



*Ralph E. Swing*

Attorney Ralph E. Swing in 1920. He later represented San Bernardino County as a State Senator for 28 years.

With Swing as his business adviser, Dr. Mills moved in and soon the hospital was crowded, patients coming from miles around to obtain its services and that of the young surgeon, already famed for his skill. He did the surgery for a score or more of the general practitioners who had had little experience in the operating room. A man of picturesque language, he frequently told his patients that "surgery was a noble profession but a dirty trade" and to all he described himself as a "belly surgeon," rather than an abdominal surgeon.

And there was never a Dr. Mills patient who ever forgot his post-operative castor oil highballs. I can still taste the mixture of castor oil and rootbeer. It was rough treatment and there was a standing order to the nurses by this English dictator. It was: If the patient doesn't keep the first one down, give him another.

There was little of the sedate, quiet life of his youth in England or his student days at Edinburgh University, in Dr. Mills. He was the sportsman who liked hunting. He volunteered his services to the posse that hunted down the Indian renegade, Willie Boy, in the desert and probably saved the life of the posseman, Charles Richie, shot off his horse by rampaging Willie Boy. And in World War I he volunteered for duty at a field hospital, set up near the lines. He was decorated for his work among the battle wounded.

He associated with him a number of young physicians, including Drs. Claude H. Lashlee, Russell W. Prince and C. C. Owan, all later to develop their own practices. He established a nurses' training school in conjunction with his hospital and built living quarters for the students on the site.

In the 1920's he established another hospital, the Sequoia, in a two-story residence at the southeast corner of 5th and D Sts., operating this along with the Ramona.

And tragically, it seemed, he was stricken with septicemia, an infection of the bloodstream, from an infected tooth and died in his own hospital, but not before he had diagnosed his own illness and with characteristic firm decision instructed another surgeon to open his chest in an effort to locate what he had feared was an abscess near his heart.

With his passing, other physicians took over the hospital, forming an association to handle the business affairs. In the later years there were rough times, financially, a series of reorganizations, but never did it close its doors. The surgical wing on Arrowhead Ave. was erected and the wards enlarged as the community and its demands grew.

It was this institution that will be moved, patients, beds and all, to the handsome new 130-bed Community Hospital at 17th St. and Western Ave.

Someplace out there in the somewhere there must be a happy fellow, Dr. Mills.

But where's that key? They've got to lock the doors.

*Hewitt*