

Millicent Tenney McKellar

Mrs. McKellar was the eldest child of the third wife of Ammon M. Tenney. Her mother was Hettie Adams.

I was born in Old Mexico on December 25, 1890. I got a job keeping house for school teachers and I rented a piano and studied music. Then in the spring I went back but after one year in high school I left again and worked in a big sewing room in El Paso. While I was home, I met Bruce. Mother liked him but Father didn't. He had a small livery stable and was nice to me. When all, or almost all, the white people left Mexico he didn't leave but came to see me in El Paso and asked me to marry him. We were married that next summer--1913--in July. We both loved El Paso, so stayed there for four months and then went back to his work. My father spoke Spanish so he had us children learn from a well-educated woman, but he never allowed us to be friends with them only as they worked for us.

--?where he did a small business and was quite happy. Then a big company from London, England came in and leased the timber off the Sierra Madre Range from the Mexican Government and this opened opportunity in a big way for many people. Bruce happened to have more rolling stock, so got the biggest concessions. His work was up the San Miguel River twenty-five miles to the little town of Pearson.

For a long time Bruce had been a sixty-dollar a-month cowboy. then the Green Gold Company went to the deep south where they owned gold mines. Bruce followed them, and there he obtained a really good job. Then the company went broke, but they paid him every cent they owed him: \$2000. gold or American money, many horses and mules, buggies, saddles, harnesses, a blacksmith shop, a weaving house (where our saddle blankets and house blankets were made) and a complete hunting outfit in which several hunting men could go comfortably. Thus he got acquainted with many business men and doctors in El Paso. We paid taxes on twenty-eight thousand.

Bruce was a quiet man and this was his first real living. He was also a gentleman, with consideration for others.

At that time Mexico was a rich land. The Louis Terrasas (Terrasas?) cattle were fat and sleek the year around because the grass was good feed. Water was plentiful for there were rivers and lakes and springs every few miles, so the grass grew where you were. And all the cattle of Louis Terrasas didn't keep the grass eaten off. He was known as the Cattle King of the world. It seems there should have been plenty for everyone. There were many possibilities for the soil had hidden wealth. American men found it but had to leave it on account of the Revolution.

It seemed the poor had been poor for so many generations that life just was that way--a repetition of what had gone before. If only someone could have helped them--think. Finally someone did decide to do something to make conditions different and the result was chaos. We never dreamed that Mexican men could stir up so much blood-letting and cause so much more poverty and sorrow.

We left Columbus early one morning in a one-horse buggy as happy as we could be. After only a few miles we met about fifty Red flaggers or Rebels all drunk. But they were all friends to Bruce

so it was a happy meeting. They visited with him all day but just before dark they said good-bye. I was scared but Bruce just laughed at me.

The next day we were in the depot (of Nueves Casas Grandes). (then) he took me through the big, beautifully furnished home he had bought to get the carriage stable that went with it. Here he had a small business until the Pierson (Fred Whiting spells this Pearson, W.W.S.) Lumber Company leased all the lumber on the Sierra Madres Mountains and had started building the town twenty five miles up the San Miguel River. So that evening we were in Pierson. These English People had beautiful ideas. They built a lovely town, and so it could function properly all the public buildings were very large and extremely nice, too. And because Bruce had more equipment than any other man, he obtained a long-term lease on their big barn, where he could house three hundred horses out of the weather. (He had for a long time been a sixty-dollar-a-month cowboy for the Corralitas Cattle Company.) Then he quit and went to the south of Mexico and worked for the Green Gold company, which had gold mines down there. However this company went broke, but they paid him every dime they owed him and he had saved this money. (This company paid him \$2000 in American money, etc. see preceding page.)

Early in 1916 I was glad to see Dr. Spring back. I had spent the afternoon with Mrs. Alexander and when I came into my house there sat Dr. Spring in my kitchen with a five-gallon can of new molasses from the colony. He had a tablespoon and was eating molasses. I laughed but didn't blame him. We were all hungry for something sweet and that molasses made everyone a piece of cake that winter.

Already the Revolution had caused most of the white people to leave Mexico. Then when the great ship Titanic went down, Mr. Pierson, who was the head of the concern lost his life. With the Revolution the town was soon left with few white people. When we came back the electricity had been turned off and Bruce had about fifty men in the woods cutting and delivering wood to keep the fire insurance up.

The night we landed in Peirson, Ong, the Chinese cook had a nice meal and the house was clean. In a day or so he told me he didn't feel well. He showed me that his scalp was swollen about an inch all over. Bruce put him in the hospital but in a few days he died. So the head man sent me Sam. He would cook nothing but bread and stew. When he cut up lovely steaks into stew, I told him I'd cook and he could go home. Bruce talked to the head boy and so one morning a young Chinese boy came in with a white apron on his arm. He introduced himself to me, told me he could cook and was a good house keeper and said he hoped he could please me. He was my cook till I left Mexico. His name was Woo and he was a really good cook.

Now the Rebels were more daring. This was one of the first things I noticed about the uprising. They went into stores and helped themselves to bolts of bright colored satin, then had one shirt made and unfurled the rest of the bolt to drag behind the horse in the dirt. And about now Villa seemed to be the top leader. In the spring, Bruce took me to Idaho for our baby to be born in the United States. We were gone six months but were glad



to get back. We named the baby Bruce, Jr.

After a battle at Ciudad Juarez the Carranzistas (or Federales) and the Rebels decided to have one more fight to decide who should rule the northern part of Mexico. It was to be Agua Prieta (on the border between U.S. and Mexico in the State of Sonora). Villa went south for men and money and he claimed that the United States let the Federal soldiers across the border at El Paso and that they were shipped to Agua Prieta or near to it by train while the Rebels waded through the snow over the Sierra Madre Mountains. So when the Federales landed they and their horses were fresh but Villa and his men had waded through the snow and were not fit to fight. Of course he was badly beaten and was very angry at the United States. On his way south he killed every white person he found and vowed he would kill us all. He went over the Chocolate Pass and landed in Madera, another little American lumber town. There he found all the white people gone on the train. He caught the train and killed every man, woman and child--more than twenty innocent people. Then he went over the hills to the Frank Wright Ranch. There he took Mr. and Mrs. Wright and their cowboy, Frank Ridder out and stood the two men up and shot them. Then he took Mrs. Wright with him--to Columbus. Now he was going to whip the United States. He attacked Columbus and there, after about nine days with that devil, Mrs. Wright got away from him and hid in a ditch so when the rebels were beaten she was on the right side of the line.

When Villa took Mrs. Wright she had left a twenty-month-old baby boy in the house alone. That little fellow was there about three days--no fire, snow on the ground, no food. It must have been terrible. Finally the Mexican family who had watched and finally decided the Rebels were all gone came and got him. Then as soon as the thirty five Federales knew the Rebels were gone they went up and brought him to the white women in Pierson who sent him to his mother then in the hospital in El Paso.

Early one evening Bruce came home and asked me if I would like to ask Mrs. Womer and family to go to Colonia Juarez. Certainly I wanted to go so I called her. She was as interested as I was, so we went. That afternoon it had rained and it was cold. It was ten miles to Colonia Juarez over low hills; when we got over the first hill, the rain had turned into hail large as marbles or even baseballs and about sixteen inches deep. When we got to the hotel Mrs. Harper told us the town was having an ice cream bust and asked us to go. It was to be in the high school auditorium. We went and I never saw so many different kinds of cake and ice cream. We danced and had a really delightful time. The next day we came home and the hail had frozen. The poor horses feet were all cut and bleeding. It was our only way to get home--but we had a delightful time.

Mrs. Keeler was almost an invalid and she almost never went out of her house. She was very nice but ill, so we tried not to bother her. One day we were all invited to her house to a tea. We all went. She was very charming and we had a lovely afternoon. Then the train unexpectedly rolled in and we all got mail. It was a red-letter day. She seemed to shower us with a special happy feeling. And to add to it, all of us got our mail. Funny, she read our tea leaves and told us about our mail that would be in

before dark. It was certainly a day to remember.

Then one day soon after, we asked Mrs. Keeler to go with us to the river for the day, but she told us she wouldn't try anything so big. So Mrs. Womer and her children, Mrs. Mann and her three, and Bruce, our boy, Bruce Jr. took a picnic and spent the day on the bank of the San Miguel River. Bruce seemed his happiest that day with a son. A Mexican man came to my door one day to tell me that Louis Terrasas' foreman at San Diego had joined the Rebels and his family were ill. I tried to think what I could do but for days I didn't know for the poor Mexican will not take charity. Finally, this was my plan. I tore a sheet up and found some socks and a silk shirt of Bruce's that needed mending. Then I got ten kilos of fresh meat, ten of corn, ten of beans, four pounds of coffee and five of sugar. I asked Mrs. Womer to go with me. I showed the mending to do. Then I showed them the food and asked if it was enough to pay for the mending. The mother said, "Wonderful, wonderful." I gave her needles, thread, a thimble and scissors. She must have been forty or fifty but seemed able. She had a blind and crippled daughter and then there was the young mother with several small children. When we went back for the clothing I never saw such beautiful mending and she said the scissors and needles, thread and thimble would make her the richest woman in San Diego.

In a few months a Mexican came by to tell me the foreman was home. Before daylight Bruce put five shells in his pocket, took his gun and went to the river. He came back with fourteen ducks cleaned and ready to cook. After breakfast he went to the barn. In an hour or so he called to see if he could ask the Federal officers to breakfast. Of course he could and Woo fixed them a nice meal. I mention this because there was an American boy about my age with them and he had been shot in the head. When it was too late I was sorry I didn't ask him if I could look at it. Maybe if I had clipped the hair around it and cleaned it, it could have saved his life. Mrs. Womer had taught me many things. But the only thing I did for him--he asked me to play some on the piano and I did. Poor little boy! He must not have been more than twenty three or four and died before his train got to El Paso.

The poor lived in one room jacals (pronounced hackals). They were built of mesquite limbs tied together with grass and mud. There was only one room and one bed and one small trunk or box which held the single change of clothes for each. Every day the bed was rolled up against the wall and no one sat on it. The rich people lived in larger houses around a patio where each child was taught the fineness of right living. The rich people didn't seem to be aware of the cruel poverty of the poor.

Now we had Bruce Jr. and we were content. He was a very nice child and it was a pleasure to have him. His father was so proud of him and immediately started taking him horseback riding.

Now that he had a son he was ready to settle down and make a good life. He liked the upper-class Mexican boys and I am sure they liked him. He went with them to their bull fights and weekly rodeos. But he left most of the dances to others although he was a good dancer and if I wanted to go he took me.

As soon as he got back to work he persuaded Mr. Cooper, the manager, that those huge mills would never make money. Small



mills set up in the timber would do it cheaper and bring faster money. So soon train loads of lumber were rolling to Ciudad Juarez for El Paso or Chihuahua City which made the men all happy to be working.

Pierson was a pretty little town and nicely laid out. There was a huge hospital, a large hotel, a big store where one could buy anything from groceries to golf equipment, a liquor store with a lounge where one could drink, a large dance hall, and there were two very large saw mills. It was fronted by a beautiful artificial lake where Bruce used to take us boating once in a while. These saw mills were about one block square and two stories high. Bruce gave me a lovely saddle and he and I hid it in one of these mills but could never find it again. Then there were cargo storage buildings and a large place for dry kilns. Bruce had hauled \$15,000 worth of dry sand to build these kilns but the wind blew the sand away.

I guess Mrs. Womer and family and Bruce, our son and I were the only people who took lake rides which we did quite often. It was a most charming lake, sitting against these two big mills and now water willows grew around a lot of it. There were lots of fish, especially river bass. We could appreciate the beauty of the town's location. Just below, five miles, were a few hot springs. The upper-class Mexicans had built bath houses and the springs were in a narrow place where the hills pushed the river and springs close together with lots of water willows for privacy. Out of the side hills gushed the hot water which, mixed with river water, was warm and pleasant.

In Pierson because of a big dance hall the elite young ladies of each town put on a dinner dance. It smacked of high society and made us all feel very alive. There were several things which made us all happy. We Americans were always invited and always went. The young people were dressed in the latest fashion and all were beautiful dancers. They danced at least two square dances without callers--and it was a beautiful sight. The hall swayed as these young people silently would swing through the different patterns. We white people danced but once with our partners, usually a waltz or lancers(?) but the American men always danced with the hostesses, usually a tag waltz. And after the dance the dinner was delightful--so many kinds of good food so daintily served. These were the only social events of the year because of the Revolution.

As soon as Bruce started working the money began rolling in and he hired more help. Now I had Woo, the cook, another Sam, a professional laundry man and Fong, a housekeeper. These boys had been trained in California and now my house was run like clock work. Then he hired a nice little Mexican nurse girl (criada), Presaliana, to care for my baby when it came. And he gave me Manuel, a lackey or Moso. I protested but he explained that they all had to eat and he was more able to hire too much help than most. I was really glad he hired Manuel for he lived in a dug-out with a wife and six little ones. And he was really a lackey, for when the trains didn't bring ice every day Manuel cheerfully waded into the river for ice for my ice box. I always had him sit by the range in the kitchen to get dry and warm and gave him dry socks, three good meals a day and milk and eggs every day for his family.

Mr. and Mrs. Womer were good friends of Bruce's. She was a trained nurse and Mr. Womer bought and sold cattle. They had three lovely children: Margaret, Mike and Ma-Honey or Stanley. Margaret was going to Maria Lara to learn Spanish, Mike had his dogs and Ma-Honey his stick horse. They were cute boys and Margaret was a charmer. Mrs. Womer got a trained nurse from Colonia Juarez to help her through her pregnancy. One day the nurse's father came by with a load of hay for the Chinese boys up the river three miles. These boys raised vegetables for us to buy. Well, she went with her father and had only been gone a few minutes till she was needed. Mrs. Womer called me. I had never been to a birthing but it was good experience. When the nurse got back there was a lovely baby girl bathed and asleep and Chewey had the other children home and fed. From my first day in Pierson Mrs. Womer was my warm, true friend and I needed her so it was a mutual friendship. Each morning we had a little visit and she even gave me a get-acquainted party. There were four of us.

As if we didn't have troubles of our own we shared those of others and they ours. The last part of one of the Womer herds came by way of the Chocolate Pass. When they got that far, men and cattle were tired so they camped. Soon some Rebels came riding into camp. Mr. Bishop was head man, Carl Eck was the driver of Mr. Womer's car, and Bill the only negro in the camp. (It is a disgrace to sit or stand by a Negro in Mexico, or used to be. M.T.M.) The Rebels took these three, stripped their clothes off them and then shot them. Bill was dead with one shot. Mr. Bishop ran down hill, Carl ran up hill. It took one more shot each for the other two to die.

Mr Eck, an old friend from El Paso who came in as soon as he heard of his son's death, sat in my living room in front of the fireplace, not talking, eating or sleeping much--just grieving, as we all did. for those fine men who had lost their lives in such a senseless way. But his son, Carl was only fourteen or fifteen and we had learned to love him for he had spent his leisure hours in our house playing our phonograph with the one hundred fifty disks we had. The phonograph was in a room by itself and so bothered no one.

After weeks of no train, we suddenly had a train. On it that night Mr. Romney brought his son who had been killed in a mine in Arizona. The river was up so he put the coffin in my living room (with our consent) and it stood there maybe a week waiting for the river to go down.

The next morning, Mr. Eck took Carl to El Paso to bury him. Because he was so young and we loved him our hearts were with them.

The last herd of cattle Mr. Womer took to the border was out on the Mexican side while we went to the officers on the line to get passage and money. In a few days these officers decided they had better see where he was. Investigation disclosed two white men floating in the Rio Grand River which separates the United States and Mexico. They wired Bruce to get Mrs. Womer out to identify her husband. She left with her children, but all they ever found were his tracks back to his herd. Several of his friends decided he had been murdered and thrown down a deep dry well. Bruce came to investigate and came to the same conclusion.



She wrote me a sad little letter asking if I would pack her possessions and ship them to our broker in Ciudad Juarez. We never lost her but didn't see her for twenty-five years. She came to see us and we went over it many times. We sent her everything except the two big dogs. Tige, the bull dog, loved my son and came home with him willingly, but the hound wouldn't leave the door step of the Womer house or eat, so we just had to watch him grieve and starve to death. It made us all ill.

With the snow on the ground and a cold wind blowing one of the wives of Bruce's help waded barefoot through the snow to bring me some tamales--The Rebels had shot her only game hen. She felt she owed me because I had dressed a wound on her husband's hand that happened in the wood camp. The little criada told me I shouldn't eat anything for I was already sick but she was so proud to offer me anything as wonderful as a tamale. Finally I took a bite right through uncleaned guts. I have never been so desparately ill in my life, but it offended her. Well, I gave her a pair of old shoes so now we were fast friends. After that she often came with some small favor but I always gave her something in return-- a loaf of bread or a cup of molasses or a jar of jam. She never knew how terribly ignorant she was, poor dear.

The regular Federal Army came to town so the next morning the women who followed them on foot came in. I kept my eye on my front door so none of them could get in. I looked up to see the most horrible woman I had ever seen. She was terribly dirty but also very diseased and was practically dragging a little girl who looked to be about seven years old. This child was not a Mexican for she had long, very blond ringlets hanging to her waist. No Mexican ever could claim that hair. She was eaten up with disease. I wanted to take her but didn't dare say anything: "neutrality" or help to some starving family was our only salvation. I gave the woman some bread and told her not to come back.

Mr. Webb was a small, nice, old man. He rode a big horse and often came to my door to greet me but he never came in. One day he said, "Mrs. Bruce, do you know how to make gravy?" i said, "Yes, I do." He asked if I would make him some and I said certainly I would. After that we always kept a dish of milk gravy on the stove for him. The Mexicans all liked him and many of the men told me how he had helped them through sickness and poverty. He had some kind of business but I've forgotten just what it was.

One afternoon Bruce came into the house just as pale and agitated as a man could be. "What on earth is the matter?" i asked him.

"The Redflaggers brought Silvester Cavada to the barn and were going to force me to witness his execution. Now you know how long we've been friends and I just couldn't do it. Well about that time the shetland stallion got under the belly of one of the male horses and was kicking the daylights out of him. They thought that was pretty cute so while their fun lasted I got away."

To walk into a Mexican home one would never think there was fear but I found most Mexican women were just as afraid as I was. The Revolutionists were the only ones who were not afraid and they were on someone else's horses showing off. All the rest of the men took an easy day each day to live another day.

The Chinese boys usually went to the big hotel every afternoon.

and as soon as he could walk they took young Bruce so in no time he spoke a few words and understood a lot of Chinese. Then he had a Mexican nurse who was anxious for him to speak Spanish. He didn't get the two languages mixed but sometimes he forgot how to speak English.

Of course I was alone in the house most afternoons. One day a loud knock sounded on my back door. I froze, but knew I had to go and greet whoever was there. I went and it was a white cowboy. He told me Bruce had sent him to me but he had just met Mr. Cooper who told him to open an empty house. He wanted to know if I would take care of his big bag. I did, heavy as it was, I put it in the ice box and it lay there for months. When they came to Pierson again and were at my breakfast table he said he would take his bag, "Please. I hope it's all there, Mrs. Bruce." I said, "You don't think any one of us would open it?" "Well," he said, "There is only \$20,000. in American money in that bag." Then I said, "What if the Rebels had searched our house? When they found all that cash, they would have shot us all and taken your money." Well, that sobered him some.

We had to take our baby to the depot twenty-five miles down the river to Dr. Gay. When he passed our big house, there was a long line of people waiting to see Villa. In the line was a white cowboy. Well, Villa had moved into our lovely home without leave. Now this cowboy knew Bruce and called a "hello" to him. He has never been seen again. A Mexican who knew him told Bruce that Villa had him shot that day.

When Villa left our house he set fire to it and burned it down. I have often thought of those huge paintings--one was a dance scene-- and of those hand made drapes hanging from high ceilings to floor. When I visited Maxmillion's palace in Mexico City there were the same drapes but not the elegant furnishings. We also had a large moose head. The Moose Lodge wanted to buy it and offered \$1000. but we never got it to them.

One morning I stepped out my back gate into the back yard and there lay a negro boy guard with a knife in his back. Oh Dear--I stepped back in, locked the gate and went into the house to phone Bruce. He came and called Mr. Cooper and in a few minutes that poor boy was gone.

On a crisp morning I went to Mrs. Mann's on an errand. We were standing on her back step when three Rebels rode up taking her dress off her line.. Then they started off with my little guernsey cow. I took after the cow, talking in Spanish just as fast as I could, telling them how many sick babies depended on that cow's milk to live. All the time they kept driving her on. I was in front of these Rebels but behind the cow. They just kept driving her on and on--then all at once they gave a big yell and rode off leaving me and the cow behind. That was once I cried a few scared tears.

On another occasion Bruce came into the house agitated and when I asked him what the matter was he told me of this other boy whom we both knew who had been brought in to be executed. This time the train was bringing two cars of horse feed to be unloaded in the barn and Bruce's full force was there to unload the hay and grain. The Rebels' horses were on the track so they had to get them.



While they were doing that the stable hands all got away. I can't seem to remember this boy's name but I knew him. He was eighteen. His parents were wealthy as were the Cavadas.

I was bathing my baby son when Woo asked me to come to the kitchen. I saw five Rebels and three prisoners digging a hole--in fact a big hole. In a few minutes they stopped digging and were lined up and shot so they fell into the hole they had just dug. Then in a few minutes the Rebels left but came back with two more prisoners who shoveled dirt onto the three who had just fallen into the hole.

One evening Bruce brought two men home for dinner and a bed. One seemed quite ill--he had a high temperature and a bad cold. I did what I could for him and the next morning he was better though far from well. I tried to get them to stay until he was well but they were in a hurry so Woo fixed a lunch for them and they started out in an open handcar in a bitter cold wind.

Once three or four of them were riding through Pierson and stopping where anyone lived. Sam was outside washing. I took some dainty hand-trimmed dresses out to be washed. I held one up to see if it need mending. These fellows rode up and the leader reached over and took that dress out of my hands. These foolish men kept riding as far into the big lake as they dared with all that silver on their saddles and bridles and clothes and hats. The leader had his saddle bags full of silver coin. Then he went in again, this time farther. Down he went never to come up again. His wife lived near me and seemed a lady. She was a trained nurse and all she said to me was "Es. es por Dios--God's will." She didn't stay long in the north but went home, I suppose.

In the early fall of 1915 when Villa brought his badly beaten soldiers back from Agua Prieta, Sonora, he stationed three hundred top officers in San Diego, the headquarters of one of Louis Tarrassas' cattle ranches, five miles from Pierson. There these men rested through the winter. They were mostly Spanish not Mexican or Aztec. Almost all were blue eyed with fair skin and reddish-blond hair. They were all of the wealthy class and the most handsome men I had ever seen. Their clothing was simply grand to look at. Even their horses were beautiful and their saddles were works of art, trimmed with inlaid silver and mother of pearl and silver bangles all around. The most outstanding part of their dress was their hats. They were like huge sombreros, trimmed with gold and silver and precious gems. The local people called them "Garudos", poking fun at them. These men had nothing to do so they rode over the country all winter, taking anything they wanted from the very poor and helpless. And so we were all very much afraid of them and their riding and laughing through the town kept us all in a state of fear and anxiety. I had encountered these riders several times before and had come away with the best of the encounter but I was still very afraid.

One morning there was a sound at my front door. I looked out and there were five of these riders on horses at my door. I tried to get some of the help to go to the door but the Chinese men got worse treatment than the poor Mexicans so neither the cook nor the laundryman nor the little Mexican Nurse girl nor the moso, Manuel would go, so I did. "Buenos Dias Senores," I said. He--the head

man--returned my salute and then proceeded to tell me how beautiful I was and that he had always wanted an American wife. Would I go with him? "Con su permiso, senor, soy casada y tengo familia." ("I'm sorry to have to tell you that I am married and have a family") Then he said he didn't want my family, just me. I told him I had a fine husband and a two-year-old son and was expecting another soon. That sort of cooled him a little, but then he asked me for a loaf of bread. I went back into the house to find out if there was any bread to spare. I brought him a loaf and hoped that was the end of the scare but the next morning they were there again and were each morning for many weeks.

His constant love-making was getting very fervent and I was almost ready to panic. My husband and I didn't know what to do because we were not allowed to leave town, so we couldn't take me to the United States. He said it was wiser for me to handle the situation alone. So I just kept giving him a loaf of bread each day.

One morning early a man who was our good friend and neighbor called at my front door. Mr. Arosco was sort of a leader of the regular men in Pierson. He told me had just heard about this man calling at my door each morning and making himself disagreeable. With this news was the information that the officers were being shipped out on the next morning's train. This man had planned to kidnap me. Now Mr. Arnold told me not to open the door to him one more time because he was boasting of this new American venture and was capable of carrying out his plan. And it was so--he was going to kidnap me.

I was almost beside myself with fear but knew I was much better off with my husband not there. In fact, Mr. Arosco said I was better off alone. So I locked the house and pulled down the window shades before they came. He shouted and when no one came to the door he pounded with his quirt on the porch post. Then he became violently angry and beat his quirt to shreds on it. After a while he jerked his horse and spurred him away. This was the last I saw of him for at three the next morning he was shipped south. But some of the men took my baby's pet bull dog. Of course we comforted him as best we could, knowing how his baby life would have been changed if he had lost his mother.

Toward the end of our stay in Mexico, the train came in and brought all the railroad officials and their wives. Each woman opened a vacant house, borrowed a broom and swept it out to make herself comfortable for a few days. They were a happy crowd. The next morning the men took the train for Chihuahua City to meet with the Mexican State Officials. The night before these people got into Pierson, a train of lumber was started up there to Chihuahua City but when it got halfway there, to Cumbre Tunnel, the Redflaggers had set fire to the tunnel and they forced the engineer of the lumber train to run almost through so it would burn. This passenger train ran quite a way in before the engineer discovered that the tunnel was on fire for it was long. He stopped and reversed the engine but it jumped the track and there they were. There were a few women on the train one with five small children whose husband was dispatcher in Chihuahua City. None were burned; they all smothered to death. The tunnel was sheared up with



mesquite wood and creosote. There was nothing that would put out the fire. Two Mexican men saw the passenger train go in. They tried to get there to tell them but they just could not go so fast. Well, every available man went to the aid of those stricken people. Bruce took equipment that would have pulled the passenger car out but those people had gone into little pockets where they smothered. Everyday for weeks I had tools repaired and sent groceries and horse feed and anything they could use. But there was one bad sight. About fifty yards in the tunnel stood the little flag boy, leaning against the wall with his handkerchief over his nose with the other hand holding his flairs for help--standing dead.

While we were still talking about this awful thing a boy from town came to tell us that an old gentleman whose family lived in El Paso had had a stroke and died. Then, while we were still together a man on horse back came to tell us that George Redd had been shot and killed by a Mexican neighbor who was a Rebel. And a little Mexican boy herding sheep had been found killed by a mountain ? out north of Colonia Juarez.

After his encounter at Columbus, Villa camped three miles north of Colonia Dublan, vowing he would kill every white person the next morning. That night he released a prisoner from Pierson who came home fast. Bruce told me he had to guard all night but he and Mr. Webb went on horseback to Villa's camp and told him those people were on his side--although they were not fighters they sympathized with him. The next morning Villa made a big detour around that town and camped three miles south of Pierson, vowing he would come in and kill us all, especially Webb and Bruce.

The next night Bruce and I were sitting at the dinner table when we heard the most peculiar noise. It sounded like a motor but it was up in the hills. We listened and then went to the back yard with the Chinese boys. Finally we decided that it was those sixty Chinese boys who lived in town in the big hotel. They had lost their reason. At least we could understand that. Then about eight o'clock a train whistled down the river about a mile. Villa! We knew he had been below us for he had sent word that he was going to come in and kill us all. When Villa could, he came in on a train and some of his followers set fire to the town. Well, the whistle blew--Villa! Now the train was across the river and the guns began to pop--Villa! We got up. Bruce took his gun and ammunition, I picked up the two babies and we went out the front door. He took the boy. I walked about twenty-five feet to give a sniper a chance to shoot as I always did. I stood a moment then back I came. It was a dramatic moment. He kissed us all three and promised me he would shoot us all if necessary rather than let us go through the Wright's experience. I sat in a large wicker chair with both babies. Bruce was gone on the run and in a minute a train load of lumber between me and the train yard was set on fire. Now I knew it was Villa. But now I was calm. All these three years of fear and suffering were over. I had nothing to fear. When that bell rang which was the signal for me and the Chinese boys to go to the hotel behind my house I never gave it a thought. In fifteen or twenty minutes Bruce came running back. He stood for maybe a minute before he could speak. Then he almost whispered: "No more fear. General Pershing is here!" Then the Chinese boys who were

standing in the door began chattering in Chinese. Bruce said, "I'm going to the slaughter house and dress meat out for those hungry boys for their supplies are all behind them." So I put my babies down and Woo, Sam, Fon and I kept my big range going full blast making biscuits and coffee. When the meat came in we began cooking it. Joyous day--or night! Those colored boys were our salvation for certain. About four o'clock they left after Villa. He never came back north and although he is a hero to some, those who lived through those thee dreadful years can never count him a friend, although he is dead.

The next morning we were all about in the street to hash it out and there was that noise again and soon it was over our heads. It was a one-beater scout plane and was used by General Pershing to keep track of the Redflaggers and keep them in their place.

Why were we by-passed so many times? And how did we live to tell this tale? This is a true story though there is more to tell.

Now I am told that Pierson as it was is just a small Mexican town--nothing big, just a small farming community.



The John Slaughter Ranch  
by Millicent Tenney McKellar

(Millicent was the eldest child of the third wife of Ammon M. Tenney. She was born in December of 1890 in Colonia ~~Dublan~~, Mexico. W.W.S.) Dier

In 1892, John Slaughter hired my father to run the farm on his ranch. So he moved his family to the ranch and we lived there one year. Mr. Slaughter had been married and had two children, Addie and Johnnie. His first wife died and then he married Charlotte.

Soon my brother, Eugene and I were welcome in the Slaughter home. Mr. Slaughter had a big house about a mile from where we lived. He and his wife were partial to both of us. They tried to get my mother to give us to them. Of course she took this as a joke.

There are many memories I have of those kind people. Mrs. Slaughter often made a bed for us at the foot of her bed so we could stay all night. Mother had a nice singing voice and the family was often invited to spend the evening, for Mother played chords on the piano and sang. This made an evening on a ranch a little nicer.

Across the fence (the fence ran along the border between Mexico and the U.S.) from us was a Mexican family. Their daughter who was about my age and I ran away one day. When we got close to the big house I realized I had a dirty dress on so I got Juana to unbutton it and I put it on back to front. As soon as I got there, Auntie Slaughter sent me home for she knew I had run away. But she had Fisher, one of the cowboys, take me home on his horse. I was just three years old. Now I had always thought that Fisher was extra nice so this day I was certain he would marry me some day. I can't remember how Juana got home.

Come Christmas Auntie Slaughter gave me a set of dishes, even with knives, forks and spoons. She also gave me a lovely satin chair and a doll. I could keep my doll clothes in the seat of this chair. I remember a family came to visit my folks and mother fixed a play dinner for me, as there were two little girls, one older and one younger. We did have a grand day, for they had their dolls too.

Behind the house was a negro family. His name was Bat, hers was Lavinia. Everyone liked him. He raised a big garden and was kind to everyone. Lavinia was always cross and we were all afraid of her. One day mother went to the garden to get vegetables, which was her privilege. Bat was in the field helping my father. Mother looked up and here came Lavinia with a big knife. Mother grabbed me and got out of the garden right then.

The Slaughters had a swimming pool. (It is a large pond fed by the spring. W.W.S.) Auntie Slaughter used to take my dress and petticoat off me and the young people would swim a little with me, then set me on the edge of the pool to watch. Johnny always teased me. He made me think he was going to pull me into the pool. I knew it was too deep for me, so I was afraid.

My folks went to Tombstone to get their groceries and of course Eugene and I went also but I have never been back, and cannot remember anything about the town. I do remember going there but the town didn't impress me as the ranch did. Somewhere mother got

a pretty little bed for me. She put it at the foot of her own but I wanted it fixed so my head was next to her. She moved it as I wanted and one night I looked up to see a wild Indian looking at me. I called Mother and she picked me up and took me into the other room where she rocked me to sleep. But my father went out and talked to the Indian and I was never scared again.

One day Eugene and I were on Mr. Slaughter's lap. He took his gun out of his belt and had it in his hand, almost in my lap. I thought he was going to shoot a calf that had pushed its head into a can so far that no one could get it out. It scared me, because I thought that shooting a big calf like that would be wicked. But he gave the calf to one of the girls who was visiting there and he showed me I could touch the gun without getting hurt.

I remember that when anyone had a birthday, Auntie Slaughter always had a party. And, of course, Eugene and I were included. All the cowboys were unmarried and sometimes there would be girls there for the party. But the big thing to me was that I either slept with Mr. and Mrs. Slaughter or she made a bed on the floor for us. That was the next best thing. Then, in the morning we had breakfast there and some of the boys took us home before dark.

That fall my father cut the corn and harvested the ears. He put the stalks to one side for the cattle to eat. The corn itself did not impress me. I just saw a big pile of ears--but the stalks were cut in small pieces for the cattle to eat and I was not allowed to play near it and I wondered why.

Auntie Slaughter came to see us in Safford, Arizona in 1910 and again begged mother to give me to her because she could put me in school. But mother was really ill so I didn't want to go with her.

After the years, Mr. Slaughter died but before his death he cleaned Cochise County of bad men. For that the state should be thankful for in those days there were many of them. But John Slaughter was afraid of no man. As I think of him now, he was short and sturdy but I may be mistaken. I saw Auntie Slaughter after I was twenty and she was still a very beautiful and intelligent lady. I am certain that John Slaughter was no ordinary man or Charlotte would never have been his wife.

I feel free to say they were all law-abiding people and respected. Young though I was, I learned many good things from Auntie slaughter. And, as John slaughter could not abide bad men, he had the sterling quality of demanding decency in his associates. He was a wonderful man just the sort the west needed, for at that time Indians and bad men migrated westward because there were so few strong men who stood for the right. I wonder if there is one Arizonan who has never heard of John Slaughter. He was famous for good reason. Even his cowboys were strong men who were not afraid to stand for the right. If they were weak or dishonest they didn't last long.

Now the ranch is sold. This little article is in memory of those two wonderful people.



(Today the "John Slaughter Ranch has been made into a National Monument. It is an interesting place to visit. It is about thirty miles east of Douglas and less than half a mile north of the Mexican border. The Tenney house was built with the breezeway stradling the border. In case the "Feds" came Tenney could step across the border. Eliza Udall Tenney, his second wife, lived there with him also. Wasn't there a television series made about John Slaughter and his ranch? I think the ranch used to be called the San Bernardino Ranch??? If so it was established during the 1500s and used as a watering place by the Spaniards on their way north to Santa Fe.) John Bret Harte who was the editor of the Journal of Arizona History helped Millicent with the organizaton of this article during the 1960s. To my knowledge it has not been published. W.W. S.)