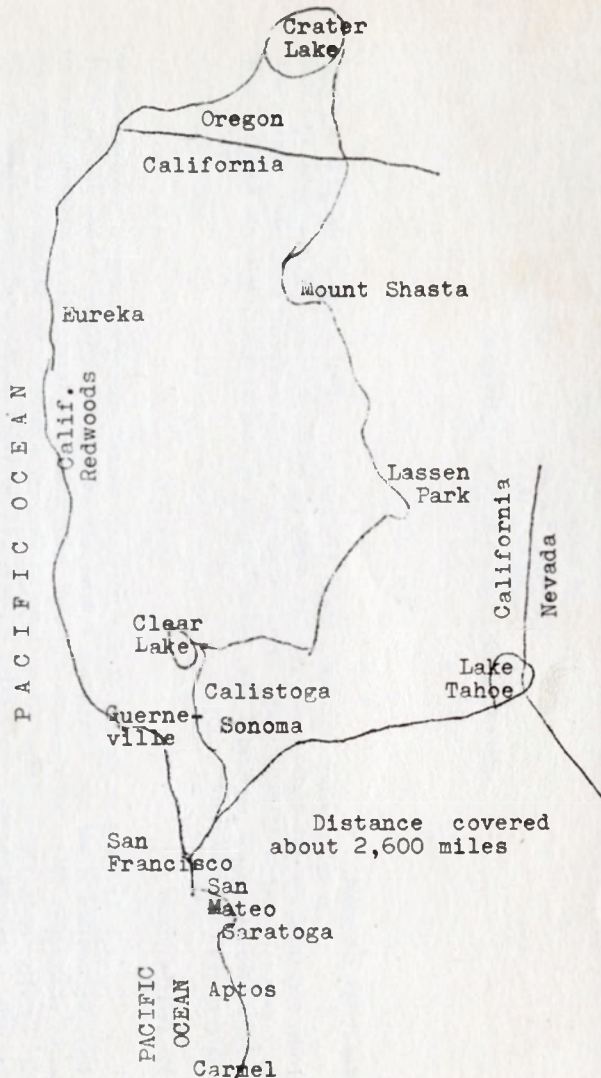




*Seasons  
Greetings*



## THE CALIFORNIA CALL

Wonderful Number

December, 1959

430 Ellsworth Court, San Mateo, California

### Wonderful Hospital

In spite of the fact that I spent 12 days of the first month of the year in a hospital, with an ulcer, the word which seems to stand out most conspicuously in memory as I look back over the year is WONDERFUL. In the hospital that word applied to doctors, nurses and friends. Now I can eat anything I like, except coffee, so long as I keep it mixed with anti-acid tablets. Isn't that wonderful?

### Wonderful Summer

The map at the end of this letter shows our journeyings during our vacation in July, but neither it nor any description I write can convey the wonders we beheld. Here are some of the high spots: an afternoon and night with friends in Guerneville, a beautiful drive up the Pacific coast, two nights at Crater Lake in Oregon, a drive to Mt. Shasta to the snow and ski lift, a visit to Shasta Dam, a drive through Lassen Volcanic National Park (where we saw boiling mud and spouting sulphur fumes), a two day rest at mineral near Lassen, a drive through scenic Feather River Canyon, on to Clear Lake for one night before we called on Julia and Jack Stone, Honolulu friends, at Calistoga; and an afternoon at historic Sonoma, a night at the famous Sonoma Mission Inn - and home to catch our breath. Then we headed south, had a night with Honolulu friends, the Nelsons, at Saratoga, drove on to Carmel to call on John Ratcliffe's parents in their wonderful new home by the sea, and spent a night at Asilomar. Then after much wandering we found our friends the Whitakers in their new home facing the Pacific at Aptos. We had a delightful visit with them, recalling Honolulu and China memories, and slept in their trailer, equipped with all the comforts of home. The next day we came home to catch another breath.

Our little Volkswagon gave us wonderful service but since it would not carry Elizabeth and her four children, she took us and them in her Ford Station Wagon, named 'Henry' to King's Beach on Lake Tahoe at an elevation of about 7,500 feet, and one of the most popular resorts in this area, where we had a delightful week, with swimming and sightseeing. We drove around the lake, about 25 miles, to Squaw Valley where preparations were being made for the Olympic Sports in February, to Fallen Leaf Lake and to Virginia City, Nevada.

### The Most Wonderful of Them All

Crater Lake is said to have been 6,000 years ago a 12,000 foot volcano which spouted so much lava, cinders and chemicals that the tremendous cavity inside the mountain caused the top to fall in, leaving a crater about six miles in diameter, and 4,000 feet deep. Since the snow fall is about 52 feet a year, and there is no place for the water to run off, the crater is filled to a depth of nearly 2,000 feet of water. This melted snow is about eight times

as pure as ordinary drinking water, and its clearness gives the bluest blue to be found anywhere. Within the lake is an island, of volcanic origin, rising to some 700 feet above the surface of the lake and containing a small crater on its top. The elevation of the surface of the lake is over 6,100 feet and the highest points of the rim rise nearly 2,000 above that. As we drove around the lake we saw many snowbanks beside the road, and there was snow near the Lodge where we spent our first night.

### Wonderful Retreat

The Congregational Churches of Northern California have a camp site of some 700 acres of wooded mountain, about 100 miles north of San Mateo and we were honored to be invited by a group of high school students of our church to go with them to this camp for a week end early in October. I had four services, including an outdoor communion service Saturday at midnight, which proved to be quite unique. The spotlight in which I was placed so blinded me that I could not see the students leave, and they went in such silence that I did not know they had gone, and so we had a silent benediction - the first one I have ever given.

At one of the meetings I showed pictures of China, and the next night Mary told of her life as a missionary wife, mother and teacher. It was a strenuous experience, but we enjoyed it, and were glad to find that we could take it. (Note, by Mary. I got a kick out of hearing the aging minister and his wife called Robbie and Mary).

### Two Wonderful Thanksgivings

Our first celebration was Nov. 21st at Harold's new home in Walnut Creek, suburban enough to have a marvelour view, with room for pasture for katie's tow horses, and a wonderful hill for sliding, -on cardboard boxes. They were in the process of moving when the old house in Lafayette caught fire and was completely wrecked. However, no one was seriously burned, they were adequately insured, and salvaged some downstairs furnishings, including china and silver. The children did not object to having new clothes for school! The Ratcliffes joined us for a very happy housewarming and Thanksgiving there. The second celebration was on Thanksgiving Day at the Ratcliffe home in San Mateo, when the four Ratcliffe children had four grandparents, a favorite aunt, Nancy Ratcliffe Everitt and Uncle Floyd to enjoy holiday food and festivity.

### Wonderful Anticipation

The fiftieth reunion of my college class will be held at Dartmouth next June and I hope to be there. Since I have never attended a commencement at Union Seminary, where I graduated in 1916, I want to take that in too. Our plans are not very definite yet but probably we shall drive one way so we hope to see many of you in the east, and some along the way. Incidentally, we are looking forward to seeing our tenth grandchild, Jan Robinson, who arrived in Summit, N. J. last spring, and we are informed that she is also wonderful.

Since this is a Christmas letter we sincerely hope that the birthday of the Babe of Bethlehem, named Wonderful, may bring joy and happiness and that 1960 may be, to all of you, Wonderful.

We also had two Thanksgiving services, in which I had a part, the first at the Methodist Church in San Mateo on Wednesday evening, the second in the Burlingame Methodist Church the next morning. The first was interracial, the second interfaith.

- - - Harold W. Robinson

POSTSCRIPT, by Mary

I began all this wonderful wandering in May, by driving to Whitman College, with a friend whose daughter was graduating, and my college roommate to celebrate the Centennial of the founding of the college, and the fiftieth reunion of my class - the first one for me. It was truly a 'wonderful' experience, the meeting with old friends at breakfasts and the Centennial banquet, the college play, a visit to the Penrose Memorial Library with all its treasures; inspiring Baccalaureate sermon and Commencement outdoors. How the college has grown and improved since I graduated fifty years ago! I was most happy to be a part of the homecoming festivities. The drive home, with snow capped mountains in the distance was a fitting climax to that bit of wandering, and an inspiration to follow the same lovely highways on our vacation in July.

I note that the wandering editor has not made mention of his pet project, a Senior Center at the Methodist Church, near our own, where some 50-70 men and women of golden years and above meet each Tuesday for discussions, crafts taught by charming young women, luncheon and games, a day of rich fellowship and fun. Already this 'baby', less than a year old, has almost out grown its crib.

Another pleasant and profitable activity now in the second year, has been a Sunday evening adult Bible study class, with Rob as leader, and members of the group taking turns at teaching. We have learned to know each other intimately, and have gained a deep respect and appreciation of the Apostle Paul and his Epistles.

This year I have been happy to serve as a representative of our Women's Fellowship on the board of the Peninsula Council of United Church Women, which is interdenominational and interracial, and has an international outreach. Surely Christian women, united for services can help to bring about that Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men for which all of us hope and pray.

Once again I ask you to join me in Tiny Tim's Christmas wish

'GOD BLESS US, EVERY ONE'