WILLIAM GLASS

By John C. Funk

WILLIAM HENRY GLASS was born on November 26, 1859, in Lockport, New York. He was the son of Dudley and Ann (Benedict) Glass. William Glass came to California with his mother and sister, Alice, at the age of 18 and initially lived in Los Angeles, a thriving small city of some 17,600 people. They soon came to San Bernardino and settled in Highland.

In June of 1881 Mr. Glass purchased land from Judson and Brown, developers of Redlands, and planted two orange groves in Highland. He became highly respected in the community as an honest and forthright man with good leadership qualities. His name was placed before the Fifth Supervisorial District in the August, 1888 primaries and he won the election to the County Board of Supervisors over incumbent Moses B. Garner. He served from Jan. 7, 1889 until Dec. 8, 1891, at which time both he and George Garcelon, Third District Supervisor from Riverside, resigned because of petty disagreements among the Board. He was replaced in Jan. 1892 by Lewis F. Cram, also of Highland.

On Sept. 26, 1891, Mr. Glass sold his Highland citrus ranch and moved to Lugonia Heights in Redlands. He had obtained contracts for storm drain construction and other water works projects in that city. On Oct. 10, 1891, the Citrograph reported he had a large force of men constructing "Brown Ditch" from Cemetery Road across Brown's property to the west Center Street Arroyo; the five foot deep by ten foot wide channel was of cemented-rock construction. Other storm drain work followed and on Nov. 21, 1891, it was reported his workmen were making fine progress with paving and cementing Redlands Reservoir. In 1892 he also did construction work on the Big Bear Dam.

When the Bear Valley Land and Water Company entered receivership in 1894, Glass was appointed superintendent and held that position for 14 years. In 1902 he purchased the Seven Oaks Resort, comprising some 40 acres, which he developed. In 1904 he bought Section 17 in Barton Flats and in 1906 formed a contracting company with Walter Fisher building flumes and tunnels for the Edison Electric Company in Santa Ana Canyon. Much of this early construction construction is still in use. The company also contracted similar work at Kern River, east of Bakersfield, for the power plant bringing electricity to Los Angeles. Other projects were done in Arizona and New Mexico.

After semi-retiring from the construction field, Glass devoted his time to developing his mountain properties. He constructed roads and trails and, over the years, built the Seven Oaks property into one of the finest and most popular resorts in the San Bernardino mountains. He also operated a resort in Big Bear Valley. In 1925 he was appointed Postmaster of Seven Oaks and retained that position for several years. Following a brief illness, Mr. Glass died in Seven Oaks, which had been his home for many years, on October 25, 1948.

William Henry Glass and Serena Alexandria Gammon were married on March 15, 1888. Serena Gammon was born in Nova Scotia on December 25, 1864, and died in Redlands on October 23, 1958. They had two sons; Dudley R. Glass, born in 1889, and William W. Glass, born in 1892.