

THE ALPINE ECHO

March 29, 1962

ECHOES OF THE PAST

The Old Timer

By Niel Galloway

Another glorious rain and it is all going in. Today I am going east again on South Grade Road. First, the old Robinson place. I don't know who before that. The Eatons lived there then. I think Mrs. Eaton was a widow, before that I believe they lived in Viejas Valley. I am told Robinsons was a relative. She had one daughter, Willa. She married Burnham McNett. I will get to the McNett family after a while. They had two children, but later separated. I think next was Indian Wright. He was a Cherokee Indian from Oklahoma. He lived there quite a long time, if I am correct. Next was the present owner, T. A. Smith. Part of that place was sold, the portion on the north side. When I came here a cripple by the name of Blank lived there. He had a one cylinder auto. It went charging along, but I don't think it ever exceeded the speed limit. The axles were made of hickory wood. The Stephenson boys used to drive it for him.

Next on the Southeast corner of South Grade and Tavern Road was John Leave. He had cottages to rent and raised a little hay for his horses also. I heard John Leave, F. B. Walker and Ed Snow remark one day when I first came; they thought I was tubercular because I was so skinny. Well, I out-lived them all by many years. Even in those days quite a lot of people came to Alpine for their health and several brought their children that were suffering from asthma and most of them outgrew it and got well. Some got well, some got impatient and went to Arizona, later came back, but did not live too long afterwards. I don't mean to say all got well, but some did. I don't think I ever had it. I was always a long, lean, skinny race horse but have slowed to the speed of a turtle.

On the Northeast corner of South Grade and Tavern Road was a man and his grown daughter by the name of Mix. He had a large olive orchard. I forgot who before that. Mix cured olives and made olive oil. Carl McCall has it now and runs a private school for boys or boards them, I don't know which. John Leave also had a large olive orchard.

Now I am going north a ways on Tavern Road—there is an old house on the west side of the street. Cabe (?) Hoagland lived there; he had a homestead back of the Wheeler place, but it had no water on it. He died a long time ago. A. L. McNett was a deputy sheriff in this district. McNett held an auction sale of Hoagland's personal property. An elderly man by the name of Young bought the Hoagland house and lived there until he died. He sheared sheep for me. He was not used to shearing such heavy sheep as I had.

About that time Winterstine bought the John Leave place. He had a son and lived there quite a long time. At the sale, Winterstine and Castro, two old men, got to bidding on an old Walter A. Wood mowing machine. Neither one would give in. The result was Castro got it and paid more than a new one cost. Some people do have hard heads. I got a Spike Harrow 8 feet wide for \$3.00. The house stands right close to Malcolm Huey's driveway. Huey's property was part of the Fosses; it belonged to Charlie Foss. When he died he left it to the church. Still going north is Tom Hills driveway. Tom also bought some of the Foss homestead. I think it was Robert's part. Tom came from the Imperial Valley and ran a garage in Alpine for a while. Later he did electrical and pump work until he retired. He still lives there. He had two children, a boy and a girl, has several grandchildren. Tom Junior does heavy

tractor work, has a large bulldozer.

On the east side of the street was 80 acres. I knew it as the Hildreth's. The house has disappeared but there was a barn that was purchased by Bob Wilcox quite a long time ago. He was a telephone man from Chicago. He was out here visiting and bought it to retire on. I did not cost him much. In those days Castro used to pasture stock on it also; the Garbanis had it leased. When Wilcox moved out here to live, he built three houses on it and sold them and moved to a trailer court East of Alpine. Some of his children still live there.

Now I am going back to Tavern Road and South Grade. On the Southeast corner lived Mrs. Achehorn, a widow lady. She had 40 acres. She had a son, H. C. Miethe, he lived there several years. There were other owners before Mrs. Achehorn but I didn't know them. Joining Mrs. Achehorn was part of the Styles place. Mrs. Batie lived them when I came. She died and A. Gleastro (?) bought it and owned it until he died in France on his way to his old home in the Cape Verde Islands, Portugal. Across the street was the Fields place. The part of the family I knew was the children, then in their late thirties. Bud Fields was found dead in the home. Lakeside butcher found him. The butcher used to come up here a couple times a week with meat and vegetables and used to bring Bud Fields bread and other groceries. He died peacefully in his sleep with his hands folded over his chest. I was there shortly after they found him. Bud had two daughters, both old maid school teachers, retired on pension, lived in El Cajon. I don't know if they are still living.

A little further east was Rancho Be Dam, Henry Styles lived there. Henry was quite a character. He always drove a horse and cart. Henry had the asthma bad. I used to see him headed for San Diego occasionally. "Henry, where are you going?" I'd ask. "I'm going to San Diego and back if I don't choke to death before I get there," he'd answer. He took the train that ran to Lakeside them days and came back same day. The way his ranch got its name was when he left something always went wrong before he got home. He used to raise a few cattle on that rocky mesa that Sid Wright owned, when he died. Sid and his wife died fairly close together. They willed their property to a church someplace else beside Alpine. Sidney Wright was here before I was, lived with his mother in the two-story house corner of Arnold Way and Tavern Road. I think they came here for their health.

I got to get back to South Grade Road again. The next place was an Emony. The Emony's apparently were real oldtimers. I don't remember was the deal was, but in the last issue, I wrote about Walter Guiggins. He rented it and fixed it all up. Pete wasn't too ambitious and it was sold to Julian Elting or Dalton. He was a woman impersonator on stage.

The Armstrong place had quite a lot of olive trees on it. The late John De Mott bought the part with the olive trees on it. John was married twice. His first wife was a minister's daughter. She got tired of his drinking and divorced him. I forgot what happened to the last one. Anyway, John passed on.

Just before you get ot Highway 80 on South Grade Road is what was called Mount Olive. I understand a family by the name of White lived there in the early days. They planted the olive trees there and carried water up from the creek in pails to water them for the first year. Guy and Angelina Little lived on the place for a while and later lived in Burnham McNett's cottage and finally moved to Japatul. Now back to Mount Olive. Daughterty owned it later on. Daughterty started life as a butcher boy on the R. R. Santa Fe, I think. He owned an awful lot of property in downtown San Diego. I talked with Daugherty many times. He gave Mount Olive to his daughter...he also had a son. He owned a Franklin automobile and did a lot of prospecting on the desert. A lot of the property he had was not paid for but the rent took

care of the payments. He got too greedy; the '29 crash caught him and busted him. All he had left was Mount Olive and some of his mining claims. He sold enough claims to manage to keep living until he died. Gordon Wilson owns the property now, the Alpine storekeeper.

When times are good it is awful easy to over-extend yourself. Play this old world safe. Even if you don't get so much finances. Vote to keep your taxes down, they also can bust you.

I will start up Midway Drive next week.

Neil Galloway