

CHAPTER 4

SAMUEL HAMILTON'S BLUESTOCKING DAUGHTERS

John Steinbeck, in his book *Travels with Charley in Search of America*, provides a small bit of information about Samuel Hamilton's daughters.

My grandfather Samuel Hamilton, loved good writing, and he knew it too, and he had some bluestocking daughters, among them my mother.

The term "bluestocking" used by Steinbeck in this sentence was a common noun that referred to an educated, intellectual woman of the nineteenth century. Three Hamilton daughters, the oldest Lizzie, and two youngest, Euna and Olive were bluestocking, as these girls were well - educated pioneering schoolteachers in early California.

Two of these daughters, Euna and Olive Hamilton, each passed the Monterey County Teachers Exam in 1880 and 1884. These two sisters then spent a considerable number of years teaching in the one-room schoolhouses that dotted Monterey County in the late nineteenth century.

Steinbeck presented several paragraphs in *East of Eden* describing the responsibilities that the character Olive Hamilton, modeled after his mother, had as a teacher in the rural one-room schoolhouse of California.

In her school there were pupils older and bigger than she was. It required great tact to be a schoolteacher. To keep order among the big undisciplined boys without pistol and bull whip was a difficult and dangerous business. In one school in the mountains a teacher was raped by her pupils.

Olive Hamilton had not only to teach everything, but to all ages. Very few youths went past the eighth grade in those days, and what with farm duties some of them took fourteen or fifteen years to do it. Olive also had to practice a rudimentary medicine, for there were constant accidents. She sewed up knife cuts after a fight in the schoolyard. When a small barefooted boy was bitten by a rattlesnake, it was her duty to suck his toe to draw the poison out.

She taught reading to the first grade and algebra to the eight.....If a marriageable son belonged to the family where she boarded a proposal was automatic; if there was more than one claimant, vicious fights occurred over her hand. The Aguita boys, three of them, nearly clawed each other to death over Olive Hamilton. Teachers rarely lasted long in the country schools. The work was so hard and the proposals so constant that they married within a very short time.⁴

The following paragraphs provide an introduction to Samuel Hamilton's five daughters, the college educated and community-oriented Lizzie Hamilton. The career-oriented Dessie Hamilton, who did not become a schoolteacher, but became proprietor of women's clothing. Mollie Hamilton, who married a well to do man and joined her sister as a proprietor of women's clothing. Finally, the two youngest daughters, Euna and Olive Hamilton who chose careers as teachers in rural communities of Salinas and South Monterey County.

LIZETTE CARTER “LIZZIE” HAMILTON

Lizzie—I guess Lizzie must have been the oldest since she was named for her mother—I don't know much about Lizzie. She early seemed to find a shame for her family. She married young and went away and thereafter was seen only at funerals. Lizzie had a capacity for hatred and bitterness unique among the Hamiltons. She had a son, and when he grew up and married a girl Lizzie didn't like she did not speak to him for many years.¹ (East of Eden)

Samuel and Eliza Hamilton first daughter, Lizette Carter Hamilton, was born 1850 in New York. In 1852, she traveled with her mother via the Isthmus of Panama to San Jose. The earliest suggestion of Lizzie advanced education appears in an announcement in *The California Teacher* in 1871 where the name Lizzie Hamilton was among one hundred others enrolled in a session organized by the Santa Clara County Teachers Institute.²

Next, in 1876, one finds Lizzie Hamilton in the Preparatory Department at the University of the Pacific working as an assistant teacher³ The University of the Pacific, founded by Methodist ministers in 1851, in Santa Clara, was California's first chartered institution of higher education. In 1871, the campus of the University of the Pacific moved to San Jose, and the college opened its doors to women, becoming the first independent co-educational campus in California.

In 1877, Lizzie received a Bachelor of Philosophy degree from the University of the Pacific. Also, among the twenty-four graduates for that year was her cousin John E. Richards.⁴

The 1880 U. S. Federal Census recorded Lizzie Hamilton living at 392 Third Street, San Jose, California with her twenty-three-year-old cousin John E. Richards, now a lawyer, and her young brother William J. Hamilton, who was attending school.⁵ As previously mentioned John E. Richards was the son of Mary Hamilton, and therefore a first cousin to Lizzie and WJ Hamilton. John Evan Richards later became a Judge of the District Court of Appeals of the First District-San Francisco.⁶

As Lizzie Hamilton was twenty-nine years of age at the time of the 1880 census, her advanced age does not fit well with the character Lizzie portrayed by Steinbeck in *East of Eden*, described as having “married young.”

Shortly thereafter Lizzie Hamilton married Joseph P. Farrell who worked for the California Door Company in Oakland, California.⁷ The U. S. Federal Census for 1910 record JP Farrell’s parents as having immigrated from Ireland in 1849 to South America, where he was a born in 1855.⁸ When JP Farrell immigrated to the United States has yet to be determined.

A newspaper article recognizes Farrell living in Los Angeles and working with the California Door Company as early as 1891,⁹ where he held a manager position.¹⁰

A number of references suggest that JP and Lizzie Farrell remained close to the Hamilton’s - making time to attend family events. As previously mentioned, Mr. and Mrs. Farrell attended the fiftieth wedding anniversary of Samuel and Eliza Hamilton in 1899, celebrated at the Steinbeck’s family home in Paso Robles.

On May 28, 1905, family members gathered John and Olive Steinbeck’s home in Salinas for baptismal ceremonies of their three children. The parish baptismal register for St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Salinas recorded “Eliz. Farrell” and her brother “Will

Hamilton” were baptismal sponsors (godparents) for Elizabeth Steinbeck (b 1894), “Thomas Hamilton” and “Eliz. Bailey” as sponsors for John Steinbeck (b. 1902), “J. R. Hamilton” and “Mary L. Martin” as sponsors for Mary Steinbeck (b. 1905).¹¹

For many years Lizzie Farrell served as president of an organization of charitable women that maintained the Saint Elizabeth Day Nursery at 135 North Anderson Street.¹² Established in 1909, St. Elizabeth became one of the largest day nurseries in Los Angeles. Located in the industrial section of the city, this non-profit nursery serviced families of the very poor. During her years as president, Lizzie worked to organize the Saint Elizabeth Day Nursery’s famous annual “Pencil Sale Drives” which raised thousands of dollars to support the organization.¹⁴ Considering that Lizzie Farrell was president of St. Elizabeth Day Nursery slightly contradicts Steinbeck’s description of the character Lizzie in *East of Eden* as a hateful and bitter woman. Lizette C. Farrell died April 18, 1923, in Los Angeles, California.¹⁵ Her husband Joseph P. Farrell had passed away five years earlier on November 22, 1918, in Los Angeles.¹⁶

RICHARD CULLEN FARRELL

Mr. and Mrs. JP Farrell had one son named Richard Cullen Farrell born November 16, 1885.¹⁶ A Marin County newspaper mentioned that Mr. and Mrs. JP Farrell visited Mr. and Mrs. WJ Martin (i.e. Mollie Hamilton and her husband WJ Martin) in November 1904.¹⁷ The purpose of their visit may have been the opportunity to visit the University of California Berkeley campus, where the following year their son enrolled as a freshman. In 1908, during his junior year, one finds Richard C. Farrell a member of the Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity.¹⁸

RC Farrell graduated from UC Berkeley in 1909 with a degree in architecture and engineering. Hired by Tourtellotte and Hummel, an American architectural firm based in Boise, Idaho, he worked for the company for five years, becoming a well-respected architect. RC Farrell's efforts while working for the firm included the architecture for the Idaho state capitol.¹⁹

Several years later RC Farrell returned to Los Angeles, California. In 1913, he married Margaret C. Taylor. The couple had two children, a daughter Mary Virginia Farrell, born June 8, 1914,²⁰ and Richard Taylor Farrell, born October 26, 1916.²¹

RC Farrell's WWI registration card, completed in 1917 presents his address as 1104 East Ocean, Long Beach, California, and his nearest relative as Mrs. Olive Steinbeck, 130 Central Avenue, Salinas, California.²² That his mother and father were still living at the time and living a short distance away, suggests that he and his parents may have had a falling out.

The 1920 census recorded RC Farrell's family as living at 661 Orizaba Avenue, Long Beach, California, with Mary age 5 and Richard, age 3.²³ The 1930 census recorded the family living at 731 North Marguerita Avenue, Alhambra, California.²⁴ RC Farrell's WWII registration card, completed in 1942, also presents his address as 731 North Marguerita Avenue, Alhambra, California.²⁵ RC Farrell passed away August 19, 1947, in Los Angeles, California.²⁶

As an architect living in Los Angeles County, several structures designed by Richard Cullen Farrell remain standing to this day. These buildings included the Villa Park School, scheduled for demolition on the campus of Villa Park Elementary School in the Orange Unified School District, and the Alhambra Fire Station #4.

ADELIA “DESSIE” HAMILTON

Dessie was studying dressmaking. (East of Eden)

Dessie Hamilton and her younger sister Mollie Hamilton did not choose the career path of schoolteachers. Instead, these Hamilton daughters became dressmakers and milliners (i.e. makers of ladies hats). For a time, the two sisters owned and operated a small dress shop on Main Street in Salinas, California.

According to the San Jose City Directory for 1876, a Miss Dessie H. Hamilton was a student at the Normal School, living at the corner of Ninth and San Salvador. Thus, there exists the possibility that Dessie Hamilton, for a time entertained the idea of becoming a schoolteacher, attending the California State Normal School in San Jose.¹

Found to date, the first advertisement for Dessie Hamilton that identified her occupation appeared in the *Business Directory of the Pacific States and Territories* for 1878, with her listed as a dressmaker in Salinas.² Next, in the U. S. Federal Census Record for 1880, one finds both Dessie and Mollie Hamilton, listed as dressmakers.³

Other publications that reference Dessie Hamilton as a dressmaker include *McKenney's Pacific Coast Directory* for the year 1883-1884,⁴ and *California State Gazetteer and Business Directory, R.L. Polk & Co.*, for the years 1888, 1890 and 1893.⁵ The *Southern Pacific Coast Directory* 1888-1889, listed Dessie Hamilton as a dressmaker whose store was on Main Street in Salinas.⁶ Also in 1888, Samuel Hamilton divested part of his property, Hamilton's Corner, on Main and Central, to the township of Salinas.

According to the *San Jose City Directory* of 1892, the sisters Dessie Hamilton and Mollie Martin, owned and operated the dressmaking store “Hamilton & Martin” at the

intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue.⁷ During this year, Joseph R. Hamilton the youngest sibling was living with his elder sister, likely attending Salinas High School.⁸

In the *California State Gazetteer and Business Directory, R. L. Polk & Co., 1893*, the business was listed as Hamilton & Martin (D Hamilton, ML Martin), millinery.⁹ In 1893, the *Salinas Weekly Index* reported the “Hamilton building” at Main Street and Central Avenue was being prepared for a hardware store, which suggests the sisters may have closed the business and Dessie retired at thirty-four.¹⁰ The possibility that the dress shop was closed in 1893 finds further support with the lack of a directory listing for Dessie Hamilton as a dressmaker in Salinas anytime thereafter.

Dessie Hamilton never married, living as a single woman in Salinas for most of her life. She was a popular and active member of Salinas Chapter of the Masonic Order of the Eastern Star.¹¹ In 1900, she was living with John and Olive Steinbeck family at their home on Central Avenue.¹² In April 1907, Dessie Hamilton at forty-eight years of age passed away on the Hamilton Ranch. The obituary that appeared in the *King City Rustler* stated: *She succumbed to an acute attack of Bright’s disease, being ill only a few days...The remains were taken to the home of her sister, Mrs. J. E. Steinbeck of Salinas Monday where short funeral services were held.*¹³

MARY LOUISE “MOLLIE” HAMILTON

Mollie, pretty Mollie, would obviously marry some well-to-do man. (East of Eden)

Beyond her working as a dressmaker with her older sister Dessie, little information has been written about Mary Louise “Mollie” Hamilton. Steinbeck provided a hint of what became of Mollie Hamilton in his book *East of Eden*, suggesting that she married a wealthy man.

Mollie Hamilton married William Jefferson Martin on January 6, 1886, in Monterey, California.¹ Born 1861, William J. Martin was one of six sons born to Daniel C. Martin, an early California pioneer.² In 1864, Daniel Martin took a homesteaded claim in Carmel Valley, in areas near what is now Garland Park and Corral de Tierra³ and ranched cattle.⁴

Over the years, DC Martin’s boys followed his lead into cattle ranching. A short article in the *Marin County Tocsin*, in 1908, described WJ Martin as a prominent cattle rancher of Monterey County who owned over seven thousand acres of the finest grazing lands in the region.⁵

*The ranch that was secured by their father in an early day and was devoted to stock raising has greatly increased in value and productiveness with the passing of time and now ranks among the valuable places in the county. A. W. and W. J. have the management of it and are making a good success of their operations.*⁶

William. J. Martin began his professional career at fourteen with the Western Union Telegraph Company holding positions first in Salinas, then Stockton, San Jose, and Sacramento. When WJ Martin married Mary Hamilton, he was working at the

Western Union Telegraph Company office in Sacramento. During the fall of that year, he was promoted to chief operating officer of the San Francisco office.⁷

In 1898, Martin became the manager of the San Francisco newspaper, *The San Francisco Call*.⁸ An article that appeared in the *Call*, in May 1898, mentions a Mrs. WJ Martin as a member of the Order of the Eastern Star.⁹ This mention suggests that like several of her sisters, Mollie Hamilton was a member of the Freemason society.

The U. S. Federal Census for 1900 recorded the home of WJ and Mollie Martin as 100 Haight Street in San Francisco California. In 1902, WJ and Mollie Martin moved to Sausalito, a small community North of San Francisco where he served as town trustee,^{10 a} position he held for the next five years.¹¹ After he retired as trustee, the Martin's continued to live in Sausalito, where they owned a lovely home on Bulkley Avenue. The couple traveled to Monterey County on a frequent basis to visit family, friends, and several ranches WJ Martin owned and managed. By this time in his life, WJ Martin had become a well-respected man, known throughout the State of California.¹²

Mollie Hamilton remained associated with her sister in the Salinas dress shop well into her marriage to the “well-to-do” WJ Martin. Numerous accounts in the local newspapers of Sausalito and Salinas tell of the sisters, Dessie and Mollie, visiting one another frequently.

Mollie Hamilton Martin has often been credited for giving her nephew, John Steinbeck the book by Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* for his ninth birthday. This birthday of Steinbeck's was in 1911, at which time Mollie Martin would have been fifty years of age. In relation to the influence this book had on his youth, John Steinbeck

commented: *“The Bible and Shakespeare belonged to everyone, this was mine—secretly mine.” The Arthurian tales became a passion he never outgrew.*¹³

In 1913, WJ and Mary Hamilton Martin left Sausalito to live in Pacific Grove where they owned a cottage at Second Avenue and Ocean Boulevard.¹⁴ The Martin residence referenced in the newspaper article was likely the home of her mother, Eliza Hamilton. In 1914, Eliza Hamilton left the family ranch near King City and moved to a small cottage located at 222 Central Avenue, Pacific Grove.

On August 11, 1915, Mollie Hamilton Martin, at age 54, passed away after a prolonged illness at John and Olive Steinbeck’s house in Salinas. Mollie had spent the last several months of her life being cared for at the Steinbeck home.¹⁵ Funeral services were held in Salinas.¹⁶

Several years following Mollie Hamilton Martin’s death, William Martin returned to Salinas as an assemblyman of the state legislature, serving as an elected representative of Monterey County. In May 1920 he was elected postmaster of Salinas.¹⁷ The 1920 U.S. Federal Census recorded William J. Martin, age 59 was living with John and Olive Steinbeck, John Jr. 17 years old, Mary, 14 years old.¹⁸

EUNICE “EUNA” HAMILTON

Una the oldest, a thoughtful, studious, dark girl....

Una was married to a stranger and gone away. (East of Eden)

A complete review of the *Annual Reports of the Condition of Common Schools in the County of Monterey, State of California*, from July 1, 1879 - June 30, 1892, serve as a primary source that documents the teaching career of Eunice B. Hamilton.² These Annual Reports, along with a scattering of other references, allow one to identify the schools in Monterey County where Euna Hamilton served as a teacher.

The Annual Reports record Euna Hamilton, at age eighteen, as having passed the County Board exam on June 18, 1880, with a percentage score of eighty-two, at which time she was granted a Monterey County Teachers Certificate. Also in the 1880 U. S. Federal Census Record for Monterey County, Euna Hamilton, age eighteen, was listed as a schoolteacher.¹

For her first two school years in the profession (July 1, 1880-June 30, 1882), Euna Hamilton taught at the Pfeiffer Big Sur one-room schoolhouse. The following school year (July 1, 1882-June 30, 1883), she was a teacher at the Elkhorn schoolhouse in Castroville, California. For the school year (July 1, 1883-June 30, 1884), Euna taught at the Peachtree schoolhouse in the Peachtree Valley, located fifteen miles east of King City.

In 1883, one finds the name of Euna B. Hamilton of Salinas among Middle Class of students attending California State Normal School of San Jose.³ The Middle Class of a normal school was composed of those students who were to form the graduating class of

the next term. This listing suggests that Euna continued her education by pursuing a degree from the California State Normal School in 1884.

During the next four school years (July 1, 1884-June 30, 1888), Euna Hamilton was a teacher at the Salinas public schools in Salinas, California. The following sources corroborate her position as a teacher in Salinas during these years and provide further insight into the Hamilton family.

A mention in the *Hollister Free Lance* for the week of December 17, 1886, suggests the Hamilton's had been participants of the agricultural industry as tenant farmers of the Salinas Valley. *Miss Euna Hamilton, a teacher in the Salinas schools, along with one of her brothers, were leasing a portion of the San Lorenzo ranch, near Kings City, and preparing to put in a crop.*⁴

A short article that appeared in *The Pacific Educational Journal* of 1887, reporting how the teachers of Salinas were spending their vacations stated: “*Miss Una Hamilton, with her sister, Mrs. WJ Martin, in San Francisco.*”⁵ And in the *Salinas Weekly Index* during the spring of 1888, Euna Hamilton was mentioned as a fifth-grade teacher in Salinas.⁶

During the school year (July 1, 1888-June 30, 1889), Euna was teaching at the Bernabe schoolhouse in King City.⁷ For the school year (July 1, 1888-June 30, 1889), Euna was a teacher at the San Lucas schoolhouse, located 10 miles south of King City. During the winter of 1888, one finds Euna Hamilton serving as Secretary for the recently organized *San Lucas Lyceum* and later that month performing "*La Cica*" for the Lyceum.^{8,9} It is of interest to note the Euna's return to teaching school in South

Monterey County follows the year in which her father relocated to the Hamilton Ranch near San Ardo.

For the next two school years (July 1, 1889-June 30, 1891), Euna Hamilton was a teacher at the Warm Springs school at Paraiso Springs.^{10, 11} The next school year (July 1, 1891-June 30, 1892), she taught at the Deep Well schoolhouse in Chualar.^{12, 13}

The outline provided above of Eunice B. Hamilton's teaching career suggests she taught for twelve years and at nine different schoolhouses in Monterey County.

Euna Hamilton married MacFarlane Anderson in Colville, Washington. MacFarlane Anderson was the recent author of the book *Anderson's Photo-mechanical Processes and Guide to Color Work*, published by the E. & H. T. Anthony Company in 1896. The couple was living on South Avenue, Northport, Washington when Euna suddenly died at her home of an overdose of aconite poisoning on March 26, 1898.¹⁴

A ceremony was directed by Reverend Dr. T. C. Armstrong at the Presbyterian Church in Northport, Washington.¹⁵ Euna Hamilton Anderson's body was then returned to Salinas, where services were conducted by Rev. E. B. Hatch at the residence of the deceased's brother WJ Hamilton and burial at the Garden of Memories in Salinas California.



Corral De Tierra Schoolhouse (ca. 1890)

Courtesy of the Salinas Public Library



Warm Springs School, the first schoolhouse at Paraiso Springs, built in the 1880's.
From "Revised Evaluation of Historical Resources at The Paraiso Springs at 34358
Paraiso Springs Road in The County of Monterey"

OLIVE “OLLIE” HAMILTON

Steinbeck’s mother, Olive Blanche Hamilton was born December 11, 1866. She graduated from Salinas high school in 1883, one of thirteen girls to graduate that year. In *East of Eden*, Steinbeck wrote his character Olive Hamilton had left the family home in King City at fifteen, boarding with a family in Salinas, in order to attend a secondary school. According to Samuel Hamilton’s timeline, Olive had no reason to leave the home in King City to board with a family in Salinas, as her family still lived in Salinas. Such verification with primary references calls into question the historical validity of some of the comments presented by Steinbeck in his book, *East of Eden*.

The Annual Reports of the Condition of Common Schools in the County of Monterey State of California (July 1, 1884 - June 30, 1885) record Olive B. Hamilton, at eighteen, having passed the County Board exam on December 4, 1884, with a percentage score of eighty-two, was granted a Monterey County Teachers Certificate.

By reviewing the *Annual Reports of the Condition of Common Schools in the County of Monterey State of California* (July 1, 1884 - June 30, 1891) one is able to confirm the schools where Olive Hamilton taught during this period.

In *East of Eden*, Steinbeck states that Olive Hamilton was a schoolteacher at the districts of Pleyto, Peachtree and Big Sur. A review of the annual reports finds she never taught at Pleyto nor the Peachtree schoolhouses. During her first two school year (1884-1886), Olive B. Hamilton taught at the Bernabe School in San Antonio, California. As well, the Pacific School Journal of April 1886 reported that “*Miss Ollie Hamilton*” had commenced her third term of school in the San Barnabe district.¹

During the 1886-1887 school year, Olive Hamilton taught at the Mal Paso School in Monterey, California. The schoolhouse was presumably located near Mal Paso Creek, five miles south of Carmel. Thus, as mentioned by Steinbeck in *East of Eden*, Olive did spend one year as a teacher in a schoolhouse near Big Sur.

For the next several school years (1887-1888 and 1888-1889), Olive Hamilton taught at the Fair View School in Gonzales, California.²

It is of interest note that, in June of 1888, Olive Hamilton served as maid of honor in the wedding of Carrie E. Miller to John M. Striening.³ The service, conducted by Reverend J. Simonds, rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, was held at the home of the bride's parents, in Salinas City. Several years later, Mrs. Carrie Striening became the first librarian of the Salinas Public Library. During her time as the librarian, Mrs. Striening was an active member of two of the community women's organizations, the Salinas Civic Club and the Salinas Wanderers Study Club.

Olive Hamilton's final term as a teacher was during the school year, 1889-1890, when she taught at the King City schoolhouse in King City, California.

On December 22, 1890, JE Steinbeck and WJ Hamilton registered their arrival at the Lick House hotel on Montgomery at Sutter.⁴ According to *Salinas Weekly Index*, John Ernst Steinbeck and Olive Hamilton, both of King City, were married on December 24, 1890 in Oakland, California.⁵ The *Salinas Weekly Index* announcement differs slightly from the Steinbeck's family bible, which recorded that the marriage took place in San Francisco.

After her marriage, Olive Hamilton Steinbeck retired from her career as a schoolteacher in Monterey County and devoted herself to her family and civic efforts

associated with Salinas, California. Olive Hamilton's marriage to John E. Steinbeck may have resulted in her becoming a member of the Episcopalian Church.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church of Kings City held its first services in June 1888.⁶ The church registry, dated March 10, 1889, notes John Ernst Steinbeck Sr. among the parishioners who donated to the construction of St. Mark's Church.⁷

Olive Hamilton Steinbeck was not the only family member to welcome the denomination, as her brother Will Hamilton joined the St. Mark's Episcopal church as early as 1894. Two years later, on April 25, 1896, William J. Hamilton and Adela H. Winkler were married at St. Marks Church, King City.⁸

John and Olive Steinbeck were members of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Salinas, where the young John Steinbeck attended services and Sunday school regularly.

On April 14, 1892, their first child Olive Esther Steinbeck was born in King City. Later that year, in November 1892, the family moved from King City, when Steinbeck had been transferred to manage a flour-mill owned by the Sperry Milling Company in Paso Robles, California.^{9, 10} On May 25, 1894 their second daughter Elizabeth Steinbeck was born in Paso Robles.

At some point after her parents celebrated their fiftieth anniversary at their home Paso Robles in October 1899 and before February 1900, JE Steinbeck was transferred to the Sperry Milling Company's flour-mill in Salinas.

It has never been exactly clear when the Steinbeck family moved into the two story Victorian house at 132 Central Avenue. Built in 1897, the home was first purchased by John Ernst Steinbeck's parents, Johann Adolph and Almira Steinbeck from

J. J. Conner on March 28, 1901. John and Olive Steinbeck later purchased the house from his parents in 1908.

John Steinbeck, their only son, was born in Salinas on February 27, 1902. The following year, in 1903 John and Olive Steinbeck purchased two lots on Eleventh Street in Pacific Grove, California. Upon one lot the family built a small three-room summer cottage and on the other lot was planted a garden.

On January 9, 1905, their youngest child, Mary Steinbeck was born in Salinas, California. Later that year Olive Steinbeck became a charter member of a recently formed local progressive women's civic organization named the Salinas Wanderers Study Club.

Fast forward fifteen years later to 1920, Mrs. Steinbeck's two eldest daughters have graduated from Mills College in Oakland, Esther in 1914 and Elizabeth in 1916, John was enrolled at Stanford University and Mary was attending Salinas High School.

In the fall of 1920, one finds Olive Steinbeck serving as secretary for the Monterey County Republican Central Committee. In November of 1920, Mrs. Steinbeck provided the following comment to the *San Jose Mercury Herald* regarding the upcoming National and State elections. *"Mrs. Olive Steinbeck, secretary county central communities, says the women of Monterey county are taking active and intelligent interest in politics this year. They approach the political questions with open minds and have been doing considerable thinking. I am certain that the majority of the women in this county are for Harding and Coolidge on national issues and for Shortridge and Free on the state and national issues."*¹¹

In 1920, 68% of Monterey County voted for the Republican candidate for president, 25% voted Democrat and 7% voted for a candidate outside these two parties other.

Passed by Congress June 4, 1919, and ratified on August 18, 1920, the 19th amendment of the U. S. Constitution granted all women who were American citizens over the age of twenty-one the right to vote. An article that appeared in *The Journal of San Diego History*, provided the following description of women of that county who voted in this presidential election.

*The profile of the women voters of 1920 as a class which has emerged from this study is that they were women of English extraction. They were married, with an average age of approximately 35 years, and they saw as their career the all-embracing occupation of housewife and mother even though their families were small. They belonged to a local Protestant church, they occasionally joined a civic or social group, and they were Republicans who identified politically with their husbands.*¹²

Several scholars have recognized the Steinbeck family as Republicans. The three daughters, Esther, Elizabeth and Mary apparently continued to vote Republican throughout their life, which resulted in arguments with their brother, who had been a Democrat since the 1920s.¹³

In March 1933, Olive Steinbeck suffered a severe stroke. Throughout her stay at the Salinas Valley Hospital, her son remained either by her side or just outside her door. When she was released from the hospital in June 1933, John and Carol Henning Steinbeck took up residence in the family home to care for his parents. Olive Steinbeck died in February 1934, at the family home in Salinas with her son sitting at her side.¹⁴ His

father, who has served as the County Treasurer of Monterey County for eleven years,
passed away on May 1935, a little over one year after his wife's death.