk to, died in 1965. He went to private schools. He went to Palo Alto Military Academy, which I attended, and he went to Menlo School, which I attended. He went to Stanford for about a year, until he discovered the night life of San Francisco. [laughter] He promptly left school for entertainment.

Bruce P.: He had a hard time settling down in life. He was unlike my older uncle, Donald; Donald's very, you know, he knew what he wanted to do and he went and did it, same with David. My father was always a wild fellow. My grandfather and grandmother had him spend the summer up at the cattle ranch in Livermore to kind of get him away from the social scene, but he just took his top hat and his tails up to the cattle ranch, and he would dress up, and he would drive the old pickup into San Francisco and hit the spots again, and he'd come back, and Mom and Dad wouldn't know.

Lage: How did you hear all these tales?

Bruce P.: I keep my ears open and my mouth shut because nobody will ever tell me anything about my father if I ask them, and if I do, it will always be a little bit slanted towards what you want to hear.

Lage: You were nineteen when he died?

Bruce P.: I was eighteen when he died; yes, I was in the army. So anyway, I just listened. You see, I never learned a lot about my father because my father never talked to me very much. My father didn't want children, and it was very obvious; my mother wanted children, so obviously she had them. But there was never the father-son communication, and so I find out all these things after he's dead, right. But anyhow, after he got through partying in the city, my grandfather and grandmother put him on a boat, a freighter, and sent him around the world, took about a year, so he could sow his wild oats internationally, I suppose, instead of just locally, or it would catch up with the family. He did that and came back, lived on the ranch for a while, up in Livermore, ran cattle up there, and end of the thirties, he got married. He married my mother in 1939. She's from San Francisco.

Lage: What was her name?

Bruce P.: Joan Meek was her maiden name, and her dad was a stockbroker and her mother's--

Lage: She came from a wealthy family?

Bruce P.: Well, yes, they had lost a lot in the Depression, though, and so she wasn't a real socialite, but they were still solvent. They were married in '39, and he went into the cavalry, horse cavalry, naturally, at Fort Riley. They discontinued the horse cavalry and made it into the armored corps in 1940 or '41. So he joined the O.S.S. because he had spent a couple of years in school in Switzerland and was fluent in French and the dialects, read and then spoke French fluently, and so consequently he joined the O.S.S. and was a paratrooper. He won a silver star in France for

Bruce P.: trying to save some guy's life. He made numerous jumps behind the lines, supplying and communicating with the French underground.

Lage: That was his adventuresome quality.

Bruce P.: Yes, that was it. So after the war, he came back and wanted to farm. He farmed some land. I remember, as a really small kid, three, four, five years, I used to sit on the back of his little caterpillar, and we would go plant beets day after day, I remember.

Lage: So he actually had done hands-on farming.

Bruce P.: Yes, he farmed across Jarvis Road there. He had a couple of hundred acres. My grandfather gave all the boys a couple of hundred acres, and he gave them each a lot of money when they turned twenty-one. Yes, he said, "That's all you're going to get now, so make it or break it." And they all made it. So my dad did that for a couple of years, and he made money at it, but there was still the dream of not just working his place, but working the whole.

Lage: Did he express that to you or are you getting that from talking to others?

Bruce P.: I've gotten it from talking to other people, as well as I remember him here, the way he was here, and he was really in his element here. This is what he wanted to do.

Lage: He liked it?

Bruce P.: He liked running his ranch; he liked doing it. All the good and the bad in between. That meant a lot to him. My mother didn't like it over here at all. It was too far away from her friends on the Peninsula, and she didn't like the drive. There was an incident that sort of came out that--cousin Marjorie lived here. She was coming back from the city one night and went through East Palo Alto and was attacked over there by some black guys, and so the story came out, and in the next couple of days my father was gone at night. He packed up and he was sitting over in East Palo Alto waiting for these fellows who matched the description Marjorie gave him. Nothing ever came of it.

Aunt Marjorie

Bruce P.: But Marjorie and my dad and mom were always really good friends. Marjorie, I think, was in the woman's army corps, or something, in the Second World War, and so they had that in common, as well

Bruce P.: as when they were children, there were no other kids for miles, and Marjorie and my dad were always best friends as cousins, and then my mom came into the picture, and they were pretty simpatico, and so that was a pretty good threesome. Marjorie had a couple of bad marriages and kind of cracked up later on, kind of too bad. I remember her as really a wonderful gal.

Lage: She did some farming too, I believe?

Bruce P.: Yes, she did.

Lage: Did she actually farm hands-on?

Bruce P.: Yes, she and my dad, they would get out there and get dirty together, yes. I mean Marjorie was more like Sarah, just a real outgoing woman, a real strong woman. The undercurrent around here on the Henry side of the family was that, if you're not careful, those W. D. boys are going to take away everything you own. Everything in this ranch is split in half, all the way down to square feet. It's amazing, the percentages are so minute around here.

But yes, Marjorie had, I think, part of her face disfigured from a bomb blast in the Second World War, so being sort of isolated and protected, she wasn't so self-conscious, maybe, about going out in public. But all the stories I ever remember about Marjorie were really, really good. Good times, you know, really a nice person. Sally, I didn't really know at all just because she was with John in Piedmont and wasn't here.

Lage: Okay, now, your brothers and sisters?

Bruce P.: I've got one sister, her name is Joan, lives in southeastern Idaho, another out-in-the-middle-of-nowhere person.

Lage: Is she involved in ranching?

Bruce P.: No, not really, she just lives off of her investments. I don't know what she's doing out there.

Lage: Is she older?

Bruce P.: Yes, she's two years older than I am. She's forty-two. She's not really actively involved in this place or anything related to farming.

Lage: She's still out in a rural area.

II BOYHOOD ON THE RANCH

Nora, the Cook

Bruce P.: We all--it was an incredible experience to walk out your back door, and as far as you could see, you owned. I used to spend days all summer long--I would walk out at eight o'clock in the morning out the back door, and I could eat my way all the way to the drainage canal down there by the McKeowns, and I could go all the way to the hills, and I could eat my way all the way back, and when I got home at six or seven o'clock at night, you know, I wasn't even hungry. The cook that we had was just an incredible cook. She had been with the family for a long, long time and had raised all the boys as well as the next generation coming up.

Lage: Was she Chinese by chance?

Bruce P.: No, she was I think from Montana. Her name was Nora Abney. She had a husband named Dennis. Dennis was the gardener, handyman; Nora was the cook. There was a cleaning lady named Margaret Sanderval who was with us for many, many years. But as far as people around there, really, the Abneys were the only ones that were there a lot.

When I was ten years old, Nora and Dennis also had a restaurant in Niles that they leased out. Well, they decided that they were tired of working for my grandfather for the summer, and so they decided to take the summer off and go work at their place. My father thought it would be a good idea for me to learn how to work, so I was indentured over--I spent the summer being a busboy for free. I would go six in the morning to ten at night, right?

Lage: That was helpful for them.

Bruce P.: Well, yes, it was, and it was important for my father to educate me in not thinking that I was something particularly special because I lived in a big house and had servants. I'm glad of that.

Lage: It's interesting that that was important to him.

Bruce P.: Yes. So anyway, I came through Niles yesterday, coming from Livermore, and it was a real shock--because as a boy, we used to feed the bums out the back door, that would go through the rail yards. The first day I was there, this guy came and just looked like hell, and he asked me, "You got something to eat?" I ran back inside, I said, "Nora, Nora, there's somebody out there." She came out and she said, "Oh, it's you again? What is it this time? A cheeseburger?" So she went in, cooked him a complete meal, stuck it out the back door, and that was it. A really, really nice person. So anyhow, I learned a lot. And just coming through there yesterday was really, really a déjà vu because I had spent a lot of time just walking around there, and it hasn't changed at all. It's really neat.

Lage: That's nice that there's some place that hasn't changed.

Bruce P.: Yes, I was really, really amazed.

Recalling Grandfather Will

Lage: Before you came to live here, were you nearby?

Bruce P.: Yes, we lived over on the Peninsula, in Palo Alto.

Lage: Did you come and visit?

Bruce P.: Oh, yes, we used to come over almost every weekend. I used to come over and do a lot of hunting, from about six years old. It was a very gun-oriented family, we all hunted everything that we could. So that's what I did.

Lage: So you knew your grandfather when he was in good health?

Bruce P.: Oh, yes. I used to ride around with him. He had this old '39 Oldsmobile. It was a white one, two-door, and everybody knew that thing. When it was coming, old Will was in the car. He was a special deputy; he had a little badge, and he used to carry his 455 pistol, Colt revolver, on his seat there, so in case anybody gave him a bad time, he could just whip it out and show it to them. He did quite a few times. I was amazed at that guy.

Lage: While you were with him?

Bruce P.: Yes. This one guy once came and started giving my grandfather a hard time, and my grandfather pulled the gun on him and told him to get his ass off the place or he was going to kill him. This

Bruce P.: guy just stood up to him, "You can't tell me what to do." My father was just down the row of trees a little bit, and my father came up and saw the gun and he says, "Don't you talk to my father like that." So anyway, the guy left. But there were incidents like that around here; it was almost vigilante. It was exciting for a kid, though; it was just like the Wild West.

My grandfather was always really interested in gold mining because that's the way his father initially got enough money to get this place going, through the gold fields. And I guess he had some shares in some Alaskan mines during the Alaskan gold rush. He went up to Juneau, and he helped survey the Taku glacier up there when it--

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Bruce P.: There's a little vial of gold flakes in there that we used to go in and look at, and shake, and take them out, and feel them. We would look at the gold, at least I would. This was the chain that linked us all together, right? So my grandfather, he would talk about that, and he had his snow shoes up on the wall, and his ice ax, and he had this picture of him standing over a kodiak bear with his rifle, one of the things he had done on the way up north.

Just lots of little things, you could go digging around and find old obsidian arrowheads that we used to get from the Indian mounds up here, mortars and pestles, all sorts of stuff, just artifacts. There's a gold mine on the cattle ranch up in Livermore that never really paid out, but that was one of the reasons why he bought that ranch, because it's got a mine on it. Couldn't leave that one alone. He also bought that ranch to run cattle because we were growing so much barley and feed down here, that--

Lage: Now this would have been your great-grandfather who bought the ranch.

Bruce P.: Yes, but he put enough into grain, and it was carried over to when my grandfather—I don't remember when my great-grandfather died—

Lage: I think it was 1895.

Bruce P.: Yes, because I remember my grandfather was really young when he sort of came into all of this. In fact, there are pictures of him swinging from the mast of one of the old grain schooners down by the slough down there in his 1906 Stanford shirt, pretty funny. But that was just another way to utilize the ground. It was good for barley, good for grain over there, because it's loose soil; it's a good medium.

Bruce P.: There used to be a legend that under one of these bigger trees that there was a jar of fifty-dollar gold pieces buried, and we could never figure out whether it was really there because great-grandfather was like that; he liked to have his gold around. But then we figured, well, maybe it was something that kept the kids busy for a while so that they wouldn't be hanging around the house.

Lage: Did you go out and look for it?

Bruce P.: Oh, yes, I mean, this place was torn up numerous times, just all the kids, and it would always be Will's kids that were over digging up because Henry's kids wouldn't do it. So anyhow.

Secrets of the W. D. Patterson House

Lage: I talked to your cousin Wil about the secret panels in your grandfather Will's house.

Bruce P.: Yes, sure.

Lage: You lived in that house?

Bruce P.: Yes.

Lage: Did your grandfather live there at the same time?

Bruce P.: Yes.

Lage: But your grandmother had died?

Bruce P.: Yes, she had died, I think, a year or so before we moved in.

Lage: Did you spend some time looking for a secret passage?

Bruce P.: Oh, yes. They weren't too hard to find. There was one in the dining room; just as you would go in, it was the first panel on the right, and it would swing open. You could climb in there, and it also had a little shelf up there where my father used to keep an automatic pistol. There was one upstairs in my grandmother's closet, and it was behind all the clothes, and it was a door that would swing in, and you could crawl in there. It was big enough for a person to hide; I guess they did that in case somebody got in the house, they could just hide out.

As a kid I was able to get in there, and you go up to the attic, you could go back down--more or less along the line of the chimney--to the first floor, between the kitchen and the library.

Bruce P.: and you could pound on the walls to people. [Laughter] It was neat. There was one that you could get down in through, and during Christmas, all the kids would be sent to one end of the house; well, we could get to the panel and watch all this going on.

Underneath the stairs of the main entranceway my father-- when he was, I guess, twelve or thirteen--had a little kind of a clubhouse under there. Pinups, 1920s and thirties pinups.

Lage: That still survived?

Bruce P.: Yes, they had survived till they burnt the house, but to get to that, you had to crawl under the house, past the furnace, and past all the dead rats, and then there was this little tiny board, and you would pull the board back, and you would climb in there, and he had a kerosene lamp there, and old comic books, cigarette butts, when they were practicing smoking.

In fact, they were under there one time, my father and a friend of his from the military academy, and they started a fire underneath the steps. They were down there, and my grandfather didn't know about this place, right? My grandfather's sitting in the front room there reading, and smoke starts to come from under the stairs. So he immediately shouted, "Fire!" and tried to find out what was going on. He ripped the stairs out, and there was my father sitting there looking at him, and all this smoke coming out. So anyway, he got caught on that deal.

But I went under there when I lived there, and it was just like going into a museum. It reminded me of pictures in the last couple of months in National Geographic. They had a picture of Scott's hut down in Antarctica, you know, where just everything is preserved. It was just like walking into the past, it was really neat, yes. So that all went down with the house, everything that was under there. A friend of mine from the military academy, we went under there, and he thought it was pretty neat. So he got an old stone Cock-'N'-Bull ginger beer bottle, one of the really old relics.

Burning the House, Selling the Land

Lage: Where were you when the house was burnt?

Bruce P.: Let's see, that was I think, sixty-four, sixty-five, I was in high school in Los Altos. Yes, we all gathered over on the lawn, and my uncle Donald went around and put the torch to the place.

Lage: That must have been hard to do and hard to watch.

Bruce P.: It was amazing. Every person has their own way of dealing with it. Aunt Sarah was over there, in her lawn chair; it was sort of fun to make fire jokes. I just sort of watched it. Donald had always been the type of person that was always moving forward, and the past was really nothing that was very important, you know, and so he just saw this as, "Well, my grandfather wanted it burned if nobody wanted to live there. It's being burned." My father saw it as quite a different experience, and I don't know how David took it, I haven't talked to him about it.

But having lived there, I was just horrified. That house was so architecturally perfect. It had integrity, it had incredible beauty inside, it was fashioned more or less like a German hunting lodge. It had deep oak panels; it had big, big, light gold oak beams; it had pillars; and it was all just exquisite woodwork. There was cherry wood for fireplace covers, Brazilian rosewood, it was truly amazing.

Lage: Some of that at least should have been saved, if not the house.

Bruce P.: Yes. But it cost a lot to maintain the place, and nobody really wanted to give up their life to live there. My father saw that it wasn't going to be working farming anymore, and it was time for everybody to move on.

Lage: So even at that point you think your father saw that the development was on its way?

Bruce P.: Yes, because he had sold some of his land too. Things were gradually moving. Jack Brooks was always here. I can go back thirty-five years--like I'm a trustee for one of these trusts--and all these documents, if it's got real estate on it, Brooks has got his name on it. But that's always the way it had been around here.

Lage: Who did he develop the relationship with first? Who did he approach?

Bruce P.: Jack Brooks?

Lage: Yes.

Bruce P.: Well, he and my uncle David had always been good developmental friends, and so there was always that line of communication. My Uncle Donald didn't really have much to do with Brooks. He did business with them occasionally, but Donald didn't, I don't think, really like, essentially nouveau riche kind of people. Jack was making a lot of money, and making it, and of course the Pattersons always look at themselves as having been here for so

Bruce P.: long that we're almost landed gentry, or aristocracy or something, and there was a little bit of that bias in there, and it was a personality conflict as well. Donald was a very refined, sort of standoffish kind of a person, and Jack was kind of a land salesman. So that's sort of the way that went. My father did a lot of business with Brooks on land trades.

Lage: Your grandfather sold land to him also?

Bruce P.: Yes. Not as much, though, as the boys. My grandfather didn't need to sell anything. So that's sort of the way that one went.

Roses, Miniature Golf, Deer Park on the Grounds

Bruce P.: Walking around the house this morning, I was thinking about some of the things that I remember about the place. One, that the grounds were always immaculate. My grandmother had a passion for roses, and there were roses all the way around the house, all the time.

Lage: You're talking about the W. D.--

Bruce P.: Yes, the W. D. House, yes. They were always into horticulture, always had new fruit trees, different kinds of fruit trees, always trying different crosses. The family orchard down there had oranges, tangerines, lemons, just every kind of fruit imaginable. My grandmother had a little rock garden. It was sort of concentric rings of rocks, with little annual flowers in them, next to a miniature golf course that had been built for the kids in this grove of trees.

When I lived there, the golf course had pretty much receded into the past, but what had remained were these wire vines, and oh, I guess, they covered about a half an acre. They would climb all the way to the tops of these trees, and as kids we could stand on one limb and jump across and grab these vines like baboons, and you wouldn't fall down, you could scramble up to the top, and just climb all over. It was just incredible. My grandfather had a deer park back there, too, where he would keep deer, just to have around.

Lage: They didn't hunt those deer?

Bruce P.: No, no, they were just for looks. No, if we wanted to hunt deer, we went up to the cattle ranch in Livermore. That's where the deer came from. Upland birds, ducks, things like that, well, we've got those down here. Yes, they always had something for horticultural going. Uncle Henry spent quite a few years

Bruce P.: hybridizing a white sweet corn. It was just a hobby. I remember one summer he had planted, I guess, about two hundred acres of this corn, and it was a different kind of corn, smallkerneled, early ripening. So I went through and I sampled about every fifth or sixth row all the way down. It was all really sweet and good. But he never marketed it, never tried to do anything with it. It was just something he--sort of like Luther Burbank--had come up with, "Ah, I would like to try this."

The Ranch Operation and Tenant Farmers

Lage: As you remember the operation, or what you know of it even before you were around, how much of it was directly farmed by the two brothers, Henry and Will, and how much was leased out, and tenant-farmed?

Bruce P.: Most of it was tenant-farmed once Will and Henry took over because there was just too much. When my great-grandfather was here, he did a lot of it, as well as hired people. But the whole place has never been farmed exclusively by the family. Earlier on, there weren't the numbers in the generations to make a work force, and now that the numbers are essentially here, nobody's doing it.

Lage: So that's what I had understood, that for the most part, it was tenants.

Bruce P.: Yes, it always has been; it's just the acquisition of the land really never stopped, just pick up a piece here or there. But I can look in History of Washington Township, the inside cover there has a lot of tracks from about McKeowns down to Warm Springs. You can kind of see the way it goes; I could tell what my grandfather picked up along the way. Kind of interesting.

Lage: You had described earlier, and then we got sidetracked and went on to something else, about how the two brothers worked together.

Bruce P.: Will and Henry?

Lage: Right, you said that one of them was the financial wizard. Can you elaborate on that?

Bruce P.: Probably not too much other than I very rarely ever saw Henry out in the fields being the honcho. It was always my grandfather going around and telling the field bosses what's happening and making sure that everything was done the right way--and, especially, on time, because in farming time is of the essence.

Lage: So he would look into what the tenant farmers were doing?

Bruce P.: Well, no, he would sort of get together and find out, "Well, what do you want to grow? Okay, this ground is better for this than that. If you're going to be growing beets, are you going to be able to make it? Is your profit going to pay us as well as you?" Just sort of the nuts and bolts of the operation.

Lage: So there was an active manager, not just leaving it to the tenants?

Bruce P.: Oh, no, very active. On a lot of the tracts, too, we would just hire somebody and his crew to put it in, and then we would sharecrop it.

Lage: When you say you sharecrop, how does that work?

Bruce P.: Well, okay, instead of the grower paying the owner a flat fee, you would take a percentage of the crop, and it was usually either/or, whichever was more. That was usually the case. Sort of interesting, we were always really concerned about making the land pay, and yet at the same time, down by the feed lots down there, you know where those are?

Lage: No.

Bruce P.: Towards Patterson Ranch Road, down there, my grandfather used to lease out for virtually nothing a forty-acre triangle for the Chinese growers, the flower growers. My grandfather always loved flowers, and so did my grandmother, and so consequently payment for the rent would be taken in bulbs, it would be taken in flowers. We used to get boxes and boxes of firecrackers every third of July.

There used to be a couple of old houses out on the other side of these barns, and a fellow named Low Yee used to live there with his sons. Low Yee spoke virtually no English, but he and my grandfather were always able to communicate, and my grandfather spoke no Chinese. They had been friends for years and years. They had never spoken English to each other, but Low Yee was always there with his flowers and his family, and Will was always there with the ground to plant the flowers and the family on. So they had a really great relationship.

The kids would come over to the house sometimes, and just sort of look around because it was so different. Yet, I would always get together with them because they were kids and I was using their firecrackers, and so we would establish a rapport like that.

Bruce P.: Low Yee came over one day, and no one was home but Nora, the cook, and you know how servants will always have their--If you're a servant you're a servant, you're okay. Well, Low Yee didn't speak any English, and Nora didn't speak any Chinese, but Low Yee ended up in the kitchen having a roll, you know, and they were sitting around talking, and everybody arrived. I remember my grandfather gave him a tour through the house, which, you know, my grandfather never toured anybody through the house, but he toured Low Yee through the house.

My mother has this really, really beautiful, big, red, lacquered chest, sandalwood inside, and lacquer painted on the outside with brass, that I guess my grandmother got in China in the twenties. He nearly had a cardiac arrest when he saw that thing. He just, "Oh!" He just pored over it, and he touched it. My family did a lot of traveling, and there were all these things from all over the world in the house, and, I don't know, it was really neat, I remember that. It was a really nice experience for everybody.

Lage: Do you remember any of the other tenant farmers?

Bruce P.: Let's see, there was the Maciel family. That was Tony Maciel, and then there was a younger son that I met about three or four years ago, and I don't remember his name, maybe it was Joe. But anyhow, my father was really good friends with Tony and learned a lot about farming from him. They were here for, oh, twenty, twenty-five years, a long time. Let me think. Well, the cattle ranch, we always ran our own cattle on there.

Lage: So that was a direct operation, the cattle ranch?

Bruce P.: Yes. We had a foreman up there named Bob Root. He was a vet from Texas. Old Doc, he was the greatest guy. He taught me how to ride a cutting horse, taught me how to rope, taught me how to shoot deer, taught me how to shoe a horse, taught me how to brand, castrate, dehorn cattle.

Lage: You worked over there?

Bruce P.: Yes, well, I got shipped up there during the summers.

"Doc, you need some help?"

"Well, okay."

"Well, here comes Bruce for a couple of weeks." So I spent a lot of time doing that, I enjoyed that because it was something that my father had done, and it had a lot of meaning to me because I wanted to be a cowboy too.

Lage: It has stayed with you.

Bruce P.: Yes, I suppose it has. I often think of myself as a real contradiction, though, supposedly from a lower-upper class background, or an upper-middle class background. I'm just happy being dirty. [Laughter] So well, what we have to do, we have to do, I think.

Lage: Do you remember the dairies?

Bruce P.: Marchy's dairy, yes, I remember Marchy's.

Lage: I interviewed Frank Borghi just last week. He had a dairy here on the ranch.

Bruce P.: That might have been before my time.

Lage: Now, let's see, he closed out--I think he was during your time. I think it was mid-fifties, he moved off the ranch.

Bruce P.: I remember Marchy had one down close to where the Alamedas are now. I used to go, usually sit in my grandfather's car while they talked, because the dogs were really fierce over there.

Lage: Now Borghi remembers--he dealt mainly with Henry--that the rent was never raised the whole time. They moved off because they knew that they were paying such ridiculously low rent, and they couldn't ask for the kind of improvements they needed.

Bruce P.: Well, that doesn't sound unusual. Henry and Will always had enough money to where they knew they weren't going to go broke, and they knew that they didn't have to jack the price up every year. It was important for them, I think, to have the land used, and have it possible for somebody to make money off of it, as well as for themselves to make money off of it.

Lage: Borghi and his wife told me that, during the Depression, many years Will and Henry wouldn't collect any rent. They knew these farmers couldn't pay anything.

Bruce P.: There was an old guy named Tony that used to live down at the feed lot, a little Mexican guy, and he was the most amazing character around. He had these little Chihuahuas, just ugly little Chihuahuas. He lived in this one block stone house at the feed lot, and he worked for my grandfather. He was kind of, not the manager, just sort of he was there, you know, in case something went wrong he would call my grandfather.

Tony worked for years and years down there, and he would work, oh, eleven months a year, all the time, and the twelfth month he would take his yearly wages and he would go back down to

Bruce P.: Mexico to see his family. Towards the end of that month inevitably, invariably, there would be this call from Mexico, "Mr. Patterson, I'm in jail, I need another twenty-five dollars for my bail." [Laughter] And my grandfather would send him the bail down, send him the money, and Tony would come back.

Then he would go back down again, sometimes he would go down once a year, and sometimes he would go back down within that same month, and then he would call again, and he would need more bail money, and then he would finally milk this one pretty dry, and then he would finally stick around. My grandfather always sent him the money. It was sort of a chuckle around the house. My father would say, "Well, Father, we got a call from Tony." My grandfather would just sort of laugh, and say, "Well, where do we send it?" And he used to send it off.

But yes, they were always really charitable guys. My grandfather was always giving money to somebody. He was just like that.

Grandmother May Bird and Other Family Memories

Lage: What about your grandmother? What do you remember of her?

Bruce P.: Not very much. She was a fairly tall, substantial woman, not fat, but her bones were big, because my sister resembles her a lot, and my sister's a big woman. My uncle David has a lot of the bone structure that my grandmother did. I remember her as being a really happy grandmother; she always liked to have the kids around. My most vivid memories of her, though, were just in her last couple of years, when she had arthritis really badly, and she was really in a lot of pain, and it was hard on my grandfather to watch this. But she always had a lot of courage, and she was always--I mean, even if she couldn't hold a child, she would still put her arm on one of the kids, and you could always feel that. That was pretty tough for everybody because she was such a good woman. But I hear that mostly from other people, and my very limited experience with her was that, yes, she was a very wonderful woman. Her family was from Yreka, and the Bird family had one of the first general stores up in Yreka.

Lage: They met at Stanford?

Bruce P.: I don't really know how they met, I have no idea.

Lage: They both seemed to be child-oriented, or at least that's what I've heard about your grandfather, that they really enjoyed the kids. Did you have that impression?

Bruce P.: Oh, yes. The family Christmases, and every year we used to go up to the cattle ranch and have a barbecue. Doc Root would slaughter a steer. We would have half a steer, all steaks. The whole family would go up there, and even John and Sally's side of the family would come up, and just have a really big family blowout. That's when everybody was really shining. It was nice to have a family that was working, that was together, that was happy, because earlier on, like I said, we really didn't cross paths with everybody all that often.

Lage: Did you sense this from your grandfather? Did he tell you to keep away from the house or from Henry and Sarah?

Bruce P.: No. It was just that, well, first of all, there weren't any kids here [at Henry's home] anymore, and so there was really nothing here for me other than just sort of the curiosity of the place. Sarah always had a German shepherd or a Doberman or something around, and that wasn't the most hospitable thing for a kid to run into, either. No, it was mostly the three sons and the two daughters always were sort of standoffish from each other, I mean with the exception of Marjorie. It's sort of hard to say these things as generalities, in that I can go right back and cite the exceptions. But there was a distance between the families, yes.

Lage: I wanted you to follow up on another remark, when we were talking about the relationship between Henry and Will, and you said there was always a lot of tension in it, now is that something you observed? Did you see them have their meetings about the ranch as a kid?

Bruce P.: Yes, and it was, I think, because they were both the type of person who couldn't wait to get it done, and so the exchanges were always rather sharp without being argumentative, so much as, "Okay, we said this is going to work, well, what about this?" "Okay, well, if we do this, this will work." You know, sort of the either/or's, the if's and and's of it.

Lage: That sounds communicative.

Bruce P.: Well, yes, I would say it would be communicative, but it was just their personalities.

Lage: Did they have sharply defined personalities as you remember?

Bruce P.: Yes, and although I'm not as close to that particular relationship as others, and so I really--

Lage: You were probably pretty young then.

Bruce P.: Yea, and very impressionable. Even like when I went over to the site of my grandfather's house this morning, I remember it as being a big, incredible place, and I was walking around, seeing where everything was, and I guess it was quite a bit smaller. My perspective had changed quite a bit.

Lage: There's just a foundation there, now, is that right?

Bruce P.: Yes, well, there's part of the driveway; there's the porte cochere, where the car was parked. That's just bricked on the ground, and that's where I got all of my bearings from. There were only a few trees still there. The old hedge I used to trim as a kid is still there. It needs trimming.

And it's been dozed over, too, I think things have been sort of disrupted. Although when I was there this morning I found a big piece of granite that was part of the foundation, and so I put that in the back of the car, and I gave it to my cousin Wil to hang on to, because I'm flying home; it's eighty pounds of granite.

Lage: You'll find some use for that.

Bruce P.: Oh, yes, I'll put it in something at home.

Lage: Did your grandfather pass down any stories about his mother or father?

Bruce P.: No, not at all, as I remember. This is Clara Hawley? No, no.

Lage: Those were the pioneers, and they really--she seems like quite a person.

Bruce P.: Well the Hawleys were here--well, in fact James Hawley opened the Red Hotel, it was the first or second hotel in this area. I sort of take pride in tracing my roots back, you know, I'm a fourth-generation farmer. Well, if I went back, I would be a fifth-generation hotelier.

Lage: That's right, on the other side, if you follow the female line.

Bruce P.: Yes, right. And that's something that's really interesting in this family, too, is that it is always the male line, and on the W. D.'s side it's because they're all boys, I suppose. But I've spent some time looking into the Hawley and the Bird side of things, and it's equally as romantic and interesting and as historical as anything else, it's all from where you're coming.

Lage: I talked to two women this week who are Hawley descendants. One of them is Hawley-Beard, and James Beard was the man that your great-grandfather went to work for when he came down from the

Lage: gold mine, really, kind of how he got his start. He leased land from them and then bought it.

Bruce P.: Oh, well I'll be darned!

Lage: So that's a nice combination. There's a lot of Hawley family interest in genealogy, and keeping together.

Bruce P.: That's good. Yes, because the Pattersons had really never been that interested in it, although things have been saved at the Society of California Pioneers.

##

Bruce P.: George [Donald's son, George Patterson. See interview in this series.] is a great source of knowledge.

Lage: He had some good tales.

Bruce P.: Oh, George is--we've done a lot together.

Lage: George and Wil must be a couple of years older than you.

Bruce P.: Yes, I think George is probably two or three years older than I am. Yes, Wil is maybe three or four, something like that, not too much older, though.

Lage: But your father didn't talk about his family, or your grandfather.

Bruce P.: No.

Crops and Employees

Lage: When you were still here what kind of crops were being grown?

Bruce P.: Oh, geez, everything, yes, it was corn, sugar beets, cucumbers, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, broccoli, tomatoes; not too many melons, that didn't seem to work too well here; horse beans; barley; a lot of grain on the other side of the railroad tracks down by the hills there--that's good grain land. That's about it. I don't think carrots, I don't remember carrots, and I don't remember spuds, I don't think we did any spuds.

I remember there used to be a lot of nut harvests around. In fact, in this old grove that used to be a lot thicker and deeper, there was this one old guy that used to come around every year, this old bum. I don't remember his name, but he used to

Bruce P.: live in a little tin shack down there. My mother would say, "Don't you ever go near him; he's dirty and he's dangerous!" You know, well, he was a friend of my grandfather's. He would come back every year and pick nuts for him.

So I went down there with my grandfather. He wanted to tell the guy, well, it's time to get to work. So I kind of hid behind my grandfather, and he pounded on the corrugated roofing, and this old guy comes. He's hung over, and he looks out, "Hello, Mr. Patterson." "Well, you ready to go to work?" And the guy says, "Oh, all right." So about a week later the guy came over to the house. He's more or less put together, and he says, "I'm here to work." So he put him to work, just picking walnuts, gathering them.

Lage: Now did he live on the ranch here?

Bruce P.: The old guy? Yes, just right over there. When I was out hunting, I used to get really brave, and sneak all the way down, and stalk this place: "Well, if he's there he'll never know I'm coming, and if he's not there, well then I'll know it, and I'll just snoop around," one of those kind of deals. He never had anything there but an old blanket and a couple of wine bottles. But there was sort of the intrigue of the place.

My grandfather was like that, people would come through that might otherwise just be run off, and if they would look for work, he would find something for them to do. Give them some money, and let them keep moving. I remember as a kid, on the horse barns behind the old house back there, there were always the old ho-be signs of "easy time" or "watch out for the dog" and stuff like that, the old signs on the wall, I remember those.

They would sometimes show up at the kitchen door there, when Nora was cooking, and the rule of the house was that she was never to give them anything from the house, because we really didn't want them prowling around, but she would always give them something. She would say, "I'm not supposed to be doing this, and I'm going to get in trouble if I do, but if you just take it and move on, it will work out." And it always did.

Humorous Recollections of Grandparents

Bruce P.: Just thinking about little things like that--towards the end of my grandmother's life she became more and more religious, maybe not any more than she was, but it was more apparent in her behavior. She used to have a Reverend Freeman, the Episcopal priest, over every Sunday afternoon, and they would go in the

Bruce P.: living room and close all the drapes. We always thought they were having a seance or something going on in there, and they would sit there and murmur and murmur. [Laughs]

Then they would be done, and they would come out, and the reverend would be sort of standing around, being fairly beatific, and my grandmother would look at my grandfather, and grandfather would look at my grandmother, and my grandfather would kind of smirk, and my grandmother would say, "Will, the reverend needs a contribution." [Laughter] My grandfather would sort of look at him, he would dig down and give him some money. It was sort of an arrangement that they had been through for years, but it was funny.

Lage: Your grandfather didn't take part in the religious activities?

Bruce P.: No, not my grandfather. [laughs] One time, I guess it was the mayor--I don't know whether it was the mayor of Centerville, these little towns, Decoto, Centerville, Union City, I don't remember who it was, some dignitary, some visiting dignitary was there visiting my grandfather, and it was a very formal affair, and the pigs got loose from the pig pen. I thought this was a pretty good deal, so I was going to help Dennis round them up. Well, you know how pigs are, they just go. So we chased the pigs around for a while, and we were trying to keep them from squealing and yelling because this was going on in the house, and we didn't want any--

Lage: You weren't trying to stir it up?

Bruce P.: No, we wanted to get these pigs away so the mayor wouldn't see what really went on at the Patterson Ranch. So we didn't do it, they got up on the porch, and as my grandfather and the mayor were walking out of the front door these two big bears were running, and Dennis and I were right behind them, I got one by the tail, and Dennis was cursing the other one. They were taken aback, and they watched us go by.

We got them, we wrestled them, you heard this squealing and all this stuff. When you get a pig, if you can get behind him, grab him by the hocks, and lift him up and use him like a wheelbarrow, they can't come back on you. They'll kick a lot, but as long as you hold onto their hocks, you can wheel them where you want to go. So Dennis and I grabbed these hogs, wheeled them around, and we wheeled them right back in front of the mayor and my grandfather, pigs there howling and squealing, and my grandfather, he saw the humor in it. The mayor--he was kind of trying to get out of the way of the pigs, he wasn't quite sure of this whole deal. Some of those things that happened are really funny, yes.

III CATTLE RANCHING IN OREGON, DEVELOPMENT IN FREMONT

Becoming A Cattle Rancher

Lage: Did you feel, when your grandfather was driving around, that he was grooming you and preparing you to take over, or did he see that it was coming to an end?

Bruce P.: No, he didn't see that it was coming to an end, although he didn't see that it wasn't going to be taken over. I think he just assumed that my father was there, he was going to be doing something, and that the boys were supposed to be doing this. I don't think that he saw the end of it, and I don't think that I was being groomed by him so much as just shown what was all of ours, and how we had always done it, whether I came back to do it or not, I don't think he really thought about that.

Lage: Did he kind of insinuate a certain direction for you or suggest, perhaps, you ought to get into something else?

Bruce P.: No, not at all.

Lage: David had the feeling that he was always told to do something else, because Donald was going to take over.

Bruce P.: Well, that's sort of an assumption in families. I see it in Oregon, old families, where the eldest always picks up, or is expected to pick up the later care, and consequently they inherit the house, and/or property, and/or something more than the other beneficiaries would get. David was the youngest of the three sons by quite a few years, and I think that that might have had something to do with the way he was brought into the business or kept out of the business, because he's mentioned, "Well, I was always the baby in the family." And that had played somehow in the way the cards were dealt.

Lage: You were still pretty young to be talking about what you should prepare for when your grandfather was alive.

Bruce P.: Sure, sure, well they just wanted to keep me in school, right?

Lage: [Laughs] Hard to do?

Bruce P.: Well, it was, for me, because I'm the kind of person that--I would rather get out and learn about things in the environment, I was never able to really sit still in class and concentrate. Most of my knowledge about life has been empirical. I learned a lot in college, but I still--

Lage: Where did you go to college?

Bruce P.: Cabrillo College in Santa Cruz. But that's academics as opposed to just what you learn, and that's always been the way I've looked at things, try to absorb them.

Lage: What happened after college? How did you get into cattle ranching?

Bruce P.: Let's see, got out of school, and I didn't really have a whole lot to do.

Lage: When did you graduate?

Bruce P.: It would be 1971? Yes, because I moved up to Oregon in '72. How did I get into that? I wanted to be a part of this place, and it didn't work out. They sold some land to Singer Housing Company, so I took the money that I got from the Singer sale and put it into land in Oregon. It was a tax avoidance deal. Then I moved out of the Bay Area because we had just had our first son, and I didn't really want to raise him here. So I just found some land that was compatible, bought it, and now raise cattle on it. But it's sort of what I wanted to do anyway. If I wasn't a Patterson with the money that comes with it, I might have done something entirely different in life, and I'm sure I would have, but the way all the cards fell, that's what I did.

Lage: Did what you learn in Livermore help out in your operation up there, to start from scratch?

Bruce P.: Oh, yes. The whole place was a real education because, like working at the cattle ranch, you learn those types of things; working around here, just being exposed to the way people grow things, the way it's done. You can't help but really absorb that.

Lage: How active are you on the ranch? Do you manage it?

Bruce P.: Yes, it's me and my wife, and my kids, yes.

Lage: How many kids?

Bruce P.: Three. My oldest daughter's a freshman at Western Washington State up in Bellingham, and my oldest son is a junior in high school, and the youngest is eighth grade; he's almost fourteen.

Lage: They come out and help around the ranch?

Bruce P.: Oh, yes, they're pretty good with the cattle. They don't like it. Derek, my oldest son, he doesn't like it, but it doesn't mean they can't do it. So, yes, it works out.

Lage: He won't choose it?

Bruce P.: No, no, he won't. They all understand that that's what I'm doing, and as long as they're there, as part of the family, that's the family deal. I'm sort of toying with selling that place and buying a bigger one east of the mountains, just more room.

Lage: Where are you now?

Bruce P.: In between Eugene and the Pacific, it's right at the top of the coast range mountains that run through there. A lot of big trees, Douglas firs.

Lage: Sounds like a beautiful spot.

Bruce P.: Oh, yes, it's really wonderful. Nice and quiet, it's the smallest school district in Oregon. I think that there are four hundred people in the district. It's just really rural. I find peace there.

Management of Patterson Properties in the Eighties

Lage: We talked a little bit about development. Let's take that Singer sale that you mentioned. Was that something you were consulted about?

Bruce P.: No, because I had an undivided ownership interest in this block of land. It was decided that the block of land would be sold--I guess Donald and David decided it--and then once that was done, then it just all filtered down the pipeline. No, I wasn't consulted at all. It's only since this office has been established that really anybody has been involved in the decision-making process other than just the principals involved, which is usually one or two brothers, but nothing beyond that.

Lage: Do you like this method of managing? Are you glad that it's kind of stayed together, and you formed the family corporation?

Bruce P.: Yes, but I wonder what the point of it is, because eventually it's all going to be sold.

Lage: Even so, they want to keep it together as a property management firm.

Bruce P.: They want to do that, but I think that, given the people in the family, not everyone wants to be involved in--you know, I like to run my own businesses; I'm that type of a person. Some people don't, and that's what the management is for. I have a hard time wondering if it's going to be viable in the long run. I like being involved because this is the first time that all of the family is able to get together and talk. Usually it was just one or two people who would do all the talking for everybody, and that was it, so it's a revitalization of the family circle, and at the same time, I think it's just a matter of time before we're done with this, and then we're done with it. Then we're just like three or four other million people around here that live in an area where it used to be pretty and now it's houses.

Lage: Anything else about the current operation? Do you feel like the board works well, makes its decisions well?

Bruce P.: I think that they do an exceptional job considering the divergent viewpoints, I think that they bend over backwards to make everything work, and I know that they work their tails off all the time, for all of us.

Lage: The managers?

Bruce P.: Yes, Leon, and Bob, and Abby. They're always there, and they're doing the work. I couldn't be happier with it as it is. I would do it differently, you would do it differently, but I think the family's really fortunate to have such good people working for them.

Lage: People I interview talk about these divergent viewpoints, and yet when you try to pin people down--

Bruce P.: What are they?

Lage: What are they! I also hear that all the votes are unanimous, that people come together before the voting stages.

Bruce P.: Yes, because we had a lot of divisiveness before this was incorporated, and so everybody's trying really hard to cooperate to make it a smooth operation. I personally--I'm rooted to the soil, I'll always be like that. My uncle David's not; he's a commercial developer. My cousin Wil is active in various and sundry business deals that he's been very successful in, and

Bruce P.: everybody has sort of found their own life, and they're mostly businessmen. There's nothing wrong with being a businessman; I mean, I'm a businessman now that I'm with this.

I look at myself as regressing because I'm going back to saying, "It should have been left the other way," and yet other people are moving on into other identities that the fortunes of this place have brought them. So you get me that says, "Don't do it." John Adams says, "Don't do it." David says, "Do it, but we'll never go out of farming." But aren't we? There's not much left. So the divergent views are some people want their money direct, some people want to use a management scheme to take care of their assets, some people want to just do this and that.

Lage: Do some people want to develop the Town Center themselves?

Bruce P.: Yes, we had talked about that. We figured that it was going to cost us about eighty million dollars to do it. We could raise that kind of money, but no one wants to be eighty million dollars in debt, and it would be a collective family debt. So we looked at that and we said, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and we're sitting on this land, we already own it, why jeopardize it?" Because I would rather have less and have it than have the gamble for more and not have it, because if I was to make it only in the cattle business, or only have cattle as my sole income, I would not be here talking to you, I would be home working. As it is, it's work anyway. So there are divergent opinions, and yet it's hard to say that when everybody is unanimous one way or another. But a lot of it is like Hobson's choice, you just sort of, well, it's either this or that, well, we'll go on with this one.

Lage: That's right, reaching some kind of a compromise.

Bruce P.: Yes, that's really what it's been, and that's been good for the family because we've always been very, oh, hardheaded. We have our own ideas and hold to them.

Lage: I understand your grandfather and Henry, shortly before Henry died, were working out a scheme to divide the ranch between the two families. Were you aware of that?

Bruce P.: No, but I knew that there had always been a problem of each family having their independence from each other, and that's even a problem now in this development, because we're all still in there, we're still all in this property together. It's just percentages instead of seven people on X amount of acres. I don't know, it's been something that's always been in the wind, and yet I was never really aware that there was a move underfoot

Bruce P.: to do that. Yet it had always been talked about, because it had been a real impediment to development, I suppose, and just generally to working with the land.

Lage: Just making decisions?

Bruce P.: Yes, you get twelve different people to dictate on twelve different acres, and brother, you've got a problem.

Wife, Alene Patterson

Lage: How would you like to deal with a situation like that at your cattle ranch?

Bruce P.: [Laughs] I'm fortunate in that my wife and I are more or less of one mind, and so we don't usually butt heads on something like that, but yes.

Lage: What's your wife's name?

Bruce P.: Alene.

Lage: And her maiden name?

Bruce P.: Peterson. She came from Madison, Wisconsin. Her dad was chairman of the education department at University of Wisconsin for many, many years, spent a lot of time traveling around the world, spent a couple of years in Nigeria, a year in Korea and the Philippines, establishing school standards and criteria. He was involved with organizing the whole teacher education system, and worked in the Philippines for a year doing the same thing. Educational, all education. His family was farmers from Nebraska, immigrants. She's half Danish and half German. She started riding horses when she was about three because they had put her on the work horses when they went out in the morning, and at lunch time she would get off the work horse and go eat lunch, and they would stick her back on.

Lage: So that's in her background too. How interesting.

Bruce P.: Yes, she's always loved animals and has always had horses.

Lage: Did you meet her at Santa Cruz?

Bruce P.: No, no, I met her up in Puget Sound. I for many years played guitar, and I went to a guitar workshop up there and met her there; so that was it. She played classical guitar for a while, but now we both just play cattle. [laughter]

Preserving the Past at Ardenwood Park

Lage: Last question, what do you think about Ardenwood Park? Are you glad to see it here?

Bruce P.: Yes, I'm very glad to see it. I'm glad to see it because this place has never looked better in my memory, and I think it's really important that people not lose track of what has been, because our family has really been an integral part of this area for a long, long time, and that's not to say that it's good or bad, but it's important that people have a past. I really feel that. This is a collective past, not only my past or something, but everybody can relate to the hours and the years going by here. I've got to drive up to the airport today, and when I get out on that freeway--

Lage: Oh, I'm heading that way too.

Bruce P.: Yes, okay, I remember when the Bayshore Freeway wasn't even there, and I remember riding horses all over this ranch. The way it used to be, I'm sort of stuck in that.

Lage: The park is such a tiny island.

Bruce P.: It is, it truly is.

Lage: But you really do get removed here from all the development that's around it.

Bruce P.: Yes. I think it's really a great idea, I think it's super.

Lage: I'll be curious to see what they develop over in your old homesite.

Bruce P.: Yes, so will I. It was a real shock to go there today, because I haven't for years and years, and I sort of have to exorcise these things after a while, you know. Just looking around, it will never be the same, any way you look at it. If they had had to burn one house, they should have burned this one [the George Washington Patterson house]. [Laughter] But I think this is really more what people think of--the Queen Anne style, and the older part of the house here, the one that's facing us--people think of that as more pioneer, more traditional, than they would Will's German hunting mansion.

Lage: Well, it dates back further, and I think there's a romance about the Victorian age.

Bruce P.: Oh, I think so too.

Lage: But it's just too bad there wasn't the kind of momentum to make the Will Patterson home into a public place.

Bruce P.: Well, at that time no one ever dreamed that this was going to happen.

[end of interview]

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TAPE GUIDE -- Bruce Patterson

Date of Interview: April 10, 1987

tape 1, side A

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tape 1, side B

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tape 2, side A

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tape 2, side B not recorded

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THE PATTERSON FAMILY AND RANCH:
SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY IN TRANSITION

Abigail Adams Campbell

Summers at Ardenwood with Grandparents
Sarah and Henry Patterson

An Interview Conducted by
Ann Lage
in 1987

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INTERVIEW HISTORY -- Abigail Adams Campbell

Abigail Campbell was included among the interviewees for this volume on the family's perspective when it was realized that three grandchildren of William Patterson were represented, but we had no stories from grandchildren of Henry Patterson who may have visited the ranch and stayed in the George Washington Patterson house as youths. Abby Campbell, the daughter of John and Sally Adams and favored granddaughter of Sarah and Henry Patterson, agreed to share her memories with us.

Abby first stayed on the ranch at about age three in the early forties and spent about two weeks there during the summers until her teen years. Her remarks give us descriptive accounts of Henry and Sarah through the eyes of a loving and appreciative granddaughter. They add to the picture of life at Ardenwood during the postwar period, shortly before the pressures of development in southern Alameda County were to change the area beyond recognition.

Abby Campbell now is part of the management team for Patterson Properties, along with her husband, Leon Campbell, and Robert Buck, whose interviews are included in this volume. She also serves on the Patterson House Advisory Board. The following interview was conducted on July 27, 1987, at the offices of Patterson Properties in Fremont, California. When Mrs. Campbell reviewed the transcript of the interview, she deleted some personal references which she felt were not relevant to the project. The descriptions of her grandparents, however, remain virtually unchanged.

Ann Lage
Interviewer/Editor
Project Director

September, 1988
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University of California at Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please write clearly. Use black ink.)

Your full name Abigail Adams Campbell
Date of birth 10-15-40 Birthplace Boston, Mass.

Father's full name John Edwin Adams
Occupation doctor Birthplace _____

Mother's full name Sally Patterson Adams
Occupation _____ Birthplace _____

Your spouse Leon G. Campbell

Your children Blake, Sallie, Margarita, William

Where did you grow up? Piedmont, C.A.

Present community Woodside, C.A.

Education A.B. University of California
M.A. University of California

Occupation(s) _____

Areas of expertise art history

Other interests or activities _____

Organizations in which you are active _____

Background and Family

[Date of Interview: July 27, 1987] ##

Lage: Let's begin by placing you in the family--where you were born, who your parents were, and siblings.

A. Campbell: I was born October 15th, 1940, in Boston, Massachusetts, when my father was in medical school at Harvard. My parents are John and Sally Adams. I have an older sister, Susan, and a younger brother, Henry, who's named after Henry Patterson. I went to the University of California, Berkeley, got my A.B. and then got my master's in art history at University of California, Riverside. I did work for the Stanford University Museum for a couple of years.

Lage: So you have a background in history as well?

A. Campbell: Art history.

Lage: At what point did you marry?

A. Campbell: I married [Leon Campbell] right after I graduated in 1963. [See interview with Leon Campbell in this series.]

Lage: And you did your work at Riverside while Leon was teaching?

A. Campbell: Exactly.

Lage: And how about your own children?

A. Campbell: We have four children. The oldest one, Blake, just graduated from Stanford and is going to UCLA Law School. And number two, Sallie, will be a senior at Stanford. Number three, Margarita, who was born in Peru, is going to Duke University in the fall. And William, number four, is sixteen and will be a senior in high school at Groton School, which is back East.

Lage: Interesting. Sounds like a wonderful family.

A. Campbell: Busy.

Lage: All going off in their own direction. Well, that places you on the Henry Patterson side of the family. Just fill me in a little bit on your father's family. You mentioned your father is of the John Adams family.

This symbol indicates that a tape or segment of a tape has begun or ended. For a guide to the tapes, see page 398.

A. Campbell: Let's see. His great. I don't know how many it would be, great-whatever-grandfather was a brother of John Adams.

Lage: Did your father grow up in the East?

A. Campbell: No, grew up in Berkeley, because his father was a philosophy professor at the University of California.

Lage: And you grew up in Piedmont?

A. Campbell: Piedmont.

Henry and Will Patterson

Lage: Let's go back to what your memories of the Patterson ranch were. When did you come to the ranch, and how much time did you spend there?

A. Campbell: Ever since I was very, very young. I used to spend summers with my grandparents.

Lage: The entire summer or--?

A. Campbell: I think, for about two weeks I'd come down during the summer. Probably started when I was about three.

Lage: By yourself?

A. Campbell: I'd come down by myself. A couple of times my sister and I both would come, but lots of times I came by myself. Mainly it was because my mother had been ill. I think the first time I came I was quite young, and she had been very ill and was hospitalized. So that was the first time. I was really young. And I remember that vividly as you do the first time you ever leave home. I don't know how old I was, but I'm assuming probably three.

Lage: And then you continued to come through--?

A. Campbell: I just don't remember. I probably came maybe every summer, every other summer, I just don't know. Until I, perhaps, was eleven or twelve, and then I went away to camp.

Lage: Do you have memories of your grandfather?

A. Campbell: Oh, yes.

Lage: He died in 1955. So you were fifteen. What kind of a man was he from your point of view?

A. Campbell: Sort of quiet. Did not speak a lot. But very kind, and a wonderful sense of humor. But didn't say a lot. I used to go with him to visit the tenant farmers. He'd bring me along in the car or on the walks.

Lage: What do you recall about the visits to the tenant farmers? What did his role seem to be with the tenant farmers? Can you remember that?

A. Campbell: Not really. My vivid memory, as I try to think about this, was that he would always quiz me on identifying all the crops and the plants at their different stages. So I would be rewarded for recognizing that was cauliflower, broccoli, or whatever, when it was just a little teeny plant. He would play games with me that way as a child. He was always very proud. He'd come back and say, "Abby recognized it right away." The crops were quite diverse in those days, not as it is today, where there's just sort of a two-crop basis. So that was always fun. And I used to go out in the vegetable garden. The house had its own vegetable garden with berries and all that. And I used to go out and help him pick.

Lage: Did they have a direct employee who took care of the crops near the home?

A. Campbell: I think there must have been, but I don't remember.

Lage: You don't remember a Donald Furtado, by chance?

A. Campbell: No. I just don't remember. I probably didn't pay a lot of attention to names. I might recognize faces.

Lage: Did you have much relationship with your cousins?

A. Campbell: None. The families stayed very separate, as you probably have heard before.

Lage: What about Will? Did you see much of him?

A. Campbell: Uncle Will use to come over every day. Oh, yes. I remember seeing him. Always saw Uncle Will.

Lage: He was more outgoing?

A. Campbell: He was much more outgoing. Had a twinkle in his eye. He'd come over and he and my grandfather would have consultations every day.

A Granddaughter's Portrait of Sarah

Lage: Now what about your grandmother? What do you know about her background, for instance? She came from Los Angeles?

A. Campbell: I think so. Is that right? Isn't that funny? I guess she did. What I've heard is that she went to the University of California and got her master's in astronomy. She was a very brilliant woman.

Lage: Tell me about her, because that's what we don't have a very good picture of. Even your own mother, I don't think, gave us a very complete picture.

A. Campbell: I just loved her. She was a wonderful woman. I have these wonderful memories of her. And my grandfather, but he was busy with the ranch. I spent a lot of time with my grandmother.

Lage: What kind of a person was she?

A. Campbell: Interesting. I can remember she would sit and read to me for hours as a little girl out on the swing on that lawn. We read all The Wind in the Willows, and she would spend two or three hours reading to me every afternoon. It was wonderful. Sitting in one of those old-fashioned swings, with the canopy over it, and we'd rock, and she'd read to me. It was warm, sort of sunny days, and it was just wonderful. We'd have fresh lemonade...I just have this vivid memory.

Lage: Can you recall the kinds of things she'd talk to you about? Your father mentioned she had a keen intellect.

A. Campbell: Keen intellect. She was an interesting woman. She took me to plays and the symphony, as a little girl. The opera. We'd go and spend the night in San Francisco at the St. Francis Hotel, and she'd take me to all these cultural events. She was well read.

Lage: Did you have a sense she enjoyed living in a rural area?

A. Campbell: Oh, I think so. She and my grandfather had a wonderful relationship. I do remember that. He adored her. As a grandchild staying there, if my grandfather said something and I disagreed with it, there was no question. You just didn't object or question him.

Lage: What about if his wife disagreed, or did she just not disagree?

A. Campbell: I don't remember that. I was too young.

Lage: She comes across as a strong woman.

A. Campbell: She was a very strong woman. But I just don't remember that, particularly.

Lage: Do you know what role she took with the ranch?

A. Campbell: No.

Lage: That didn't come into your relationship? Because I know at one point she kept the books.

A. Campbell: Well, I didn't know that. She probably did.

Lage: Do you know what she did with her days besides reading?

A. Campbell: She loved to garden. She was an avid gardener. Spent hours in the garden. She had gardeners, but she herself did work in the garden. With flowers. In fact, there's a picture you can see of the garden on the wall there as you go out. I think my father took a slide. She had a beautiful garden. She spent a lot of time gardening.

And she was a member of this book club --this very intellectual book club of women who would read books and then discuss them.

Lage: Was that a group of local women?

A. Campbell: From Piedmont. They would come out to the ranch. She went in a lot. She didn't stay out on the ranch all of the time. Of course, when my mother and her sister were older, they moved into town for school. For quite a long period of time. Probably four or five years.

Lage: Henry moved in also and commuted back--

A. Campbell: Yes.

Lage: But when the children were in college, they moved back? Is that correct?

A. Campbell: I guess so. Probably. Because I came out there in 1943.

Lage: Would you remember her as being a lively person or a reserved person?

A. Campbell: I think women of that era were sort of reserved, but she had a wonderful sense of humor. I can remember her laughing a lot and telling jokes. She had a very quick wit. We used to play word games. She used to do the double acrostic, which was out of the Saturday Review. She and my mother both subscribed to the Saturday Review, and it was a great contest who would finish it first, and who would get it all correct and not have to use any references. They had sort of a thing going between them--phone calls back and forth between my grandmother and mother over the double acrostic.

Lage: Was she strict with you, or permissive, or did this just not come up?

A. Campbell: Oh, I think she was strict. You had to have very good table manners. It was imperative that you had nice table manners. That's where I learned all about table manners. And the meals were always very formal except for Sunday night. My grandmother had help, and it was always served, even both lunch and dinner. But on Sunday night was the help's night off. My grandmother would cook, and we'd all eat in the kitchen. My grandfather, my grandmother, and myself would eat in the kitchen just on a little table. She'd do the cooking.

Lage: In the other meals, would you dress for dinner, and would Henry dress for dinner?

A. Campbell: I'm sure he did, because he always wore a tie. My grandmother always had a skirt on. Even when she was gardening, she always had a skirt, and the big straw hat, and the gloves. She always wore the gloves to protect her hands. I remember that vividly.

Visiting the Victorian Mansion

Lage: What do you remember about the house? Was there a special place or favorite rooms that you had?

A. Campbell: When I would come I would sleep in the nursery, which you probably didn't see, because that's been converted into the living quarters for the park manager. But that was the nursery, and it was a big room. That's where I used to sleep. The house creaked, being redwood. I do remember that. Very creaky house. I used to always get in bed with my grandmother; I'd go get in bed with her in the morning.

Lage: Did you play up in the attic at all?

A. Campbell: No, never. It scared me to death. There were always bees up there. We never went in the attic. We sort of peeked. We used to play in the elevator a lot. Believe me, we played pretend games in the elevator all the time.

Lage: Are the furnishings, as they are now, at all the way you remember them?

A. Campbell: No, no. The guest bedroom is the same, that sort of old heavy furniture. The formal parlor is pretty much the same. They brought things back. When I was there, we spent all our time in the sitting room. If you go in what they call the front door, it would be that room to the right. There was always a fire going. It had very comfortable, ordinary furniture--couches, two big chairs. My grandmother had her chair. My grandfather had his chair.

Lage: And now it's booklined, isn't it?

A. Campbell: No. The books were in the library, right off that room. That was my grandmother's desk, where she did all her work. My grandfather's was the one further. I don't even know what they're calling it now in the house, but that's where we spent all our time. Never, never were we in the formal living room. They just didn't live in that part at all.

Lage: I think that was typical, too, to have a room for entertaining. Do you remember entertaining going on, special events?

A. Campbell: I really don't. I think my father would always have UC medical school picnics where the whole medical school would come out. If they entertained, I was never there. I just remember we'd come out once a month for Sunday dinner, which would be at two o'clock in the afternoon. That would be just family.

Lage: Did you come for Christmas?

A. Campbell: No. Thanksgiving, definitely. But Christmas, usually because as a child you want Christmas in your own home, they would always come to our house for Christmas.

Lage: Now I heard a story about her dogs. Do you remember dogs? Or did that come later?

A. Campbell: I don't remember dogs at all. Who told you that?

Lage: The other side of the family. The boys. Wil and --

- A. Campbell: I just remember that Uncle Will had a pit bull that was just the scariest dog in the world.
- Lage: I didn't realize that they had pit bulls at that time.
- A. Campbell: I remember. It had pink eyes. He always had it on a leash. He didn't have it very long, but I can remember my grandmother saying, "That dog is a mean dog; don't go near it." But I don't remember dogs at all.
- Lage: Maybe that came later, because it was past 1955.
- A. Campbell: There was never a dog there when I was a child. I would bring my dog in the summer. They did not have dogs. They had lots of cats, because of the mice and gophers and stuff.

Roaming the Grounds

- Lage: Did you roam around the grounds at all?
- A. Campbell: Oh, a lot.
- Lage: Were there particular places?
- A. Campbell: The barn. I'd throw rocks at the owls. Climb up the water tower, which I was forbidden to do, but we'd do it anyway. Jump from the loft into the hay. And the pigs. They had a wonderful pig pen. Huge, big pigs. We'd go feed the pigs.
- Lage: Was there a sense that girls shouldn't do certain kinds of things?
- A. Campbell: Not at all.
- Lage: You had to learn the manners, and learn to be ladylike, but the rest --
- A. Campbell: Oh, oh yes. You could do anything. I spent all the time in the swimming pool. They use to fill the swimming pool up with fresh water. And let it all drain out after we went home. I'd always swim. The swimming pool was wonderful. I'd bring my friends out when I was older, and we'd come out for the day to swim.
- Lage: What about Aunt Marjorie? I hear some really nice tales about Aunt Marjorie when she was younger--that she liked to hunt, that she had her own farm area. Do you remember her?

A. Campbell: Oh, yes, because she was really kind to me. I would go out with her when she was farming.

Lage: Was she actually doing hands-on farming?

A. Campbell: No. She had tenants, but she would be directing the tenants. My grandfather gave her a piece of property, and she literally did run it--hired the tenants and oversaw the crops. I would go with her during the day when she would go out and spend time. She was, as I remember, really involved in their families. I do remember that about her, asking about the families and the children. As I think of it now, my grandfather was that way, too, concerned about the children's education. I remember somebody being sick one time, and they were concerned about it.

Lage: I've really heard some very nice tales about your grandfather from the people who worked on the ranch. They describe him as being very kind.

A. Campbell: Oh, I think he was a very kind man.

Lage: And forgiving money owed.

A. Campbell: Yes, I think so. I didn't know any of that. I never heard it. But I think that's very true.

Household Help and Family Meals

Lage: You mentioned household help. How much household help? Do you remember that?

A. Campbell: I just remember the couple, Kenneth and Dorothy, who were a Japanese couple that--I may have just heard this, and I didn't know them. They were Japanese, so when the Second World War broke out, they just sort of disappeared one day. They just packed their bags one night and left. My grandparents thought they were wonderful. It was the best help they ever had. They never had help like that again. There was always somebody there. They usually tried to get a couple. I can't remember names, but there was always somebody living in that house in the back--one who would do the cooking and the other one who would maybe help with the gardening. I can't remember their names. Isn't that funny? I should.

Lage: Well, there was probably a succession of them.

- A. Campbell: Yes, but not that many. I remember Kenneth and Dorothy. I've seen pictures of them, when I was a baby.
- Lage: The mention of the Japanese reminds me of the tea house. Was that still ---?
- A. Campbell: The one that's out on the property? The one that's out there now--the gazebo?
- Lage: No. There was a Japanese tea house that Clara Hawley built.
- A. Campbell: I don't even remember any tea house. Where was it?
- Lage: The story I've heard was that it was burned down during the war, probably due to some anti-Japanese sentiment.
- A. Campbell: Oh, really? I don't remember. You see, my mother would know all that. I just don't remember that at all.
- Lage: Do you recall the deer park?
- A. Campbell: I don't remember that either.
- Lage: That might have been more connected with Will Patterson's side.
- A. Campbell: It must have been, because I just don't remember that. At all. I remember the pantry of the kitchen. I remember game hanging there and a side of beef. They'd hang all the meat. And you'd see all the vegetables laid out. I remember the potato cellar.
- Lage: Now tell me more about those things. The game--was this your grandfather's hunting?
- A. Campbell: Right. The pheasant or the duck that they would hunt. There was never lamb. There never would be lamb served because of my grandfather being a cattleman. And the minute my mother got married and had her own house, she had leg of lamb all the time.
- Lage: Would the beef be from the cattle ranch?
- A. Campbell: Oh, yes. A cow would be slaughtered, and he'd hang it.
- Lage: It didn't have to be refrigerated?
- A. Campbell: Well, you hang beef anyway. It's always hung, so it would age. Then, I'm sure, they cut it up and refrigerated it. The food was wonderful. You'd go out and have these wonderful meals. They would be long, with lots of adults, but we as

A. Campbell: children had to sit at the table and only speak-when-spoken-to type of thing. And that wasn't how it was at our house growing up. But the food.. I can just remember these wonderful desserts. I mean homemade boysenberry, and blackberry, and raspberry pies for dessert, with homemade ice cream. Oh yes. And floating-island pudding. I can remember we used to call it grandma's favorite pudding. She used to always make that herself, not the cook. I mean, food was very important. And meals were very important.

Lage: Kind of a social center of the day. I think that was more typical then, in general.

A. Campbell: That's right. Yes. None of this "eat and run". [laughter]

Lage: Was there ever any sense that you particularly would have anything to do with the ranch as an older person?

A. Campbell: No, my grandfather always wanted my father to be involved. My father and my grandfather got along very well. My grandfather, I know, always wanted my father to take over and run the ranch. And, of course, they understood that he never would, because he went to medical school. But this was before, when, I guess, they were courting, or even before he went to medical school. When they were in college. When he was in college. There must have been probably two or three years that my mother and father were dating before they went to medical school. And, of course, women did not take it over.

Lage: When did you have the sense that the thought was that someday this is all going to be developed?

A. Campbell: I never thought about it.

Lage: It wasn't brought up?

A. Campbell: No. No. Not at all.

Lage: Every time I come down here I see new homes.

A. Campbell: Oh, isn't it awful! [laughter] Terrible.

Lage: What about politics, religion, those things that sometimes aren't discussed in families? Were they discussed around the dinner table?

A. Campbell: Definitely. Very definitely. Politics were discussed. I, as a child, do remember talk about presidential candidates and other lively political discussions.

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Lage: Did your grandmother and grandfather have similar views?

A. Campbell: Yes, I think so. I think, probably. Politics was discussed often.

Lage: What about religion? Was your grandmother a church-goer?

A. Campbell: No. It's always sort of been a joke in our family that there were Presbyterian ministers on both sides. On my father's and my mother's. Grandparents, and great grandparents, and so when it got down to their parents, they'd had it growing up, religion shoved down their throat. And religion did not play a big part in my grandparents' lives, on both sides. It was not important.

Ranch Management After Henry and Will

Lage: Let's talk a little bit about more recent history. The formation of the family corporation and all. Were you in on that?

A. Campbell: No, because we were out of the country and really knew nothing about it particularly, except that it was happening. And I can remember my mother and my father would say that they'd be having meetings and they were incorporating. But I don't know anything about it really. We were out of the country.

Lage: You didn't have a sense of how things were run before that? Did you have any sense--

A. Campbell: I remember Donald having a very strong role.

Lage: Did you know Donald very well?

A. Campbell: Yes. Well, not very well. But I knew him because he would even come and visit my grandmother when I would be out there. And he'd come in and say what was happening, as far as the ranch.

Lage: In the course of interviewing Jack Brooks and other people, I was told that just before your grandfather died, they were ready to sign a sales agreement that would have included what is now the park area, where the house is.

A. Campbell: I think what they had agreed to, and my father to this day says that, that Will and Henry had divided the property up so it was a fair and equal division--whatever they felt at that time--so the two sides would each own their own land. Then

A. Campbell: they wouldn't have to be together and own this jointly for perpetuity. Somehow, after my grandfather died, nobody knows, but that plan, no one's ever found it again. My father is the one you should talk to about that. Have you interviewed my father?

Lage: I didn't, but Knox Mellon did.

A. Campbell: I'm sure that's all, because my father says it's always sort of a mystery. Where did that plan go? There was a division. Then, of course, I'm not in on the incorporation. So, it would be my father, I'm sure, who would know all that.

Management by Family Corporation and Staff

Lage: When did you become involved as part of the operation here?

A. Campbell: When we moved back up here, and that would be five years ago. I can remember my mother said, "Well, you're here. Please come to the meetings." They were held in my parents' house in the evenings, and this was really after it was incorporated. I was not involved in any of that. This would be meetings to discuss whether to sell to Kaiser at that point. I knew nothing about it, and my mother said, "You should, as the next generation, know what's going on. Please come." So, I did. I started attending meetings.

Lage: At that time, were they talking about having a professional management, paid management, as they have now?

A. Campbell: No. You know how things just sort of evolve. There are gaps, and they need to be filled. That's how that happened. I think my brother-in-law and Leon got on the board, so each side of the family would have equal representation.

Lage: Isn't your father on the board?

A. Campbell: Yes, he is on the board, but they feel the next generation should be involved in seeing what's happened. And so that's kind of how it happened, basically.

Lage: And how about the decision to become involved as part of the paid management?

A. Campbell: I thought about that, and I can't really remember how it happened, except that we were either going to have to do it or pay somebody from the outside to do it. David has always been very adamant about "keeping it in the family." He feels very

A. Campbell: strongly about that. So Leon took a leave of absence for the year, and it just sort of evolved. We wanted to stay in northern California, and he was needed. Things needed to get done. I, to begin with, came out, and started to realize that I just didn't want to deal with these developers and business. I was working at Stanford museum at that time. I started paying the bills and doing all the bookkeeping. It just evolved, and there it was.

Lage: Are you finding it interesting now that it's happening?

A. Campbell: Oh, yes. I do.

Lage: Do you get involved at all in meetings or dealing with developers, dealing with councilmen?

A. Campbell: Not very much. No. I basically just do the bookkeeping and pay the bills. And the budget. We do an extensive budget because we have so many people that are part of the family company. We project this year and next year, all the way up to 1989, actually. So I do that type of thing. Work on the computer.

Lage: Do you have any sense in observing the board, that the past-- differences in the past--affects decisions today? Generational differences, or the two sides of the family?

A. Campbell: Oh, I don't think so. I just think the basic difference would be that the other side of the family has always been more pre-development than our side of the family. But it works very well. You respect each other's opinions. You get along and do what you have to do.

Lage: Do you work well with David Patterson?

A. Campbell: I don't really work with David Patterson that much.

Lage: You're not actually on the board?

A. Campbell: I'm not actually on the board. No, my husband is. I go to the board meetings. I'm officially the secretary's assistant, because my mother is the secretary-treasurer. I'm the assistant secretary-treasurer.

Lage: Do you have any dealings with Jack Brooks?

A. Campbell: Not much. No.

Lage: Or any sense of his role in all this?

A. Campbell: Not really, no.

The Patterson Home as a Public Park

- Lage: Is there anything you'd like to add that we haven't covered, either memories from the past or something in the current scene?
- A. Campbell: Not particularly. I have very fond memories of the past because it was sort of an idyllic life. I'd come out and visit and stay on the ranch for two weeks. It was always wonderful. I was the only child, and so I was paid a lot of attention.
- Lage: Does that affect at all your feelings about the development or decisions that are being made? Does your memory of what it used to be like ---
- A. Campbell: It's not as I remember it, but I think they're doing a very good job. And I'm on the board, the Patterson House Advisory Board. They're doing a good job with the funds that they have.
- It's not as I remember it, though. My grandmother's sister was an artist, and so a lot of her paintings were always all through the house. Those aren't there. And all the books. The grounds are very different. They had to change those, because of the paths, and the public, and all of that. The grounds were very different then, when I was growing up.
- Lage: Is the advisory board interested in making it the way you recall it? Of course, they're trying to put it back to the 1890s.
- A. Campbell: Right. Right. And they just hired a consultant. And they should do what they want to do with it. I don't feel that they should keep it the same way as I remember it, because I think they're trying to bring it back to 1880s. Of course one half of the house was built much later than the other. There's sort of controversy about what you do there.
- Lage: Overall, are you pleased?
- A. Campbell: Oh, I think it's fine. I just am glad, because having seen older houses supposedly left to a city or something, and then they don't have the funds to do anything about it. You can just drive by them in many small cities or towns. They're just in terrible, terrible condition. So, I'm glad to see that they're going to keep the house. And it is the oldest Victorian in Alameda county. And I think they're doing a good job, yes. I have no ---

Lage: It certainly is getting a lot of use.

A. Campbell: Oh, it is. I think it's wonderful. I think it's great what they're doing. And I think the regional park is doing a terrific job. It's exciting. I love to see all those little kids running around. I think it's great.

More Memories of Sarah

Lage: You were saying your grandmother died in...

A. Campbell: She died in 1965. Would that be correct? I think it was 1965. I had a baby. I'd still go visit her. In graduate school we lived in Escondido Village, and after our first child was born, I used to go over and visit her. Just drive across the Dumbarton Bridge. She was not well then.

I recall that she and my grandfather took my sister and me, when I was probably ten, to New York City for a week at Easter. Stayed in the Waldorf hotel. They were wonderful grandparents. They just did wonderful things for us, which I hope I will do as a grandparent. I really do have wonderful memories and thoughts. She was very interested in us, genuinely interested, yes.

Lage: When she was older, were her health and mental abilities good? Did she stay alert?

A. Campbell: Pretty much so. She just was sort of frail. I think she maybe faded in and out a little bit, but she was still pretty astute toward the end. Yes.

[End of Interview]

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TAPE GUIDE -- Abby Campbell

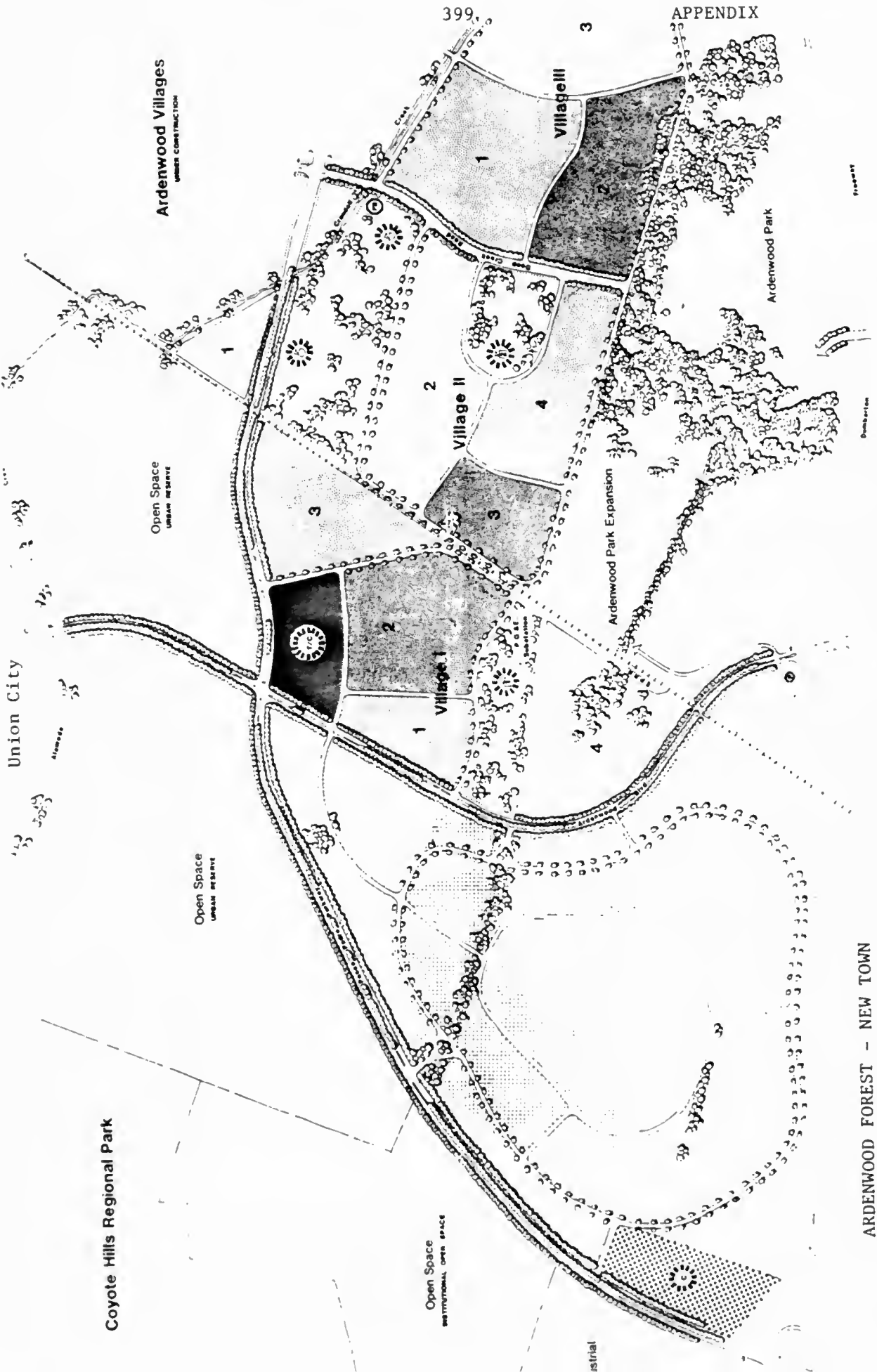
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ARDENWOOD FOREST - NEW TOWN

TOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN
BROOKMAT, INCORPORATED
November, 1981

Newark

APPENDIX

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Village III

1

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Ardenwood Villages
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Ardenwood Park

Village II

2

1

Open Space
URBAN RESERVE

Ardenwood Park Expansion

3

2

1

Village I

Open Space
URBAN RESERVE

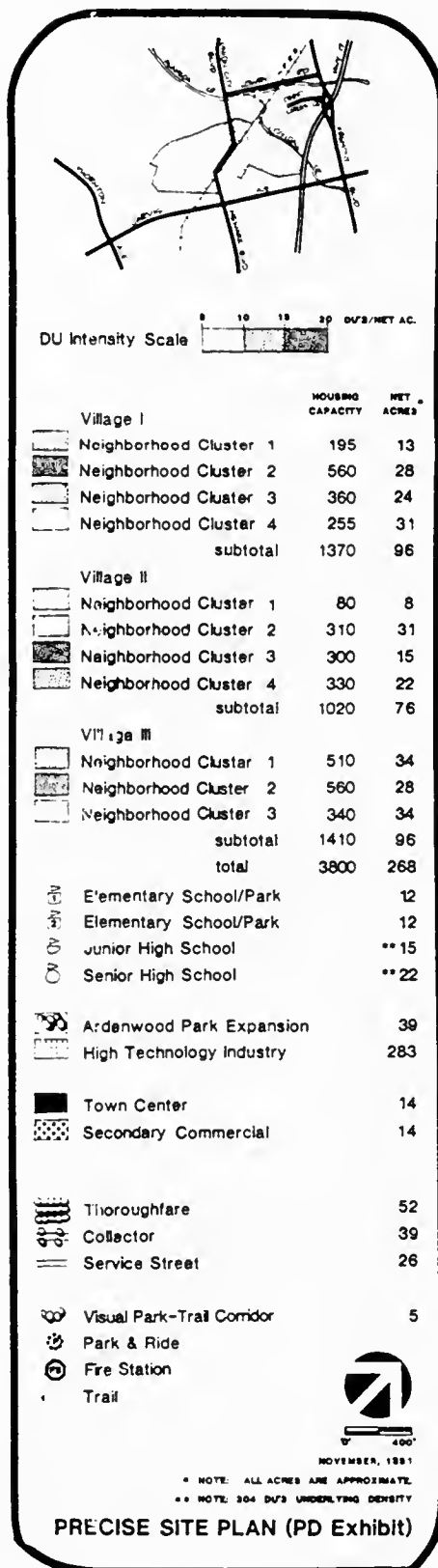
Coyote Hills Regional Park

Union City

Open Space
INSTITUTIONAL OPEN SPACE

Industrial

Key for 1981 town development plan



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