



The Author
and Illustrator:

Betty Boulton Herndon was born in Caldwell, Idaho. Her life on a dairy farm gave her a love for birds and animals when she was a child, and this interest has been a constant source of pleasure to her in the mining camps where she has lived since her marriage to Thomas Ralph Herndon, a metallurgical engineer.

Most of her married life has been spent in San Francisco del Oro, Chihuahua, Mexico. In the easy pace of Mexican living she found leisure time to do writing and sketching, and she has spent many hours study-

ing the wildlife in the hills surrounding the mining camp.

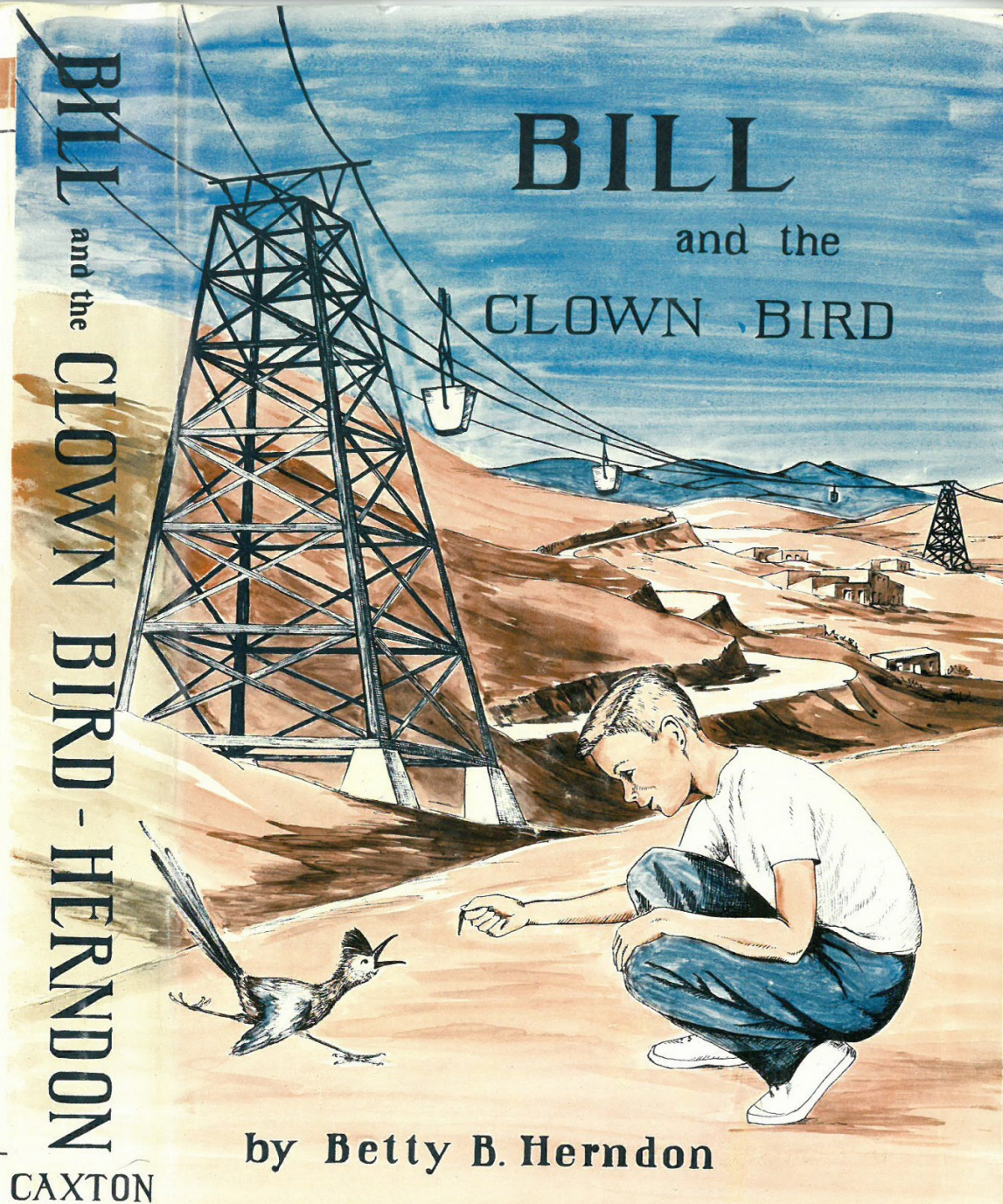
She took up pen and ink sketching and then pastels. More recently she has developed an intense desire to learn water colors which she feels are the natural media for capturing the illusive tones of desert scenery.

Before her marriage she taught English and Spanish in Cananea, Sonora, Mexico, and while wintering in Tucson recently she was a member of the teaching staff of the Fenster Ranch School.

She and her husband now live in Ajo, Arizona, which she terms "one of the friendliest towns I have ever known." They have three children, a married daughter and two boys of college age.



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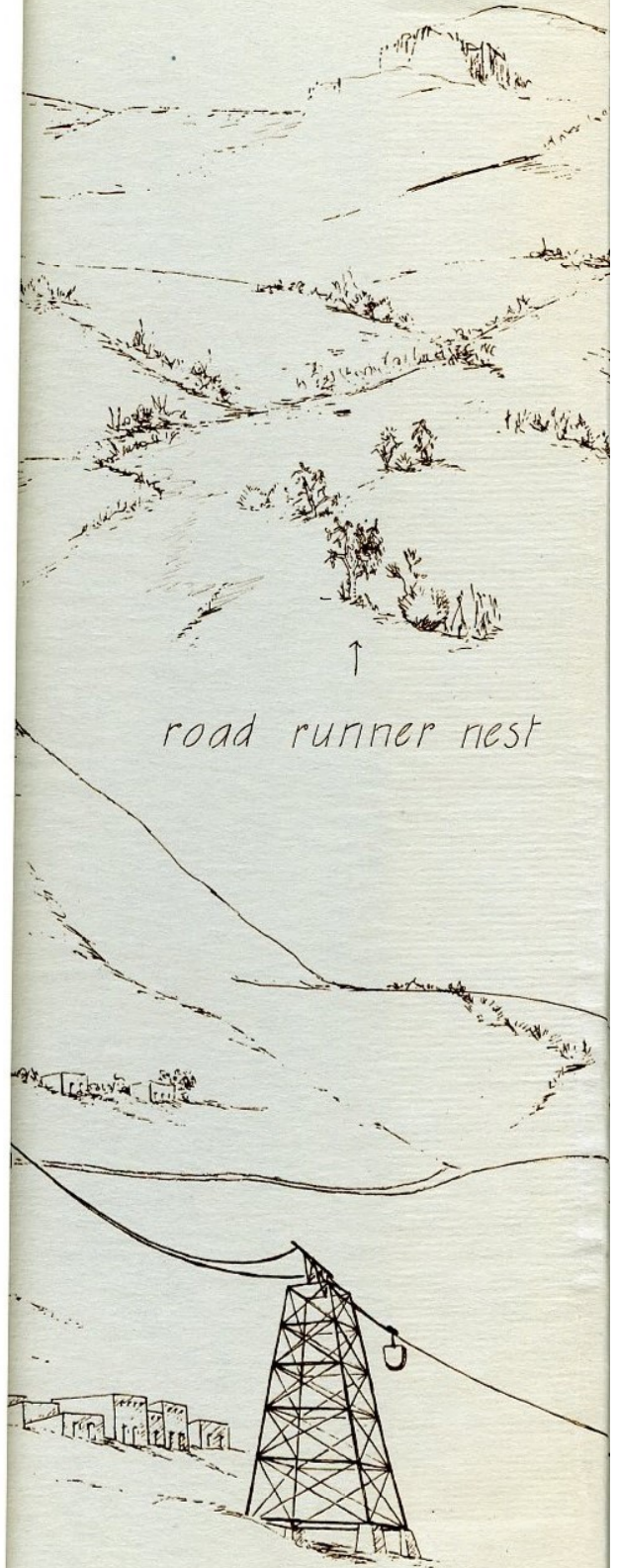
(Ages 7-12)

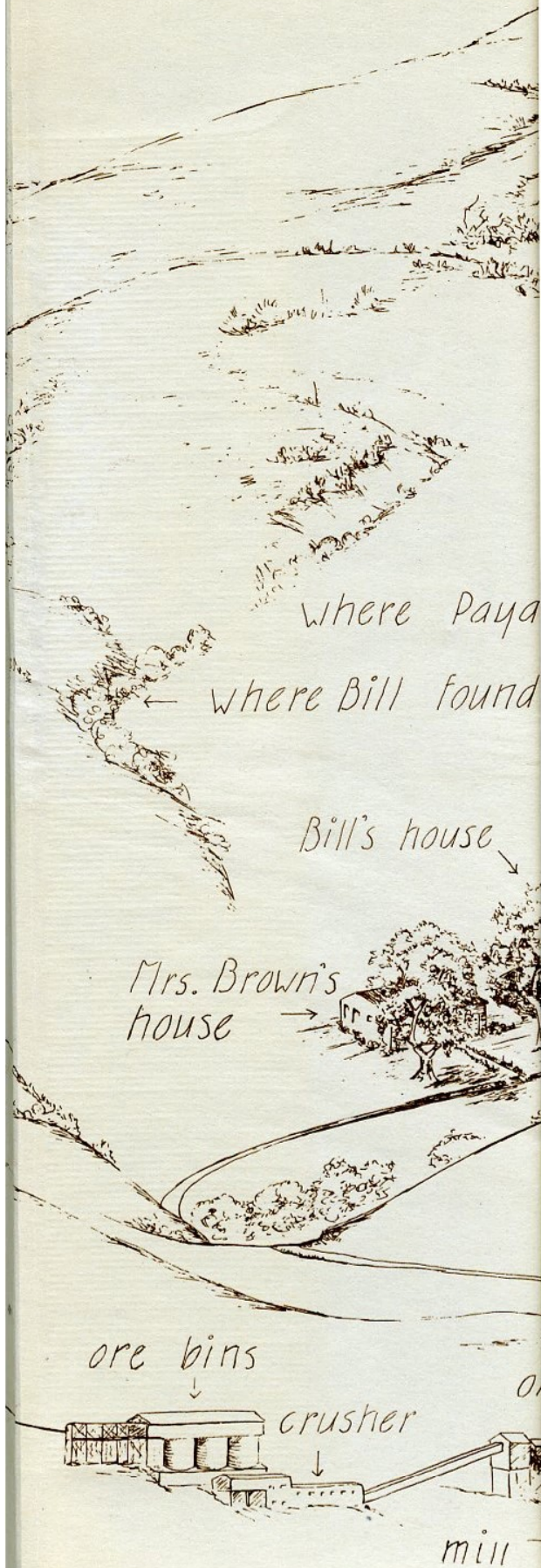
The heart of a boy and his triumphs and disappointments with his strange but beloved pets is portrayed with sympathetic understanding in this true-to-life adventure tale.

The most delightful of the pets, a comical road runner with the prankish disposition of a clown, keeps Bill and the reader continually in suspense by getting into one scrape after another. But the road runner had brave qualities, too, and he finally erases his black record in a gallant fight with a vicious rattlesnake.

The locale of **BILL AND THE CLOWN BIRD** is a mining camp in Mexico where the author spent many years. Here her children, now grown, were reared, and they, like Bill, filled the house with unusual pets of all kinds.

Drawings by the author help to make Bill's pets come to life in these pages. Payaso, the road runner, is charmingly real, for the sketches are of the author's own pet road runner, and they have all the saucy qualities so characteristic of this Southwestern bird.





Interesting mining information and Southwestern nature lore are part of the background material which makes this book informative as well as exciting.

With Bill, the youthful reader will enter an abandoned mine and have the terrifying experience of coming on a shaft, a dark hole that leads deep into the ground. He will visit the mill where minerals are extracted from the ore and will marvel at the great crushers and at the fascinating machines in which bubbles float the minerals away from the waste sand.

In the hills back of the mining settlement he will follow a coyote, and finally he will see its den. He will watch playful coyote pups when they come out to romp. He will tame a road runner, the bird clown of the Southwest, and will feel only the despair a child can know when he is told he must dispose of his wonderful pet.

But, finally, he will share with Bill his great happiness when his road runner becomes an honored member of the family.