

The Low-Down on a High-Up

By Louise Hardwick

AS I came out of the lounge of Bishop's Lodge, a guest ranch in New Mexico, I saw a car bearing an Oklahoma license drive up.

Oklahoma!

After twelve years in humid Louisiana the sight of anyone from the sun-swept prairies of Oklahoma unbalances me.

A car from Oklahoma and a personable male at the wheel! With a gleeful gulp I rushed forward to embrace the driver. As he stepped out and was almost within the arms I heard the well-modulated voice of a woman call:

"Daddy!"

Looking up I saw a most attractive brown-eyed woman with two children: a little blue-eyed-golden-haired son of three years and half past, and a little brown-eyed-golden-haired daughter of two years.

Undaunted I embraced all four, patted the license plates several times, then asked, "Who are you?"

"Lowrey H. Harrell and family from Ada, Oklahoma."

"Lowrey Harrell? Oh, yes...the newly elected president of O. U. alumni!"

We settled down to exchange information regarding Oklahomans who were out here in Santa Fe: Judge and Mrs. A. P. Murrah at the La Fonda; Mr. and Mrs. J. Fred Orr at the La Posada; Dr. and Mrs. Salyer at the De Vargas; Dr. Tilley and family visiting his brother. At an adobe on Acequia Madre is this little typewritten note thumb-tacked on the entrance door: "Lynn Riggs works until noon each

day. Please do not ring unless absolutely urgent. Gracias."

About ten miles southeast is the adobe of Walter S. Campbell who homesteaded seventy acres in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Here he writes beside windows that overlook the Pecos range. When weary he walks up to the highest peak at the rear of his studio and watches the iridescent haze around the Sandia Mountains. Isabell Jones Campbell remains in Santa Fe in her studio writing and chaperoning two popular daughters.

For two weeks in July Lowrey and Vera and I bumped our heads against the turquoise skies of New Mexico and flecked our spirits with star-dust. During the days we collected suntan and freckles going to rodeos or to Indian pueblos: Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Santa Domingo, Taos, Isleta, Tesuque, Puyé ruins and Frijoles Canyon. Then one morning we all donned cowboy boots, spurs, chaps, sombrero, mounted a horse, and attempted to be vaqueros, galloping over mesas and up mountain trails and along a tiny canyon stream of clear, blue waters. What fools these Dudes be! For the next few days we suffered from sittingmusclesitis...but we won't discuss that, for only time and a Stoic's endurance will cure that trouble.

One night we decided to take off the bandana and blue-jeans, go "Easterner" in our fashionable clothes, and strut out to the formal dining room of the La

Fonda. Man-like, Lowrey was struggling to dress his son. When the most essential article of dress for male bipeds could not be found, Vera spent many minutes looking in traveling cases, wardrobe closets, under beds, behind doors, through all the chest of drawers. Finally with obvious but suppressed, well-suppressed exasperation, she asked her son:

"Jimmy, where *are* your pants?"

Jimmy, wholly unconcerned, sweetly said, "What, Mother?"

"Jimmy, where *were* your pants when you last undressed?" As we eagerly watched his face and listened for the necessary information, Jimmy looked up with a bewildered expression and questioned:

"Mother, if 'was' means 'were,' what does 'are' mean?"

Yes...we eventually arrived at the La Fonda, enjoyed a delectable luncheon of chicken with wild rice, frijoles, enchiladas, tostadas, tacos, salted piñones, piña, and hot spiced chocolate...all to the accompaniment of a Mexican orchestra, Spanish atmosphere in murals, lighting effects, and costumed "muchachas." After the finger-bowl gesture, however, little Jane, aged two years, jerked our adult imaginations into a kink when she quietly whispered, "Now, I want a hamburger, please Daddy."

During the morning we spent at the ruins of a large prehistoric Pueblo, Vera revealed a worry that she and Lowrey have silently kept between them for several years. In the museum we studiously read the expositions of cacti and grasses that the Puyé Indians used for pottery making, basketry, food, and medicinal purposes. While reading aloud to us the various uses of the Poñii or Apache plume, Vera suddenly stopped, wistfully looked at her husband, hesitantly rubbed the top of his head and murmured, "Oh, dear, do you really think *that* might help if we tried it?"

Naturally this stimulated my curiosity. I hurriedly peered at the exhibit and this is what I read: "The leaves of the Poñii are steeped and the infusion used to promote the growth of hair."

Even vacations have their limits. So the morning came for the Harrell family to leave Bishop's Lodge where they had made many friends...one of whom is an alumna who has a deep admiration for the new president of our Alumni Association. May he have great happiness and success in all phases of his year's work for the Association.



Mr. and Mrs. Lowrey Harrell view ruins of a Pueblo