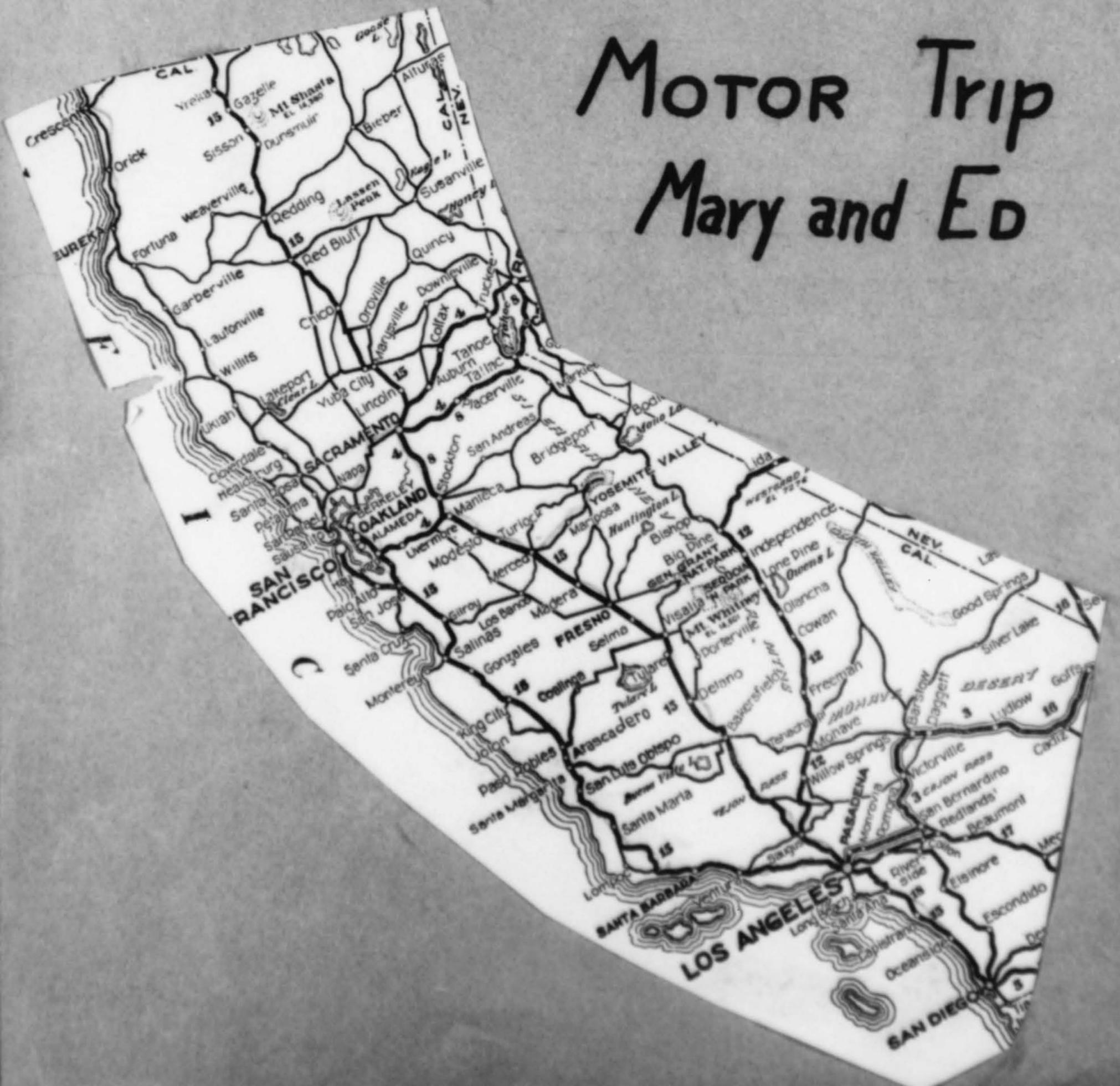


Our Motor Trip Mary and Ed



OUR MOTOR TRIP

In January, 1933, Mary and I left San Diego at 7 A.M. with Gene at the wheel on his way to U.S.C. It was a joy forever - a splendid spring day. It was low tide. The ocean shore had a coloring long to be remembered. The flowers, winter vegetables, green rolling hills with the mountains covered with snow as a background added mystery and made it all the more entrancing.

Soon we were rolling thru the walnut and orange orchards and reached the college grounds at 10 A.M.

A four hours delay for business reasons and we were off via Santa Monica to Santa Barbara. It was another 100 miles of paved highway, ocean shore and coloring that brought to mind the Mediterranean between Marsellies and Nice. At a quarter past four we called on Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Hodges only to find them out.

We refilled our Oakland and away we went. Another 50 mile stretch of ocean, mesa and mountain. Fifty or sixty miles an hour meant nothing to us. At Santa Maria we had a splendid dinner. The moon up shining brightly and we were feeling fine so on we went.. Up the mountains and down again, thru the oaks with the light and shadows mile after mile at 60 or 70.

What a glorious ride into Salinas which we reached at 10:30 P.M. tired but happy, a drive of almost 450 miles. A good night's rest, a 7:30 breakfast and at 8 we were on our way.

In an hour we were at Del Monte, Monterey and over the 17 mile drive to Carmel. More marvelous views of a rock bound coast where here and there we dashed thru a forest of pine, cypress with a visito Carmel Mission, so splendidly located overlooking beautiful Carmel Valley. We will never forget the fields of artichokes.



CARMEL MISSION

A swing around to Highland and soon we were visiting our dear friends, Admiral and Mrs. McLean. Here we found one of the most interesting spots in California. Soon we were on our way. We enjoyed a nice luncheon at Forest Hill Hotel at Pacific Grove where we stopped to talk business matters over with friends. At two o'clock we were speeding toward our beloved children and grandchildren at Piedmont.

Our road took us thru Casterville, Sunnydale and over the Santa Cruz range of mountains to San Jose. The winding roads, trees, broad expanse of view of the ocean and valley from the summit will long be remembered. Then a winding road took us thru cherry, prune and peach orchards. Soon we were at Palo Alto visiting our friends. Again we were on our way via the Dunbarton bridge for Piedmont where we arrived at 5 P.M. to enjoy the happiness of being with our dear ones, Lawrence, Lilian, Lilly Ann and Joan, the sweetest ever, all of them.



Mary, Lawrence, Lily Ann, Lilian and Joan

There are several vivid incidents in connection with our visit with Lilian and Lawrence that will never be forgotten. First, the splendid, tasty food, then that evening the game of bridge where Mary and I whalloped Lilian and Lawrence badly.

Then the visit with the dear grandchildren. What a happy day it was.

The next day I took my wonderful trip to Crescent City by train to Eureka and by auto the next morning. What a marvelous ride. Only 2½ hours from Eureka to Crescent City over a magnificent paved highway which eight years before took us 12 hours to negotiate.

The day was replete with interest. The snow storm, the redwoods, the thunder storm and rainbow. The falling of the two redwood trees during the storm. We passed under one on our way back. It had been on the top of the cut but gave a 20 foot clearance



The saw mill, the Klamath River, the Scotland fog, the land slide and the new friendships all made the trip most interesting including the collision of our train with a big boulder which smashed our cow-catcher and an hour's delay.

I should mention a lovely visit with Madeline, Ana and Walter, the night with Madeline in their apartment, the beautiful view of San Francisco Bay, Madeline's wonderful cooking and the renewal of stories of early day experiences.

On Wednesday we were on our way to Sacramento, a delightful run in three hours over the Dunbarton bridge and thru the Sacramento Valley. A luncheon at the Senator Hotel with our good friend, Edward Hyatt, the state engineer. An ✓?



ROCK BOUND COAST - DEL NORTE COUNTY



ROCK BOUND COAST - DEL NORTE COUNTY



"Scotland Fog" - Crescent City

afternoon of politics in the legislature pulling strings for appropriations for flood control, the junior prison site and meeting old friends, including the Governor.

Mary and Mrs. Hyatt enjoyed a tea with Mrs. Rolph, the first lady of the state, Mrs. Harper, the wife of Senator Harper and others.

What a splendid dinner we had that night with the Hyatts. Another real game of bridge and a happy evening together. The next morning a visit with Emrl Lee Kelly, Director of Public Works, bringing Senator Harper and Kelly together on political matters and then a visit with Rheba Crawford Splivalo, Director of Social Welfare, with Mary as chaperon and then we were off to Stockton and Modesto, an 85 mile run for lunch. There our good old friend, C. O. Harbell met us. We talked ranch matters over together and by 2:30 P.M. we were at Merced.

There I had a surprise for Mary. We turned toward Yosemite Valley and for the first time she knew whence we were going. It was a 92 mile drive over hills and valleys with the Sierra Nevada ahead of us covered with snow.

Soon we were among the hills and snow. How skiddy, slippery and wet it was. We were soon among the gold, placer mines and historic town of '49. Another mountain to climb and then we slid down into the Yosemite and up the valley to El Portal, a most wonderful trip and long to be remembered.

Soon the snow was 2 or 3 feet deep. Our car skidded along without chains. The trees were bent low with snow. We passed a couple of deer 10 feet away from us you remained unfrightened.



Soon we were on the floor of the Yosemite. It was Massachusetts all over again. Eight or ten deer were around the front steps of the hotel, snow was 5 and six feet deep, in places covering the windows.

Still we kept on and found ourselves following a rotary plow shooting snow 75 feet into the air.

We were soon at Happy Isle but found ourselves a moment later stuck in the snow. Three times the forest rangers pulled or pushed us out. What a gay time we had. Everybody jolly and it was a new experience and one Mary and I will never forget. The snow was six feet on the level.

We landed safely at the hotel, had dinner and then heard that a new storm was expected that night. Our plans were changed immediately. At 7 P.M. we were on our way and reached Merced at 10:30 that same night with only one remarkable incident. Going around a corner we met a car which passed us at a mile a minute. In my fright, I turned too sharply with the result that the rear of the car swung to the left, made a complete circle and we found ourselves in a snow bank headed east instead of west, all without damage or turning over. I shut the motor off as we turned and it was only necessary to turn on the motor again and pull out, going up the hill a little, finding a place to turn which we did and again we were on our way west.

When we drove into the garage at Merced I could not open the door and looking out found that when the car swung into the snow bank it took on a solid 2 feet of snow clear up above the door, the entire length of the running board. This was indeed a surprise to both of us.

A hot bath, a splendid bed and it was 9 A.M. before we were on our way the next morning. A splendid luncheon at Bakersfield and we were soon on our way to Los Angeles. We received all kinds of reports as to the condition of the ridge route, that it was snowing, that it was blocked, and that it was okay. We took our chances and certainly had a wild ride climbing again to an elevation of 6,000 feet with snow banks 12 feet high, snow plows in operation, 18 or 20 trucks stuck along the route but luck was with us and happy we were when we landed for the night with our dear friends in Los Angeles, Russ and Julia Walters. Another splendid meal, another game of bridge and to bed.

In the morning we visited Charles and Jeannett, the Tobermans and enjoyed a happy hour or two with our grandchildren Kim and Peter. A visit to their new home at San Gabriel, a fond farewell and that evening found us safe home again, the Oakland having made a trip of 1900 miles in less time a week while I had made the flying trip from San Francisco to Crescent City as well.







This was the first trip that we had ever taken by automobile alone together, a happy one, it was and may it not be our last.

E. Fletcher

Ed Fletcher Papers

1870-1955

MSS.81

Box: 74 Folder: 7

Personal Memorabilia - "Our Motor Trip -- Mary and Ed"



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