

July, 1943

The summer months at Embudo have been busy as usual. With the increase of hospital admissions which we have been noting from year to year, we have had a decrease in hospital staff as all hospitals have to expect at this time. This has made it very difficult for our nurses. We are glad that the summer months will soon be over along with vacations so that we can settle down to the usual routine again.

Our brood of six little pigs is coming along fine. Our present problem now is to secure food for them. It is impossible to buy corn or other grain from our wholesaler, so we are trying to make arrangements with local farmers to buy their corn when it is ripe. The six little pigs we have now are about two months old and have grown beautifully but it will take some feeding to get them to the right size for our table. It is interesting to know that the mother of the pigs was brought to us in payment of an operation.

The people in New Mexico are feeling the effects of the war more every day as their sons go from home to the far away places. Our church has a membership of about 100 and to date 23 boys have left for the service. One is in England, another in Africa, one in Newfoundland, one in Mexico and several on the seas in the Atlantic and South Pacific. A number of boys are still in training in camps in this country, and the son of our laundress is at Western Reserve taking a pilot's basic training course. This war is certainly enlarging their horizons and we are hoping that they will also meet Christian people who will show them the good things in life when they are away from home among strangers.

Our minister is now on vacation this month. In the meantime Rev. Atencio, a retired Presbyterian minister who lives in Dixon, is taking over the work of the church. Most of the young people are away working as migrants in Colorado or in war work so that the Christian Endeavor is not as large as normally, but those who are here are very faithful and it is playing a part in the life of the community.

Several weeks ago we had a little four year old girl in with gastro-enteritis. She is the only child and her father works in a saw mill in the mountains about 25 miles away, so when it came time to pay her bill we asked him to bring a flag pole (a tall aspen tree) and some lumber. He was very glad to do this so we now have a pole and hope to be able to have our flag raised and lowered every day. We are hoping to have the services of the American Legion in Dixon for our initial flag raising and believe that they will be glad to take part in this service. This will be made possible not only by Mr. Rodriguez, who brought the pole, but also by our loyal friends who have sent us cash gifts which will help in purchasing the flag, cement, pulley, rope and paint that is necessary.

August, 1943

Things in the hospital are about as usual. Last month was a red letter month as we had 12 babies in our nursery at the same time for about a week. One would go home, another would come in to keep our number up, then one day two went home but three more were admitted so our even dozen was maintained. We keep our mothers in the hospital ten days after confinement as a rule and they usually are ready to get up and begin doing things by that time. Last Sunday we were presented with twins, a little boy and a girl each weighing 4 pounds 4 ounces, so they are occupying our incubator now. We have six other babies in today and no telling when more will arrive. A week ago Thursday a cesarian section was performed on a young mother from Taos and she is certainly proud to have a little daughter. Last year her first cesarian was performed when she was presented with a son.

There seems to be a lot of diarrhea among our babies in this section now and our children's ward has seven children all in various stages of recovery. One little girl is very sick. She is two years old and was admitted with a fever of 105. Her fever has remained up two days but she is really beginning to show a little improvement today, so we are all relieved and happy. So far we have not lost any little ones who have been brought to us this year due to the marvelous results obtained by some of the sulfa drugs, but one cannot be sure when things will not turn out so nicely. A good many babies throughout this whole section have died because of "summer complaint". However, the parents are learning to take their children to the doctor earlier and I do not believe the infant mortality is as high now as it was ten years ago.

Yesterday one of our three sows presented the hospital with four more little pigs. She apparently stepped on one leaving us three little ones that are very lively and nice. They help out in our kitchen department early in 1944.

The work of the church is going on in spite of our minister's vacation. School is to open next Monday and Rev. Ruybalid will no doubt be back with us before long. Monday seems a very unauspicious day for the schools in Dixon to open because it is our saints day -- "Santa Rosa Day". That is when everybody from near and far gathers in their best bib and tucker and goes to early mass in the morning, then spends the rest of the day milling around town purchasing what he can buy from the stores and entering the two dance halls in town for a big time. Liquor is likely to flow freely and before the day is over we often have an accident case brought into the hospital. It is a day we are always glad to have back of us but one that means much to each little Spanish village throughout this section. I do not know how each village chose its saint, but the fiestas in the various towns are usually held during the summer months and each town has a different date

so friends from nearby towns can join in the festivity if they are able.

Our farmers in this section are doing very well because of the high prices they are receiving for their produce. It is the first time in years that they have not had to take their fruit to nearby villages or up to Colorado and peddle it or trade for produce that they can use at home. This year they have been getting from \$2.50 to \$4.00 for peaches, \$3.50 for pears, \$3.00 for grapes and plums and we do not know what the apples will be. Some of our local farmers were even able to sell sweet corn for \$.50 a dozen, but that did not last long and now we can get it for \$.20 a dozen.

We feel very fortunate that our victory garden has been a success as it has cut down considerably on our provisions account. Now we are getting good melons, cucumbers, beets, carrots, soy beans, tomatoes and onions. Our lettuce is gone and the corn is only fit for the pig though they enjoy it very much.

Sincerely yours,

Sarah Bowen, M.D.

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