

Jessamyn West comments on Star's article about her

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(Editor's note: An article about author Jessamyn West and her former home in Yorba Linda was published in the Jan. 6 edition of the Star. A copy of this issue was mailed to West, who wrote the following reply.)

Thank you for sending the "Star" with the picture of the house in which I lived through college days and from which I was married. It's the only picture I have of it - and it hasn't changed much in 50 plus years.

I did solicit advertising for the "Star" when i worked for it in 1923-24 - but my important job, I thought, was writing the "Social Notes." So, the first writing for which I was paid was done for the Yorba Linda Star.

The house in which I lived longer and which my father built, stood (still stands, I think) at the east edge of the tract. My father, Eldo R. West (Superintendent of the Yorba Linda Water Company for some years) was no carpenter and that two-story house on a hilltop had to be propped on the west side by planks when the Santa Ana blew. Beds on casters on the second floor left tracks on the uncarpeted floors as they rolled forward and backward as the Santa Ana gusts hit the house. On occasion of very bad blows, the children were put to bed in the weir box - which as yet was just a cement box with no water flowing into it. In this house Merle was born.

Another book of mine which has a Yorba Linda background is "Cress Delahanty." A number of the short stories are also Yorba Linda based: "Love, Death and the Ladies Drill Team," and "The Mysteries of Life in an Orderly Manner."

I have a new novel coming out this fall - "This Life I Really Lived," and after that - a memoir, "Double Discovery."

I was happy to read the names of Viola Bemis and Ruth McDonald. At my age, those who were young when I was have for the most departed this earth.

Sincerely and with best wishes,

Jessamyn West