

THE ALPINE ECHO
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ECHOES OF THE PAST
The Old Timer

By Niel Galloway

Here we go again. I have a neighbor in Glen Oaks that has some horses and Shetland ponies, also a couple of animals mentioned in the Bible. The prospectors called them Desert Canaries, also Mountain Canaries. They have loud melodious voices. They need no television or radio to carry this music for long distances. Some people object to their melody.

We will now start Southeast on South Grade Road. There is a fire and sometimes a lot of smoke that is Forrest and Hazel Hohhanshelt clearing off a mountain to build their new castle on. Hazel has been an Alpine school teacher for many years. Across the road is Ray and Dorothy Knox. When he was building it I kidded him about building Knox's hotel, however I never got to board there. Coming up South Grade Road is the W. W. Whitson homestead. There was a vinyard on it. The house burned several years ago. I think there were two houses, one on each side of the road. The Whitsons had left before I came. I think they ran a lumber yard in San Diego. The property then belonged to Wolf and Davidsons as a summer home. The Whitsons filed a Water-Right on the Foss property as there was a permanent spring there. They sold 40 acres over on Arnold Way to C. H. Schulte. He also got water from the spring. As the spring started to dry up, the Davidsons tried to shut off the water. That couldn't be done as the water was filed for the Whitson homestead. There were two brothers of the Davidsons. Wolf was a half-brother, the oldest. He never knew how old he really was. His mother kept him hid to keep him out of the Russian Army. They were Jews, all dead now. Wolf and one of the Davidsons ran the Chicago Shoe Store for years in San Diego. The other Davidson ran the People's Clothing Store on Fifth Street below G Street. They leased the place to Castro on shares. I bought some hay from them when I first came. Wolf's first name was Hyman. I forgot the other's. He died a couple of years ago. He was ageless looking, no whiskers at all, never grew. I don't know how they got to the U. S. A.

Next the Foss family. I will cover some of my personal contact with them. Their father died in debt. I don't know how much, but they were paying 12 per cent interest. The father, and perhaps the boys also, there were five of them, hauled lumber for the flume that took water from Cuyamaca dam clear to San Diego. It was all Redwood. It must have been a private water company. I was led to believe the late Ed Fletcher company bought it for \$40,000 and sold it to La Mesa-El Cajon Water Company for over a million dollars. They are probably still paying on those bonds.

Getting back to the Fosses. The boys used to work in El Cajon Vineyards. It was a real struggle to get that mortgage off their property. I never heard any of them speak of their father. I heard he died under an oak tree snapping green beans—hearsay. They told me many times all they had to eat was bread, milk and honey. There was nothing else in the winter months. They raised garden and beans to dry. There was no irrigation in them days, in El Cajon either. They used to talk to me often. I brought a different method of farming with me. They had a threshing machine, a little one. It did very good work but was quite slow, but we all had more time than money in those days. We bought a self-binder to gather and a grain drill. There never was any friction and is not now. Charlie used to work in El Cajon but later years he just raised bees. When he was well along in his 60's he fell out of a tree and broke his neck. The original Foss homestead, I think, was 200 acres. Each one had 40 acres.

I think Malcolm Huey owns Charlie's 40 acres now. Joe worked in Japatul. That is where he met his wife Bertha. I mentioned they worked for C. O. Anderson. Robert went to Davis Agricultural School and took up dairying and cheese and butter making. He had a creamery of his own in Escondido for years, finally sold it. He also worked with bees. Joe went to Visalia, I think for a while, but finally came back to the old homestead. Still lives there. Percy and Pearl never left it. Harry got married and moved to Pasadena. After his wife died he also moved back to the old homestead. There is still Joe and Robert left living. No Foss children at all.

George Campbell bought Percy and Pearl's and Joe's part of the homestead. George Campbell was one of the partners of the Campbell Boat Works in San Diego. They build tuna boats. I used to kid George, "Well, George, when you want to go fishing, all you have to do is get on one of them boats; you probably have interest in most of them." He said, "No can do, the ocean makes me sick." I am sure the Foss family is one of the oldest left living in Alpine. Bea had the history.

My next contact is Alpine Heights. The most of it was owned by Bozza, Wm. Stephenson Doc Ponties and Snow. I may get tangled up some here. I knew Bozza slightly. I think he owned on the west side of the road—Stephenson lived in an old house a little farther to Southeast. It belonged to some of his relatives. He also had a homestead there. I know part of it is where Alec Adams' turkey ranch is. Their son George built them a house on it some place. After Mr. Stephenson died, they sold it and moved to Washington Street in El Cajon. The mother died there. She was 100, or nearly so. Mr. Stephenson used to take care of the stage horses in Alpine. The barn was near Isabel's Hobby Shop on Highway 80. They changed horses both ways. Stephenson had two boys, Hugh and George and one daughter, now Mrs. Williams, she had two boys, lost one in the second World War. The other is living. So is she. Now the Stephensons, like a lot of the rest of us, raised a vineyard, and made raisins. This part of California was the raisin center of the world at one time. We used to get from \$1.50 to \$3.00 per hundred for the finest raisins at that time. They sold for 12 ½ cents per pound in the retail stores. It cost \$3.00 to raise them. The Stephensons were always very highly respected and very religious. Getting back to the Stephenson boys, Hugh went to Palo Alto to college and there got some infection in his nose. I had a phone at that time. They telegraphed his father at El Cajon. They phoned me, I took the message to them, and the father went up there; I took him to San Diego to the train. Hugh only lived a couple of days. Those boys, Hugh and George, used to ride their bicycles to Bostonia to High School everyday. They had to walk a lot of the way to get home—to steep to ride. The High School was behind Pernicano's restaurant, just off 80 on Broadway. They had an old mule, slower than molasses on a cold day. The boys got part of an old telephone magnets, attached it to the mule's tail, and turned the crank. The mule ran away—both of them couldn't stop her. Next they tied it on the pig. Mr. Stephenson always raised a pig. The pig jumped out of the pen and they had a merry time to get it back in before Dad found out about it. Mr. Freeland's place was part of the Stephenson homestead.

Mr. Quiggins came to Alpine quite a few years ago. He rented the Pete Armstrong place. Mrs. Armstrong was from one of the old time families. Emerys Quiggins cleaned it all up nice and they sold it. Next he went to Johnstown, rented from the Wentworth brothers, fixed that place all up nice and they sold it. He was looking for another place to rent. I told him to buy something. He had very little money to buy with. I told him to see Mr. Stephenson. He had charge of the Dr. Ponties place. They made a deal and he cleaned one more place, his own, and died there. Mrs. Quiggins moved to San Diego where her daughter lived. The Quiggins told me when they were married in the east he was making the magnificent sum of \$15 a month, got a house, a garden plot, and milk and eggs thrown in. I was intimately acquainted

with them. Commander McDonald's and Oeser's places are part of the Ponties place, also the part Claude and Bonnie Clark own. Adjoining the Clerks on the west was the Snow homestead. Old man McKee had it when I came, later sold to the Talbots. I don't know who the owner now is. On the west end of the road Bernie Snepp and Traver purchased 20 acres of the Snow place. They divided it up, each taking 10 acres. Bernie Snepp was a Spanish-American War veteran. There was a family in there by the name of Barnett. I don't know who all live in that valley now. How many young boys would ride a bicycle to Bostonia to get an education this day and age?