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*Tattered Tidbits: Alpine Historical Society*

**ALPINE – A PLACE TO SETTLE FROM A FARMER’S STANDPOINT**

The following is another article from the brochure, *Alpine—Its Resorts and Resources*, published in 1898 by F. B. Walker, Justice of the Peace. If you think property values have fallen—read on and realize what has happened since 1898!

“The publisher of this little booklet wrote an article on Alpine for the New Year’s edition of the *San Diego Union* of 1897, which has unexpectedly brought numerous letters of inquiry in regard to Alpine as a place to settle from a farmer’s standpoint.

To such enquirers and others I would say that I believe there are possibilities in deciduous fruit, nut and olive growing lying dormant in the uncultivated hillsides and mesas of Alpine to support ten times the present population.

So many people have planted three and five-acre orchards and have not made a living from it, that during the dull times and low prices of the past few years they have, in some cases, concluded that there is no money in fruit-growing.

But let the same people have planted acreage enough, and gone about fruit-raising and drying in a business-like way, so that when the season ends instead of having a few hundred pounds of a large number of different kinds of fruit to offer for sale, they would have a carload or more of our unrivaled sun-dried peaches, (which are in no way inferior to the finest evaporated fruit, without the cost of artificial heat) prunes or other fruit, which they could offer to eastern wholesalers instead of depending upon local markets, then they would find fruit-raising a profitable industry as do so many in other parts of the State.

Farmers in the east have recently gone through several years of depression and many have been ready to give up in despair of making anything more than a bare living, as have many of our California fruit-growers, but the wise man has held on, knowing that a turn in the tide would come.

The writer has seen the fruit on deciduous orchards in this State sell for five hundred and seventy-five dollars per acre, and bought on the trees at that, the buyer bearing the expense of gathering, and he has only been in the State since 1887. Inasmuch as twenty-five dollars per ton was the price paid for the fruit in that instance, there is no doubt of the event occurring again and frequently.

Land can be purchased in Alpine at \$10 to \$40 per acre that will raise as fine fruit as ever was sold. A family coming here ready and willing to work and wait a reasonable time for growth of trees can undoubtedly do as well as at farming in the east, with no more exertion and have the advantage of living in an incomparable climate, where every day of the three hundred and sixty-five of the year one will thank God that he is enjoying existence as never before, where health is 200 per cent, better than in an average of all the rest of the United States.

The undersigned, while not in the real estate business, has a thorough knowledge of the properties for sale in the vicinity of Alpine, homes or unimproved, and will be glad to put land or home-seekers in communication with owners of properties for sale. Enclose stamp for reply when writing for information.”

Don’t you wish you could buy 100 acres in Alpine for \$1,000 today? Oh, my, times have changed. Mr. Walker may have missed his calling—an innkeeper and farmer, he could certainly sell real estate as well!

*Carol Walker and her husband Paul lived in Alpine for 19 years. Carol is the webmaster and newsletter editor for the Alpine Historical Society. She can be reached at [cwalker@alpinehistory.org](mailto:cwalker@alpinehistory.org) or 619-467-7766.*