

Fishing in Ojai, Camping with Bob Pierpont

I went up to the ranch & took dinner because Dad had called twice in the previous few days. Nice talk, nice dinner. I commented on the beauties of Kennedy Canyon, and he said that in his childhood Senior Canyon was his favorite. There were then lots of little pools, deep and dark but not much more than 2 or 3 square yards in area ... and in them were little trout. Kenneth taught him and his brother to fish in them using a leader, a willow switch as a pole, and salmon eggs for bait. The limit was 25 fish, and they would often catch a limit of little 6 or 7 inch fish which they would then clean, roll in yellow cornmeal, and eat – bone, heads and all.

One time when they were 9 or 10 years old Dad and Bob Pierpont went on their first camping trip up in Senior Canyon. They hadn't taken much food, I think planning to "live off the land." They had had their dinner, set up their little pup tent and were getting ready for bed when the owls started hooting, the coyotes howled, and there were too many noises – even the sounds of mice in the grass were getting louder and louder, and as Dad said, the two boys were feeling very lonely, especially Dad, who of course was from the city, Detroit. Then down the canyon they heard rattles and thumps and mechanical noises working their way up the road, which was pretty terrible. Soon Phil Pierpont appeared, driving a Model T, and bringing 5 or 6 kinds of food that he thought the boys would like- easy to cook or pre-cooked that he had gotten from the hotel kitchen. He stayed 10 or 15 minutes and then left, and the boys were alone again – but with a difference. With their stomachs full the noises weren't so loud and they felt in control of things.