Here is a country home located in the hills near Lompoc.

Lompoc is situated in a fertile valley of Santa Barbara County, California. It's 10 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean, and the trading area, which is about 40 miles long and 20 miles wide, was once a part of an old Spanish land grant. The city, which is shown below, was founded in 1874, and had a population of 3387 in 1940. Since the war, many military installations have been established nearby, and the population is now approximately 7000.

Oscar Cook was born in Bartlesville, Oklahoma August 22, 1922. His father moved the family to Illinois in 1940 where he worked in developing oil fields. Oscar worked at a service station until he enlisted in the Army in Nov. 1942. After basic training in Louisiana he began tank maintenance training at Ft. Knox and then 11th Armored Division desert tank warfare maneuvers near Needles, CA.
Dear Folks--

Here I am in Lompoc! It's a town of about 7000 population and is the nearest of any to the post where I am now stationed. I haven't had time to find out all about the city and the valley in which it is located, but the Lompoc Chamber of Commerce has put together this folder for the fellows to send home. It will give you and idea what the country is like, what the people here do for a living. It will also let you know what the little city is doing in the war program, what it has to offer the servicemen stationed in the area.

The Greatest Generation
One of the many servicemen stationed at Camp Cooke during the course of WWII was Oscar Cook who returned to Lompoc after the War. During nine months of training with the 11th Armored Division from Feb. to September, 1944 he must have found something he liked about the town!
but now--

Acres devoted in peace time to flower raising are now producing food crops. Thousands of acres of grain, beans and vegetables are in steady production. Lompoc carrots, cauliflower, cabbage, celery and most other vegetables are sold in the markets of New York, Chicago, Los Angeles every day. Until recently, Lompoc also produced 90% of the nation's mustard. Orchards of cherry, apricot and walnut help supply metropolitan centers.

The base chaplains were known to have brought soldiers by the busload to attend evening services at the local churches. Great singspirations were held, followed by refreshments including cookies baked by the ladies of the churches. It was just one more "touch of home" provided by the folks in Lompoc for lonely servicemen.
Before the war--

Before the war, one of Lompoc’s principal industries was raising flowers commercially for seed. More than 2500 acres of the valley floor was carpeted with hundreds of different varieties of blooming flowers. Whole fields of sweet peas, marigolds, larkspur, stock, poppies, petunias, zinnias, delphiniums and other varieties totaled more than 500 produced seed which normally is retailed around the globe.

Lompoc’s mild climate, 18-inch average rainfall, and rich soil, make the valley uniquely suitable for flower growing. For here, flowers usually grown under glass, can be cultivated in open fields.

Now, only enough acreage is planted to keep the strains alive. But at war’s end, the fields will bloom again.

The 11th Armored Division then began intense training at Camp Cook in Feb. 1944. A buddy invited Oscar to attend the CMA church on North 1 St. thinking to show him a girl he had met. The girl was there with her fiance, and the buddy was greatly disappointed. However, Oscar met Pat Stillman there that evening in March, 1944!
the future--

California has been spoiled plenty for tooting its own horn. This part of it—Lompoc—has these things to offer: beauty, in terms of rolling hills, flower covered valleys, rugged sea coast; pleasure, in terms of lovely parks, athletic facilities, fishing and hunting, a modicum of night life; a future, in terms of a rapidly expanding population, sound agriculture, sound industry; a good place in which to live, in terms of good neighbors, the honesty of an honest rural community; weather, in terms of—well, everything that can be said about California weather has already been said. Easter lilies grow here in open fields.

Oscar Cook was kept busy training at Camp Cooke during the spring and summer of 1944. At first the 11th Armored Div. was preparing for the invasion of Japan, and then Gen. Patton wanted them for the 3rd Army on its "drive to Berlin by Christmas". Pat Stillman turned 18 and before summer was over, August 9, 1944, Oscar and Pat were engaged.
The beef cattle industry started in Lompoc by the Spaniards still thrives. Surrounding hills are ideal range land.

and agriculture--

The valley’s oldest industry is animal raising, it having been a constant factor in the area’s economy since the days of the Spanish Dons. Now, in addition to beef, the valley produces poultry, sheep and wool, and dairy products and adds a cool $1,000,000 to the valley’s annual income.

As much addicted to fine flesh as their Spanish predecessors, Lompoc ranchers breed stock horses for their ranges, fast thoroughbreds for the race tracks.

Patricia (Pat) Stillman was born in Cortland, N.Y. June 25, 1926. She was a granddaughter of Lee Forest Stillman who was coaxed by his uncle, George Roberts, secretary of the Lompoc Valley Land Co., to come to Lompoc. The inheritance of 30 acres along South L Street made the move to Lompoc worthwhile. (See Lompoc Legacy No. 22)
A Special Note--

For whoever receives this little booklet, we of Lompoc have a special message. Because some serviceman stationed near our city has sent the booklet to you, we assume that you have special interest in him. We want to say merely that we are doing our best to make his stay as happy as possible. Naturally, the time he spends in our city is small and plays only a minute part in the great job he has undertaken. But we believe small things are important now as never before.

In any event, we thought you'd like to know, and that he would like you to know, something of the character of the country in which he is now doing his job. So we published this folder about Lompoc, the place we like to call "The Valley Beautiful."

Lompoc Valley
Chamber of Commerce

Continued in Legacy No. 94

"The Valley Beautiful" booklet goes on to tell more about Lompoc's industries and tells of the Mission (dedicated Dec. 7, 1941 at the outset of the War) and other recreational activity offerings.

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