

~~Since I have been helping at the Maritime Museum~~ I have been remembering about my many trips to Santa Cruz Island. My first trip was in August of 1926 before my fifth birthday. We drove to Stearn's Wharf early in the morning and boarded Capt. Ira Eaton's "Sea Wolf" about 6 a.m. I suppose. The landing was near where the Harbor Restaurant is now. The breakwater had not been built yet so getting aboard the moving boat was quite a trick. Dad told Mother to sit on the deck behind the small forward cabin with Margaret and me, which would give us some shelter from the wind and the spray. After what seemed a very long time we reached Santa Cruz Island. (It was probably about 3 or 4 hours)

Our party, consisting of perhaps 15 people total, was landed by skiff and our provisions and gear likewise put ashore. The campsite was about 75 yards up the canyon where there were a number of tall oak trees beside the small stream there. Everyone began carrying food and camping gear up there. I wanted to help so they gave me the axe, which I dragged up as I was too small to carry it. I remember that our whole family made their bed on one canvas. We used blankets not sleeping bags. I don't remember sleeping bags until later. I do not remember much about the actual camping activity since I was so young.

We had a round-bottomed row boat belonging to Nelson Smith, Jake Hales, Joe ~~Switzer~~^{Schwartz} and Manny Solari. ~~We must have towed it over behind the "Sea Wolf".~~

I remember going out fishing in it several times. It had a outboard motor which was started by spinning the flywheel using a knob on the fly wheel. We trolled for mackerel and bonita using heavy hand lines and jigs made of bone. You had to be careful to keep the wet lines from touching a spark plug or you would get a painful shock. Dad also took me fishing from the shore in the little cove just west of Dicks. We caught sheephead using mussels for bait. Sometimes he would let me reel in the fish

while he held the rod. I still have one of these old reels, which were like a large spool with knobs for handles. I really liked catching fish at this early age. The men in the group went over to the rocks east of the harbor to get abalones at least once during our stay. I liked the abalone to eat but not the fish. There were several teenage boys along, Spaulding Birss, Whitelaw Birss, and Chesley Pinkham, who all had guns along and did a lot of shooting. Dad and his good friend, Roy Pinkham tried soaking some of their ammunition in water to reduce the amount of shooting.

On our second trip in 1927 Capt. Eaton did not come to get us on the agreed day. Mother was teaching second grade at Carpinteria Grammar School and Margaret was to start first grade so they had to get home. We all went west to Fry's where rock was being quarried for the SB Breakwater to see if Mother and Margaret could ride to Santa Barbara on a tug pulling a rock barge. The skipper of the Merret, Chapman Scott Co tug was reluctant to take them but finally agreed to, perhaps a few bucks changed hands, I remember Dad persuading me to stay with him so we could fish some more. We were fishing for sheephead at our favorite spot, when we saw the tug with the barge clear Fry's. I was a little sad to see them headed home. Their ride home was not fun as they it was windy and rough. It took a long five hours closed in the pilothouse high above the deck. They arrived after dark and were shuttled over to the Wharf by skiff, that trip was the only time Mother was ever seasick.

In due course Capt. Eaton came in the "Sea Wolf" to haul us home but two other times he delayed coming for us for several days. We were camped at Dicks another time and he was 4 or 5 days late so we loaded all six of us and our gear in the Smith-Hales boat, with the outboard power and set off for Pelican Bay where Eatons had their fishing camp. We were deeply loaded with only a few inches of freeboard but the ocean was glassy smooth. However when we were half way to Mussel Rock Max

