

... pint of blood which brought his
total contributions to four gal-
... ating in Santa Cruz. Assisting
with the drawing is Mrs. Roger
... fou

Along The Trail

by
ken legg

What is happening to my age that makes me remember childhood events with pleasure? A dusty lane lined with barbed wire fences draped with poison ivy! The wheat and rye enclosed in neat squares called fields!

Beside the road a summer-time brook ran warm and full of polliwogs. A huge cherry tree stood on the hill beside the road, its limbs reaching above the fence. It was in this tree that I used to sit and stuff myself with juicy black cherries. And one day the limb broke and I fell on the fence and gashed my arm. The wide white scar, unsewn, but healed, is my cherry tree scar—my memento of the lane.

The posts that held the vines were rotten and entwined with poison ivy. Some old flicker had hammered here and had excavated the cavities which the Eastern blue birds had found suitable for their summer homes.

Down that dusty lane the prints of my bare feet, now erased some 30 years, leave their middle-of-the-road course and branch out to allow their maker to inspect some post hole. The prettiest bird I know, that heavenly blue thing, clung to the fence posts, flew above the fields, raised their broods of young and made my days exciting and full of wonder.

I lost blue birds for a long time after that. When next I saw them I was shaken by their

demeanor — such beautiful, quiet, unobtrusive things uttering their meek calls. I was completely taken in by their charm as one might be fascinated into misbelief by a person gifted, or developed, to an exterior of pleasantness.

But now the blue birds of my childhood, inscribed so vividly as the sweetest and most enjoyable of memories, were showing their badness and at La Purisima mission where cliff swallows lived I watched a pair of blue birds throwing the eggs out of a cliff swallow's house because the heavenly blue, sweet and unimposing birds wanted the mud house which the cliff swallow had so laboriously constructed.

But what made me think of bluebirds—I don't know bluebirds very well. I have seen them in the Carmel valley, in an old apple orchard east of Santa Cruz, in an old apple orchard at Prairie creek, and now, yesterday, in an old apple orchard in Arcata.

This may sound like bluebirds and apple orchards go together. Their appearance in the three instances was unintentional but somehow or other I just like to associate bluebirds with old apple orchards. I know that old apple trees have many holes in stubs and that these would make good nest sites and I guess I like to think of bluebirds and apple blossoms together for such things brighten my life.

One important thing I do know. Bluebirds need a special kind of niche for their survival, for bluebirds have a special way of feeding. Many insect-eating birds use the air levels as their hunting ground. The robin and the sparrows of summer hop about on the ground in search of insects, but the bluebird sits on a weed, a fence or a telephone wire, looks at the ground until he sees an item of food, then drops upon it.

This method is effective only under certain specialized conditions. The grass must be short and since cows keep grass short, and places where apple trees grow, especially abandoned apple trees, usually serve a dual purpose and cows eat grass under the trees, the combined efforts may be for bluebirds!

Yet this is not entirely right, for many western bluebirds nest in places where native trees abound. Many sections of the mountainous regions serve as bluebird-nesting grounds.

The Garden Trades or Antiques

lumbering in one door while Duncan Phye is being carted out the other.

Pound for pound, antique addicts are a shade less blood-thirsty than Marciano moving in for the kill and definitely more dangerous than lady wrestlers.

Carefully schooled at in-fighting in the brawling basements of Macy's and Gimbels, they bore into a crowded counter with elbows akimbo and can deliver a body check with the ferocity of a wounded hockey player.

Their footwork, in and out among tables laden with fine sandwich glass and priceless Oriental Lowestoft, is reminiscent of the early days of Willie Pep. Grace and balance are essential in the battle for bric-a-brac. Anything smashed must be paid for on the spot.

But even amid the ruins of the