

ONE

~ Angela Comes to Arizona Territory

AFTER A THREE-DAY TRAIN JOURNEY from Reno, Nevada, the Hutchinson girls were unprepossessing when they arrived at the Casa Grande depot one July morning in 1883 to await a father they had not seen in over four long years. The quartet descended the portable stairs in birth order with a statuesque, rather dour-looking, eighteen-year-old named Mary Genevieve leading the way. After Gen came twelve-year-old Angela with serious hazel eyes, long yellow braids, and a wayward derby hat that shifted positions each time she took a step. Next in line, Mary Patricia, a year younger than Angie and dressed identically, bounced down the stairs; her derby nestled securely into thick blond curls. These hats, a great source of merriment among the girls, were part of an Easter trousseau their mother had sent to the convent along with a note saying that derbies were the latest fashion among the young set in Pinal City. Nine-year-old Mary Adelaide trailed behind Pattie, looking rather wan and unsteady on her feet, her dress bearing evidence of a nose that had bled profusely throughout the sweltering trip across the Mohave Desert.

No sooner had Addie reached ground level than an impatient porter unceremoniously heaved their luggage onto the wooden platform as if to hurry their departure from the passenger car. The locomotive gathered steam and began to inch forward as passengers crowded around train windows calling out words of assurance and waving goodbye to the girls, who stood motionless among their scattered trunks as if in a daze.

“Watch out for them giant prairie dogs, Darlin’!” one passenger yelled to Pattie.

4 *Chapter 1*

The previous day on the train, as Pattie exclaimed over “the prairie dogs that sit up in their holes like little people,” this man had jokingly informed her that “many prairie dogs weigh a ton.” Urged on by other passengers, our gullible girl had spent the rest of the day at a train window searching for a giant prairie dog.

She called back, “Now I get the joke. Many prairie dogs TOGETHER weigh a ton.” But her words, drowned out by the locomotive’s farewell whistle, didn’t reach the ears of her intended recipient.

Angie gave her sister’s sweat-soaked waist an approving squeeze as together they watched their last link to civilization disappear over a mesquite-studded horizon.

At a makeshift office displaying Western Union, Wells-Fargo, and Southern Pacific Railroad signs, Angie found Gen engaged in conversation with the ticket agent. The man, seemingly confused by the appearance of four young girls on his watch, listened as Gen explained that their father was on his way from Pinal City to pick them up.

The agent allowed as how Pinal City was a good sixty miles or so from Casa Grande and told them that their papa would have had to travel all night in order to arrive this morning. He apologized for the lack of a shaded waiting area while upending the girls’ trunks for temporary seating. “How was the trip from Sacramento?” he asked.

This question elicited a barrage of complaints and finger pointing at Gen, whose absentmindedness had caused them to be put off the train at Indio, California. Prior to boarding the Central Pacific train in Reno, the girls had stayed with friends of their parents, the Judge Young family. Then, after switching trains at Sacramento, Gen discovered she had left their Southern Pacific tickets behind at the Youngs’. A concerned conductor assured them that if they wired the judge for ticket confirmation, another train would be along in the morning.

Angie launched into a description of the miserable night they had spent in Indio, a place akin to Hades in her estimation. “We ate at a greasy spoon restaurant with forks and spoons made out of tin. It was so hot we couldn’t sleep, and on top of that, we had indigestion all night.”

Gen bore the chastisement of her sisters in silence, but when the agent went back into his office, she resumed her role as the imperial eldest. “I wish you girls would quit complaining and be thankful for the blessing of train travel.



Mary Adelaide Hutchinson (Addie), at left, around age seventeen; and Angela Hutchinson (Angie), around age twenty.



Mary Patricia Hutchinson (Pattie) in her twenties.

6 Chapter 1



Mary Monica Hutchinson
(Quita) in her twenties.

How would you like to have made this trip by stage the way Mama and Baby Monica did?”

Angie concurred with Gen, then turned her attention to their immediate surroundings, which were not very prepossessing, either. Across a road to the south that ran parallel to the railroad tracks stood a dreary assortment of wooden buildings: a livery stable, a general merchandise store, a restaurant, and one adobe hotel with a few horses and wagons tethered in front. Little sign of life could be seen at this early hour. Well-worn wagon trails fanned out in every direction from the railroad yard, testifying to Casa Grande’s status as a supply and shipping center for area mines and for the Indian agency at Sacaton. As far as the eye could see lay vast stretches of desert ringed by distant mountain ranges.

To the west, a rosy, flat-topped mountain glowed in the early morning sunlight. “It’s called Table Top Mountain,” the agent said. “A big, Amazon woman lives there in a cave with her tubercular husband. When we were laying these

tracks, she would sneak in at night to steal the rails, then we'd have to go out there the next day to buy them back." He chuckled. "We could have had her arrested, but we felt kind of sorry for her having to work so hard to make a few pennies."

Papa, better known as William Tallentyre Hutchinson, hurried to reach his daughters before their anxieties turned into a fear of abandonment. So often had they heard their mother, Sarah, tell the story of her own father's disappearance during California's Gold Rush that William knew well how this fear pervaded the whole family psyche.

When a distant spot of dust materialized into an approaching wagon, the girls began to clap and jump up and down. "There he is! There's our Papa!"

However, their cheers turned into stunned silence when the wagon's driver passed by with hardly a glance in their direction. He traveled down the road a short distance, then turned his team around and came slowly toward them. Stopping alongside the platform, the grinning, heavily bearded driver jumped down and rubbed his fists into his eyes as if awakening from a dream. "I had no idea that you beautiful young ladies were the same wee girls I left in Virginia City four years ago. I didn't recognize you!"

Squealing with delight, the girls mobbed their father, hugging him and chiding him for having such a short memory. He exclaimed over each daughter, making them say their names in turn to be sure these stunning beauties really belonged to him.

When the excitement abated and luggage was loaded into the wagon, William led his brood to a nearby Chinese restaurant, where they feasted on a breakfast of stale eggs, bacon, and toast with butter poured from a pickle jar, a breakfast later lost over the sides of the jouncing wagon.

Traveling in a northeasterly direction to the town of Florence, William's wagon bumped through rocky basin land, up and down arroyos, and over dry lakebeds topped with curling mud that looked like pieces of a giant puzzle. The thousands of black, fuzzy worms that crawled in every direction along the desert floor soon caught the attention of the girls. They took turns trying to flick the worms with a buggy whip to make them curl up and jump, but the fun ended when Pattie complained that they were causing pain to God's innocent creatures.

By the time the sun reached its zenith, Addie's nosebleeds began in earnest, and everyone admitted to feeling a little faint and nauseated from the heat.

8 *Chapter 1*

After his all-night trek, William could hardly keep his eyes open. He pulled in to the Florence Hotel for a long afternoon siesta during the hottest part of the day.

The proprietor of the hotel, kind Dixie Whitlaw Stone, led the girls to an adobe addition that looked as if it might have been formerly used as a fortress. Over large openings on three sides, Dixie hung dripping wet blankets. The effect of desert breezes blowing across these wet blankets, a time-honored system of evaporative cooling, soon lulled the tired, hot girls into restful slumber.

Lengthening afternoon shadows found the Hutchinson family under way for the long haul to Pinal City. Upon leaving the flat desert basin, the wagon team labored up mountainous grades into higher and greener elevations. Cactus spines, backlit by the setting sun, shimmered under waxy crowns of red, yellow, pink, and mauve in the last stages of bloom. Angie exclaimed, "This is not at all the way I had pictured the desert. The nuns taught us that deserts were barren and sandy, but this one is full of vegetation. I love it already."

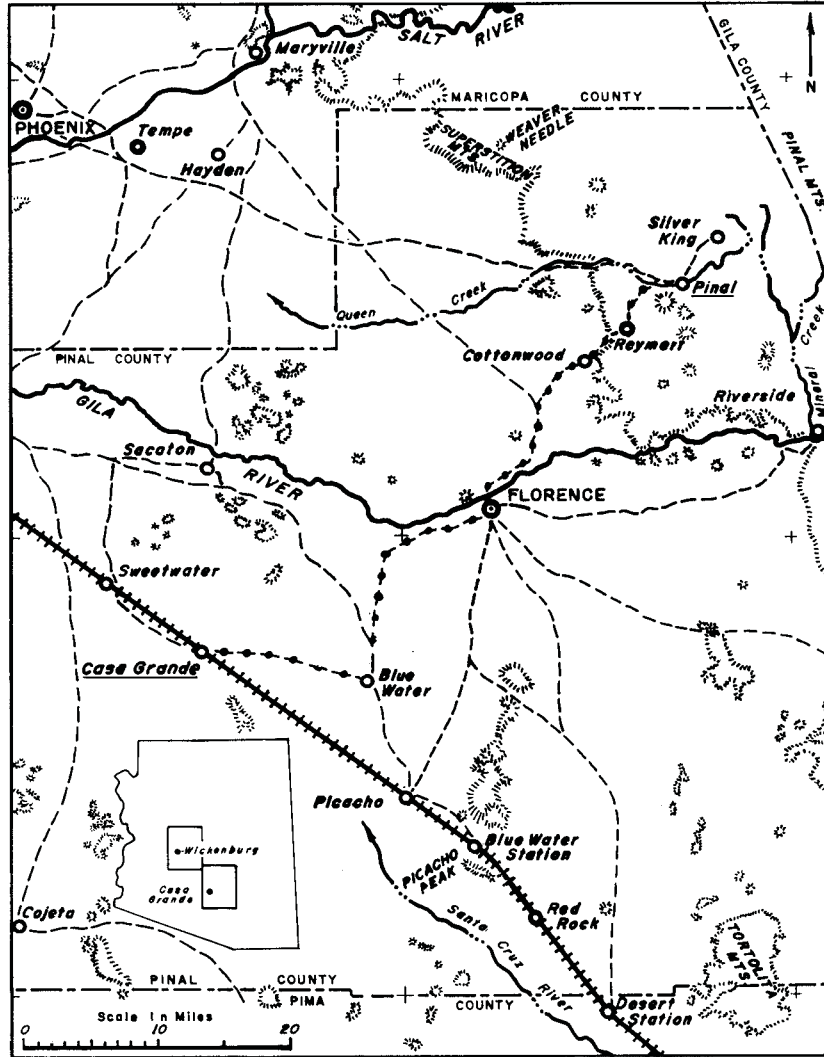
As night fell, young imaginations stirred to strange sights and sounds. Clumps of saguaros become road agents pointing guns at the wagon, or the towering smokestacks of mill towns, or companies of soldiers marching with muskets over their shoulders. Bunches of fluffy chollas turned into flocks of sheep resting on a hillside.

Imaginations lapsed into drowsiness as the vast silence of a moonless night settled across the land, a silence occasionally interrupted by the howling of coyotes, the hooting of owls, or the sleepy voices of adolescents asking the age-old question, "How far is it now, Papa?"

At about a mile east of the point where the Boyce Thompson Arboretum is today, Gen spotted a row of dark buildings on her side of the road. "Papa, you didn't tell us that Pinal City had skyscrapers."

William chuckled. "Those buildings are the bank and the newspaper office. They look tall because they're built on the slope of a hill." He called attention to a huge, dark building on the opposite side of the road. "That's the mill where I work, where the ore from the Silver King Mine is treated. It has eight stamps, and when it's in operation, it makes a deafening roar."

Wide-awake, the girls strained for a first glimpse of their new home. The wagon took a diagonal course to the right and stopped in front of a building that even in the darkness appeared very drab. No one moved until they saw the glow of a candle coming toward them and heard their mother's voice.



Portions of Pinal and Maricopa Counties showing the route of the Hutchinson family from Casa Grande to Pinal City, 1883. (Map by Donald F. Hammer, modified from an 1883 U.S. General Land Office map of the Territory of Arizona)

The anxiety caused by long separation melted into tears of joy as Sarah inspected each daughter by candlelight and saw that even her younger daughters carried the unmistakable signs of approaching puberty. She was shocked at this change.

Right away the girls wanted to see their baby sister, but little Monica (called Quita) slept through all the hubbub of the happy reunion. Sarah warned the girls not to be disappointed if Monica didn't remember them.

Though the hour was well past midnight, the family sat down to their first meal together in over four years. Each girl returned her fervent thanks to the Lord for this long-awaited reunion, and then nonstop talking erupted from all sides of the table. At the end of the meal, Sarah came from the kitchen carrying a can of Borden's Sweetened Condensed Milk, a new product on the market, with four spoons. Everyone agreed it tasted like nectar of the gods.

As heads began to nod, Sarah led the girls to their new sleeping quarters, where four cots stood side by side. William, who made most of the family's furnishings, had fashioned these cots from canvas stretched over crossed two-by-four legs, and once Angie discovered how easily these cots could be folded up, she proclaimed her father a genius.

While the girls got ready for bed, Sarah warned them to be alert for scorpions. Bedcovers should be shaken and the walls and ceiling checked before climbing into bed.

Angie picked up her cot. "Look! I can just fold up my bed and walk to a different spot if I see a scorpion on the ceiling."

Despite her bravado, Angie slept fitfully that night. Each time her skin brushed a raw edge of canvas, she startled awake, thinking it was the legs of a scorpion.

At the first rays of light, Angie scrambled out of bed to see her baby sister, only to be disappointed by an unenthusiastic reception. Little Monica didn't remember her and shyly trailed at arm's length as Angie took inventory of her new home.

At Home in Pinal City

William Hutchinson, a steam engineer by trade, built and operated the huge stamp mills used in the mining industry for crushing gold and silver ore. As part of the great horde of mining men who migrated from one mineral dis-

covery to the next along the Comstock and other parts of Nevada, he and Sarah lived a nomadic lifestyle. Like clockwork at each mining camp, a baby had arrived: Gen and Joseph at Virginia City, Angela at Hamilton, Pattie at Piermont, Addie at Egan Canyon, and five years later, Mary Monica at Monterey, California. When the mines of the Comstock began to decline, and after the tragic drowning death of Joseph (his only son), William came to the Arizona Territory in 1879 to look for new mining opportunities.

Settling in Picket Post, later renamed Pinal City, he opened a blacksmith shop while awaiting employment at the Silver King concentrator. Sarah and Baby Monica joined him there in 1881, after leaving the other four girls in a convent in Virginia City until the Apache troubles abated.

With Sarah's arrival, William added another bedroom and a kitchen to the same building that had housed his former blacksmith shop. Unable to afford glass, he covered the window and door openings of the new additions with unbleached muslin tacked onto frames. The older part of the building served as the parlor, where a pine-board table surrounded by upholstered beer barrels sat upon a floor of rough-hewn planks. A bookcase contained the family's most important possession, their library. Tightly drawn, wine-colored draperies, a remnant of more affluent days in Virginia City, covered the parlor's single glass window.

The town of Pinal City grew around the Silver King quartz mill, constructed in 1878, along a bank of Queen Creek. Commercial buildings such as a shoe shop, M. Jacobs and Company, Goldman's General Merchandise, Murray's Saloon, and the Carroll Sisters' Hotel and Restaurant faced a plaza containing the town well. Since William had built his blacksmith shop in the business district, it, too, fronted the plaza.

According to Sarah, all kinds of wickedness took place in the plaza. People used language not fitting for the ears of young girls. Drunks came out of saloons to fistfight or sleep off binges. Lowborn women gathered to gossip instead of seeing to their children, and occasionally, gangs of cowboys, a vernacular for "toughs," rode around on horseback looking for someone to pick on. If the toughs found a newcomer and didn't like his looks or the kind of hat he wore, they would shoot at his feet to make him dance.

"Furthermore," Sarah told her daughters, "our parlor drapes are to remain closed at all times. You are not even to look upon the plaza through the front window. Now come around to the back of the house where Papa has built a

nice seesaw and swing for you.” There, Sarah had one more ground rule to establish. She called anything beyond a sandy wash skirting this playground the “badlands,” and the girls were forbidden to cross it.

One morning, to Angie’s and Pattie’s surprise, Sarah handed them each a five-gallon oilcan fitted with wooden crossbars for handles and told them to fetch water from the plaza well. “You’ll find a bucket with a rope attached at the well. Just lower this bucket into the water and pull it up hand over hand. You’ll catch on. When your cans are full, come right back home. Don’t dawdle.”

At the well, three women deeply engaged in gossip watched the girls’ clumsy attempts to pull up the water-filled bucket. One of the women came to their aid. As she demonstrated how to pull the bucket up in a steady motion, she continued talking about Black Jack, a local saloon entertainer who lived a life of shame in order to support her two young daughters in a Tucson convent.

Angie and Pattie discussed Black Jack’s situation all the way home. They concluded that someone needed to tell the woman to run away and stay at the convent with her daughters. Angie said, “Black Jack probably doesn’t know that the nuns would be glad to help her. Let’s try to find her and tell her ourselves, since we’ve had firsthand experience with nuns and convents.”

From that day on, Angie and Pattie took up surveillance on the plaza, hoping to somehow spot a woman who might be Black Jack. They hid between the forbidden window and the wine-colored draperies while other members of the household took their afternoon siestas.

Another task given to the girls was that of bringing milk from a dairy across Queen Creek where a large cottonwood tree that had fallen across the creek offered a challenging shortcut. The girls hauled their milk can around branches while the creek, swollen from monsoon rains, raged beneath them. In the big muddy root, they dug footholds and handholds so they could climb over it and slide to the bank on the far side. For the return trip, they used a rope to pull the milk can over the root end, then passed the can from girl to girl in bucket-brigade fashion.

One day a mill hand happened to be standing at the doorway of the Silver King concentrator and saw the girls making their way along the tree bridge with the milk can. He called William. “Come and take a look at what your youngsters are doing.”

The girls received stern lectures from both parents that evening. Their bodies could be torn apart by floodwaters if they happened to fall, or even

worse, their bodies might never be found. One drowning in the family was enough.

The next day the girls discovered a two-by-four handrail nailed along the length of their tree bridge. Their shortcut to Rudledge's Diary lost its attraction once the element of danger had been removed.

A Synthetic Cowboy

Gen had been engaged twice and jilted twice before she left Nevada. As the eligible new girl in town, she was under scrutiny by every lonely bachelor in the vicinity of Pinal City. She made her town debut when the local Catholic community held a bazaar for the church building fund. Gen was in charge of the lemonade stand.

One very handsome young man kept returning to Gen's stand to buy drinks for himself and his buddies. He introduced himself as Ned Fales and removed his hat in a great show of respect. Although Gen had heard that Fales had a fiancée, she allowed him to help her squeeze lemons. By the end of the day, Gen's stand had outstripped all others as the bazaar's big moneymaker.

That evening Gen told her mother she considered Ned Fales to be quite a gentleman. Sarah harrumphed and launched into her opinion of the young man. "He's nothing but a synthetic cowboy from a wealthy Missouri family who indulge his fantasy of becoming an Indian fighter. He brags around town that he'll send old Geronimo's scalp home to his parents."

Upon hearing this, Angie and Pattie added Ned Fales to their surveillance list. So far, they hadn't seen anyone who fit the description of Black Jack, only old weathered prospectors who brought gunnysacks of black sand to the well and used steer horns, instead of gold pans, to separate any gold flakes from the sand. Then, just when they began to think their mother had greatly exaggerated the dangers of the plaza, they witnessed an event that sent them scurrying back to their cots, feigning sleep.

Amid the sound of loud, angry voices, Ned Fales himself strode out the swinging doors of Murray's Saloon. Even at a distance Angie and Pattie could tell he was angry. Another man, who stood in the doorway shouting obscenities, fired a pistol at Fales' retreating back. The young tough staggered momentarily, then drew his pistol, whirled around, and fired. The man in the doorway collapsed onto the boardwalk.

14 *Chapter 1*

Mary Genevieve
Hutchinson (Gen) taught in
the Vulture City School in
1886.

When Murray's clients streamed out of the saloon yelling for an officer of the law, Fales made no attempt to run. He sheathed his pistol and sat on the edge of the well with his head in his hands to await the lawman. Angie and Pattie didn't wait to see what happened next.

William reported two different versions of the killing of Bill O'Boyle, a highly respected owner of a hotel and restaurant in Silver King. In one version, Ned Fales started the fight by accusing O'Boyle of circulating rumors that he had participated in a train robbery, whereupon O'Boyle threw a glass of beer in Fales' face. Fales started to leave the tavern, then changed his mind and shot O'Boyle at close range. The other version had Fales punching O'Boyle in retaliation for the rumors, then leaving the saloon. Some of Murray's patrons claimed that O'Boyle, who had been drinking all afternoon, fired a shot over Fales' head to scare him as he walked away.

Either way, William figured Fales had already been convicted of murder in cold blood and doubted that the cowboy, who had a bad reputation for drunken forays into town, could get a fair trial in Pinal City. The loudest voice

to proclaim Fales' guilt came from Jack McCoy, O'Boyle's brother-in-law, a man rumored to be in love with Ned Fales' fiancée.

Gen retired early with a headache, leaving Angie and Pattie to wash dishes. Alone in the kitchen, they briefly discussed telling their parents what they had seen that afternoon but decided against the severe spanking that would surely follow such an admission. Besides, other adults had witnessed the incident and would certainly tell the truth.

That night a lynch mob, led by Jack McCoy, got the keys away from the jailer, took Fales to a nearby barn, and hung him from the rafters. When his body was cut down the next morning, the coroner discovered that a gunshot wound had grazed the flesh in his side, indisputable proof that Ned Fales had acted in self-defense.

As Angela looked back on the young cowboy's funeral sixty-three years later, she vividly recalled the moonlit night and the coffin in the open grave under the spreading branches of a mesquite tree. She wrote about the funeral, held a few miles up Silver King Road at Jimmy Reymert's place.

The entire population of Pinal City came to protest the illegal death of a man on hearsay evidence. As the first clods of dirt hit the wooden casket, the minister asked the Almighty to touch the hearts of the sinners and forgive the penitents. A large clump of beautiful and poisonous jimson weed exuded its sickly fragrance into the night air, a fitting touch to the occasion.

Ned Fales became the tragic figure who might have become a good, substantial citizen had he not indulged in horseplay and been hated by his rivals. Jack McCoy suffered remorse for his part in the hanging, motivated more by jealousy than revenge. He often talked to Mother about his regrets.

Glass Snakes and Arizona Diamonds

Each evening, Gen held court in the parlor. Her suitors came bearing gifts—nuggets of white quartz with thin silver wires curled together like bird's nests, possibly high-grade from the Silver King Mine, and all sorts of filigreed silver jewelry made by local Mexican craftsmen. Occasionally, Sarah allowed Gen to go walking with an admirer, provided one or more of her sisters trailed along, a task they found most disagreeable.

Sarah approved of Pat Donahue, a seemingly good Irish Catholic boy, so Gen accepted his invitation to the St. Patrick's Day Ball. Pat pressed his luck by announcing to Sarah that he didn't want any sisters tagging along to the dance. The parlor turned silent. No one had ever dared talk to the diminutive Sarah this way.

When Sarah found her voice, she issued a surprising command: "You must prove to me that you are worthy of my daughter's company and a man of true faith by getting down on your knees and reciting three Decades of the Rosary for me."

The parlor audience gasped, not believing for a second that Pat would put his pride on the line by acquiescing to this command. But to their surprise, he slowly knelt before Sarah and took the rosary from her hands. Then, after inviting the whole household on their knees along with him, he reeled off the Rosaries like an altar boy.

Sarah had no choice but to relent, and the erstwhile tagalongs breathed a sigh of relief. However, she extracted one last promise from the couple. They must agree not to participate in any round dances. It was considered improper for dancers to have bodily contact.

As the eldest of the siblings, Gen had always functioned as a surrogate mother. Now, with her attention diverted by suitors, the younger girls took advantage of their freedom by exploring farther and farther up Queen Creek with their Hispanic playmates.

August of 1883 brought terrific storms to the area. *The Pinal Drill* reported that J. D. Reymert's rain box measured over thirteen inches of rain in one two-hour period. Homes and livestock close to the creek bed were swept away by its raging waters.

Angie wrote poignantly of Queen Creek, their favorite playground.

It was a wide and, at times, turbulent stream that ripped out everything in its path when the summer rains swept over the mountains in sheets that seemed to be almost horizontal.

Mother always said they came in honor of the Feast of the Assumption. As mother was a devout Catholic, we usually observed those particular days in church; but there was no church in Pinal, so someone donated the use of their home for services.

The creek cut through some of the roughest country imaginable, where it



Pinal City, circa 1880. View northwestward showing Queen Creek in flood.
The Silver King concentrator is at the left edge of the photograph.
(Courtesy of the Sharlot Hall Museum)

was compelled to make more than an ordinary display of foam to get through narrow gorges. It washed clean any rock ledges impeding its way, but left something behind of interest to us children in the way of odd-looking rocks.

The youngsters, having heard so many of Sarah's Irish legends, made up stories about the rocks that had what looked like glass snakes inside. These snakes were the ones that St. Patrick drove out of Ireland by locking them into crystal-lined rocks and throwing them into the ocean. After rolling around on the ocean floor for hundreds of years, the rocks tumbled their way to Queen Creek. Their father called these snake rocks *geodes*.

Farther up the creek, the girls found a hill of "Arizona diamonds": translucent, coffee-colored nodules of obsidian that looked like beads. These Arizona diamonds made their way back to the house in such numbers that they were swept under furniture or out the door.

On another exploratory trip, the girls found an abandoned quartz mill that had been used to concentrate ore for Judge Reymert's Seventy-six Mine. They collected handfuls of quicksilver, or mercury, from the mill's amalgamation plates used to process precious metals from ore. When William caught them playing with the quicksilver, he told them to return it to the mill. Quicksilver was expensive, and Mr. Reymert might want to use it again someday; besides, they had no business taking things that didn't belong to them. No one considered that quicksilver might be toxic.

Not far from the old mill, Judge Reymert was building a great stone castle on a hillside. Each afternoon, the girls went to watch the judge's daughter-in-law feed the castle cats with chunks of salt pork cut from a big slab. Never completed, the castle stood ghostlike for years and became known as "Reymert's Folly."

Fearless Pattie, always ready for a snake attack, carried a rope with her on the day the girls and their playmates tried to hike to the Superstition Mountains, a distance of some fifteen to twenty miles. When they got to the wide gorge skirting the mountain, Pattie spied the head of a Gila monster protruding from some rocks. She dropped a slipknot loop over its head, slung it over her shoulder, and ordered everyone back home. Despite pleas from the Hispanic children to let the reptile go, Pattie persevered with her burden. By the time they reached home, the Gila monster was nearly dead, and the girls came

away from the adventure with another lecture from William about the dangers of reptiles and their perceptions of distance.

On San Juan's Day, June 24th, the Hutchinson family joined others in Pinal City for mariachi music, dancing, food, and games on the plaza. One of the festival highlights was a game called *saca el gallo*, in which live chickens were buried in the ground up to their necks. Two teams of horsemen competed to see which team could pull the most chickens out of the ground. Only the most expert horseman could grab the ducking head of a chicken by hanging way off the side of his saddle. The rider that accomplished this feat then used the chicken like a baseball bat to whack his opponents about the head and shoulders. Blood and feathers flew everywhere. The horrified expressions on the faces of the Hutchinson girls only added to the amusement of the riders.

Thus the Hutchinson girls grew accustomed to life in Pinal City. Color lines blurred, and soon Angie couldn't tell the difference between her own sunburned skin and that of her Hispanic playmates.

William's gentle, retiring nature stood in sharp contrast to his tiny wife's prideful ways and often-fiery disposition. The couple came from opposite ends of the religious and political spectrum: he, from a Southern family of slave owners and Protestant English patriots, and she, from an Irish Catholic family of globe-trotting adventurers and explorers. William generally acquiesced to Sarah's wishes, except for the time he went prospecting over her objections.

Pinal buzzed with the news of mineral discoveries in the Quijotoa Mountains west of Tucson. If Sarah could spare him for a few weeks, it wouldn't take William long to stake a few claims in the region.

She wouldn't hear of it. "You can't go by yourself. Besides, I hear those Pimas and Papagos are getting a little hostile about all the ranchers and prospectors invading their land. You can't be taking off on your own when you have family responsibilities."

That put an end to this discussion for the time being. Then Willie, the son of Judge Young in Reno, came for a visit with gold on his mind. He begged William to take him prospecting. William resisted until Jose, a young Papago (those Indians are now called the Tohono O'odham), told him that he knew where there was "heaps of gold" in the Quijotoa Mountains. That did it. Over Sarah's objections, the three men put together a pack outfit and took off.

It's uncertain how long they were gone, but by the time William limped

home empty handed to an angry wife, he found that he had also lost his job at the Silver King Mill.

The search for a new job began as the recalcitrant William trekked from one mine to the next. At each mine, he heard the same story. Due to a drop in silver prices, companies were laying off workers. Eventually, he found employment at the Monarch of the Sea, a prospect about a half-mile above the Silver King Mine.

The family took temporary quarters at the William's Hotel, located in the Silver King settlement near the waste dump. While there, a guest happened to catch a six-inch centipede in a glass jar. In those days, people feared centipedes as much as scorpions, believing that if a centipede's legs pierced the skin, it would cause the flesh to rot away. Onlookers began telling centipede stories, and William joined in with one about the time a nine-inch centipede dropped from the ceiling on top of Sarah as she lay in bed. It took all the courage Sarah could muster not to scream or move as the critter slowly traversed her entire body before finally dropping to the floor. From that day forward, Angie considered her mother to be the bravest woman on the planet.

William didn't remain at Monarch of the Sea long. The prospect closed in a few months, and William left Silver King in late 1884 or early 1885 to look for work in Maricopa County.

Mormon colonization of Arizona had become one of the most hotly debated topics of the time. But public sentiment against the Church of Latter-Day Saints didn't prevent Sarah from purchasing farm produce from Mr. Vance, who made frequent rounds to Pinal City from his farm in Mesa. When the time came for the family to move to Phoenix, Sarah asked Mr. Vance if he would transport Gen, Angie, Pattie, and Addie to Phoenix to look for housing while she stayed behind to pack.

The trip to Mesa took two days. The first night, spent on the ground at Hewitt's Station, found Gen anxious about snakes and hydrophobic skunks. Mr. Vance and his dog stayed awake to keep watch.

The next night, the girls stayed at the Vance home before continuing on to Phoenix. Still in the process of developing farmland, Mr. Vance had built a comfortable home along an ancient canal originally constructed by the Hohokam Indians to channel water from the Salt River. The family's drinking water came from this irrigation ditch, and even though the water was strained and put into ollas to cool, Angie noted that it still had a muddy taste.

After supper that evening, Gen and Mr. Vance launched into a discussion of the Bible and the teachings of Brigham Young and Joseph Smith. To clear the air of any negativity, Gen told how a kind Mormon neighbor had saved her mother's life in Egan Canyon, Nevada. After giving birth to Addie, Sarah had been on the verge of death from excessive hemorrhaging when this Mormon woman packed her with snow to staunch the bleeding. "Ever since then," Gen told the Vances, "Mother will not permit an unkind word to be spoken about Mormons in her presence."

In Phoenix, the girls found a vacant adobe house near the Linville Addition, not far from the old courthouse. Angie said that this abandoned home's well-worn floors and woodwork and its surrounding giant cottonwood trees gave one the feeling of barging in on a prehistoric civilization. When Sarah arrived, she didn't want to remain in this house without the consent of the owners, so the family underwent a series of moves that ended in a house rented from Mr. Fifield, across the street from the Old Town Ditch with its row of mud-roofed adobes.

Apparently, William didn't find work in Phoenix, and by the time his family arrived there, he had found employment at the Vulture Mine about sixty miles northwest of Phoenix. Knowing that Gen had a teaching certificate from Mount St. Mary's, the Catholic convent in Reno where the girls had stayed, he wrote Gen that the Vulture City School might soon need a teacher. She should come to investigate and bring Angie along with her. Protocol of the day deemed it improper for young ladies to travel alone.

A Room at Hannah's

By the time William found employment as a stamp mill steam engineer at the Vulture Mine in 1885, this mine, touted as the richest in Arizona, already had a long and notorious history. It was the classic story of Henry Wickenburg, a poor prospector, finding a rich quartz vein in the late 1860s and losing it to eastern capitalists. However, Wickenburg's discovery of gold brought miners and settlers to a remote region of central Arizona that had been occupied solely by Indians.

After Henry and his companions formed a mining district, he allowed any comers to pack off the rich gold ore at fifteen dollars a ton. Miners carried this ore to the Hassayampa River, ten miles due east of the Vulture. Soon *arrastras*,

great stone wheels used to crush ore, lined the riverbank. This camp became known as Wickenburg and would eventually become the town of Wickenburg.

In 1866 the Vulture Mining Company contracted to pay Henry twenty-five thousand dollars for his ownership interest and built a twenty-stamp mill and company houses at a place on the river they called Vulture City (this was not the same Vulture City that later grew around the Vulture Mine).

Stockholders in the Vulture Mining Company received little return on their investment. Freighters charged eight to ten dollars a ton to haul ore, so only choice rock was sent to the mill, a practice that made it easy for miners and freighters to pocket high-grade along the way.

Boilers for steam engines at the mill burned lots of wood. When the company ran out of a wood supply at Vulture City I, the company erected another ten-stamp mill, Smith's Mill, twelve miles south of the original Vulture City. At this mill, they installed a flume to carry water from the Hassayampa River. The cost of milling Vulture ore kept getting steeper and steeper until the Vulture Mining Company caved in.

When the Central Arizona Company took ownership of the Vulture in 1879, it moved the old mill at Vulture City to Seymour until it could complete a pipeline to carry water from the Hassayampa River all the way to the mine site. A new influx of money from investors allowed an eighty-stamp mill to be erected at the mouth of the inclined shaft that accessed the Vulture lode. A settlement, Vulture City II, grew around the company buildings at the Vulture Mine site.

By the time William arrived in this second Vulture City, the Central Arizona Company had met the same fate as the old Vulture Company, their expenses far exceeding any profits from gold. Unhappy stockholders agreed to lease the mine property to Lyman Elmore, a New York attorney. Instead of working underground, Elmore kept the mill busy processing the low-grade ore that had been stockpiled around the mine. Under these circumstances, William realized his job probably wouldn't last long.

Gen and Angie made arrangements to stay at Hannah Humphrey's Boarding House, but Angie wasn't happy to learn that Hannah's was the big social center for Vulture City. Although she had learned to polka and hop waltz at the convent, she wasn't ready to put herself on stage with a mixed crowd. Shy and awkward at sixteen, she still wore her hair in braids and considered herself a "homely brat."

This low opinion of herself came partly as the result of an incident in Virginia City when Sarah's sister had come to offer condolences after the drowning death of Angie's brother Joe. Angie described what happened.

I admired Aunt Norah, a large, important-looking woman who dressed like a millionaire. When she arrived, she turned to Pattie and said, "So this is the little darling who looks like me?"

"Oh, no," piped up Gen. "Not Pattie. It's Angie who looks like you."

Aunt Norah's face fell. I knew immediately that she was hurt and offended to think that such a plain brat could look like her.

Angie confided her social fears to Gen, saying that she would remain in their room when people gathered in the evening to dance and converse. "With these pigtailed of mine, I look like I'm twelve, instead of sixteen."

Gen laughed at her sister. "We can remedy that. You won't recognize yourself when I get through with you."

That evening a comely young lady took her place among the guests who congregated in front of Hannah's dining room fireplace. Angie's hair, arranged in a pug, sported stylish Saratoga waves around her face. She made friends with the younger set and actually took a turn or two on the dance floor. Over the next few weeks she met many residents of Vulture City: the Kirklands, the Jacksons, the Joneses, the Rances, the Osborns, and the Amaviscas.

When Gen and Angie visited Laura Copeland, the current teacher at the town's two-room schoolhouse, Laura revealed the reason for her haste in finding a replacement. She and Fred Brill, a trustee on the Vulture City School Board, were secretly engaged. They couldn't marry as long as Laura remained in the school's employ. Gen took over her teaching duties immediately.

Vulture City didn't offer much in the way of family housing, but William found a small frame house for sale on a flat below the mill. He didn't have enough cash to buy it and because of his uncertainty of continuing employment was hesitant to sign a note. There were rumors of the mine being sold to a silver baron from Colorado, who would, most likely, bring in his own personnel.

Gen talked him into signing for the loan. She reasoned that it would be less costly if the whole family lived together. "If something should happen to your job, I can make the payments on the note."

So the family came together once again to live in the little house on the flat.

With the mill's mighty stamps pounding day and night, the whole house reverberated, and conversation in a normal tone of voice was impossible. They soon got used to this constant din, and as Angie noted, when the stamps weren't in operation, the silence seemed so strange that no one could sleep.

Angie, Pattie, and Addie attended Gen's school, where most of the students were Hispanic. Gen spoke fluent Spanish, as did both parents, but the girls had picked up a lot of slang along with smatterings of the language. They often found themselves as a center of amusement when they tried to converse with their classmates.

The Kirklands owned a large general merchandise store in town, but since this store didn't stock women's apparel, Mr. Levy, the owner of a stage line, began bringing in readymade clothing and hosiery. With no outlet for selling his goods, he talked Pattie and Addie into becoming his peddling merchants. The girls did a brisk business until competition arrived. John Hyder, another stage line owner, began bringing in huge cases of expensive women's clothing, so Mr. Levy looked about for another product to sell and hit upon the idea of importing ice cream in large, well-packed freezers.

The girls, ecstatic about turning their home into an ice cream parlor, began serving this delectable treat to the town's three hundred grateful residents. Although this venture became an instant success, the days of their ice cream parlor were numbered.

Not far from the little house on the flat, a menacing glacier of yellow mill tailings crept closer and closer each day. Neighbors abandoned their homes. Then, when the peril could no longer be ignored, the family moved to higher and safer ground, and the great wedge of yellow sand swallowed Pattie and Addie's ice cream parlor, along with all the rest of the homes below the mill.

Life didn't get dull in Vulture City. No sooner did the family settle into another frame house than trouble arrived at the mill when a former adversary of William's came to work in the boiler room on a different shift. The two men had worked together at some mill in the past and for some unknown reason had become sworn enemies. After eyeing each other warily for a few days, William extended a hand of friendship. They talked over their past problems, and both agreed "to bury the hatchet."

This truce lasted until it became apparent that the man was deliberately letting the steam boilers go dry before William's shift began. William confronted the man, who immediately flew into a rage. Greatly outweighed by his oppo-

nent, William took a bruising beating. In desperation and fearing for his life, William grabbed a pocketknife that he kept above his workbench for cutting plug tobacco. Gauging the knife blade to just the right length, he plunged it into the man's belly. After a few jabs, the man felt his blood running and backed away. William was brought home with an injured back and a face so battered that he was practically unrecognizable.

The company doctor ordered that hot packs be kept on William's back around the clock, a task that all the Hutchinson women took turns performing. Meanwhile, the assailant brought attempted murder charges against William, charges that were thrown out of court on grounds of self-defense. William couldn't return to work for six weeks.

What disturbed Angie the most about all this was that her papa enjoyed a reputation as a congenial, valued employee with excellent blacksmithing skills. Perhaps, she thought, the man who had pounded Papa was jealous of his good reputation. She noted with pride a carefully folded letter of recommendation from General Rosecrans that William carried in his wallet until the day he died. Rosecrans, who had been a major general in the Civil War, a congressman, and a minister to Mexico, had employed William at his San Jose Mine in California in the early 1860s.

Dear Sir:

I remember you very well as a mining and steam engineer at our San Jose Mill, where your services were efficient and intelligent. Anybody who knows what it is to run a twenty-stamp mill with pans and settlers such as that one and keep it going, knows that much work puts an engineer on his trial.

Your engineering was a success and to your trustworthiness and good temper, I can testify with great pleasure.

Yours truly,
W. S. Rosecrans

As a testament to William's worth, he remained among the few kept on at the mill in 1887 when Horace A. W. Tabor, the silver baron from Colorado, bought the Vulture Mine. Tabor sent a tough new engineer, Cyrus Gribble, to oversee its operation, and Gribble quickly cleaned house of all slackers. Not only did Gribble appreciate William's work ethic, the two men eventu-

ally became good friends. At last the mine seemed to be heading in the right direction.

The Aborted Stage Holdup

After Laura Copeland married Fred Brill, Gen often spent weekends visiting at their ranch about three miles down the Hassayampa River from Wickenburg. An unexpected brush with tragedy occurred during one of these visits when two of the ranch cowboys, Leopold Walleth and Will Gore, noticed flames lighting up the southern sky. Upon investigation, the cowboys found the smoldering wagon and possessions of a neighbor, Barney Martin. Then, to their horror, the cowboys discovered the cremated remains of Barney and his whole family.

After notifying authorities, the cowboys returned to the site of the tragedy and gathered the remains of the Martin family for burial. What little they could find fit into a candle box. At the ranch, the Brills, the cowboys, Gen, and Pattie held a brief funeral service for the deceased and buried the box near a road leading from the ranch to the river.

Few people were deceived by the murderer's attempt to make the crime look like the work of Yavapai Indians by scalping or burning their victims. Angie noted,

It was fairly well established that "Bloody" Stanton was the fiendish murderer of the Martin family. The Martins' had just sold their ranch and were carrying the money, about five thousand dollars, with the intention of buying a place in the Valley.

Stanton, who ran a stage stop at the foot of Antelope Mountain near Wickenburg, kept evading the law until a group of men from Wickenburg took it upon themselves to go after him. They put him below ground in 1886.

Because of attacks by outlaws and Indians, Wells-Fargo had quit carrying the Vulture gold in the early 1880s. Therefore, each succeeding mine superintendent had to devise his own strategies for getting the bullion to Phoenix. Bandits watched every stage or rider who left Vulture, and although stage drivers normally didn't transport gold along with passengers, every conveyance came under suspicion. Apparently, this is what happened the morn-

ing that Sarah loaded Angie, Pattie, and Addie into Dick Huzy's new spring wagon for a trip to Phoenix.

When the wagon passed into a mesquite thicket not far from the Agua Fria Station, a shot ripped through the air. Dick Huzy whipped up his team, while Sarah pushed the girls to the floorboard and covered them with a comforter. Angie told what happened next.

The horses ran so fast that I thought the stage would either overturn or go to pieces. As we pulled into the Agua Fria Station, and it appeared no one was following us, Mother turned to Dick saying, "Tell me the truth! Are you carrying the bullion on this stage?"

Dick seemed shocked at the question. "God, no! I would never carry bullion with passengers."

Sarah wasn't convinced.

After giving a report at the station, Dick and Sarah were advised to spend the night and leave at an undetermined time in the morning in case another holdup was in the works.

On the return trip to Vulture, Sarah and the girls again stopped at the Agua Fria Station. Mrs. Elder, the proprietress, told Sarah that she had overheard two men discussing the holdup. She went on to say, "I didn't let on that I could understand Spanish. I recognized one of the men, Inocente Martinez. The other man asked Inocente why he only fired one shot at the stage and didn't stop it. Inocente answered, 'Por Dios, no! It had the teacher's mother and sisters on it. We'll try another time.'"

Mr. Gribble, the new mine superintendent, often visited at the Hutchinson home to talk about their common links to England and Ireland. He talked about his wife and nine children, who still lived in the Old Country. Angie recorded her memory of one of these discussions, humorously spiced with all the affectations of proper discourse.

"It's this way," he began, "I hardly ever get 'ome more than once a year. The devil of it is that a new baby lands after every visit. I'd like to settle down and get acquainted with my children, but the life of a mining engineer doesn't work that way."

"Why don't you bring your family with you?" Mother asked. "I've been



John Kennard Murphy (J.K.), a Maricopa County sheriff, married Genevieve in 1888.

traipsing all over the country with William, following wherever he goes. Each of our children were born in a different mining camp in Nevada.”

Mr. Gribble looked pensive as he sipped his tea. “Why don’t I? Mrs. Gribble agrees that we must consider the children’s education, health, and social standing. They could lose all that if we hawked them from pillar to post around the world.”

“I suppose you’re right, Mr. Gribble, but let me beseech you right now to be more careful of your own life in this unsettled country. I beg of you not to ever carry that bullion to Phoenix again. You have a family to think of.”

“Tush, tush, don’t worry about me, dear lady. I can pick off any robber before he takes aim. No highwayman’s gun will ever get me. No, I’m not afraid in the least.”

On March 19, 1888, Cyrus Gribble left Vulture in broad daylight with a driver and two husky guards on horseback. He carried three thousand dollars’ worth of bullion in his light wagon. Angela described him as a large man who bulked high in the buggy seat with a rifle resting across his lap. He waved to the girls as he passed their house, the last time they would see him alive.

Cyrus Gribble rode into an ambush near the Agua Fria River and didn't get off a shot. The entire party fell under a fusillade of bullets.

Various posses trailed the bandits and recovered the Vulture gold. One version of the fate of Inocente Martinez appeared on the back of a picture of a handsome, young deputy sheriff who led one of the posses. Next to the sheriff's name, John Kennard Murphy, an unknown hand inscribed the following: "Married Mary Genevieve Hutchinson, 1888. Deputy sheriff of Maricopa County who trailed the Gribble murderers to an island on the Colorado River, ten miles from the Mexican border. Inocente Martinez jailed in the Territorial Prison."