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THE REAL WYATT EARP

By Nicholas R. Cataldo



WYATT EARP AT EIGHTY

One of the most well known figures of the Old West seemingly possessed a "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" personality.

In his often questioned biography of this man, author Stuart N. Lake depicted him as a knight on a white horse combating enemies of law and order. This "paladin" image soon inspired numerous movies and eventually a T.V. show.

On the other hand, Frank Waters, in rewriting the memoirs of this man's sister-in-law, portrayed him as a cold blooded killer, a womanizer who deserted his previous wife, a liar, and a bigot.

Who was this Wyatt Earp? Was he an outlaw as well as lawman? Were he and his brothers simply defending themselves or did they instigate the famous shootout at the O.K. Corral in Tombstone, Arizona?

Of all the giants of Western lore- Jessie James, Billy the Kid, General George A. Custer, Cochise, Geronimo, Wild Bill Hickock, and Buffalo Bill- no one has been as controversial as Wyatt Berry Stapp Earp.

While most books written about him were either pro or anti Wyatt it is generally agreed that Glenn G. Boyer's book, I married Wyatt Earp, the recollections of Wyatt's third wife, Josephine Sarah Marcus Earp, is the best book to date. Unfortunately, "Sadie" -a controversial character in her own right (she claimed to have at one time danced with a well known theater group while some historians insist that she had been a dance hall queen, the belle of the



VIRGIL EARP, 1885



WYATT EARP, ABOUT 1885

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Wyatt Earp...Was he a hero or a villain?

"Oh, he was no saint!" claimed Grace Spolidora.

"But he was a good man and a good friend of the family," chipped in Elena Bosnyak, Spolidora's niece.

Both women, who now live in San Bernardino, had been well acquainted with the Earps. Charles Courtney "Charlie" Welsh, father of Mrs. Spolidora and grandfather of Mrs. Bosnyak, was a good friend of Wyatt while both men lived in Needles. Wyatt frequently visited with the Welsh's and was treated as a member of the family.

Mrs. Spolidora, now 88, recalled hearing many stories regarding Wyatt's past as frontier marshall, gambler, under cover agent for Wells Fargo, stage coach driver, freighter, and saloon keeper-many of which were not true-but admitted that nobody in her family was really in awe of him because of those stories. She insisted that Wyatt detested all the lies that had been written about dime novelists who portrayed him as a folk hero, as well as those who made him out to be nothing more than an outlaw. Mrs. Bosnyak's father, Louis, blamed the folk hero myth for the groundwork of the television show Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp and claimed that "Wyatt would have laughed at that sissy Hugh O'Brian."

There was no doubt in Mrs. Spolidora's and Mrs. Bosnyak's minds as to how the highly exaggerated legend of Wyatt Earp came about. "It was Sadie," both ladies echoed, "who always interfered whenever Wyatt would talk

with Stuart Lake. She was always interfering! She wanted him (Wyatt) to look like a church going saint and blow things up. Wyatt didn't want that at all!"

Tall, erect, with steely blue eyes that "could stare right through you", Wyatt Earp was admired as a complete gentleman who never acted disrespectful. However, he also would not tolerate anyone showing disrespect, especially in front of women.

Mrs. Spolidora chuckled as she recalled one evening when several family members and friends were socializing at the Welsh home, and a man who obviously had too much to drink, was speaking obnoxiously to her niece. It didn't take long for Wyatt to put an end to the loudmouth's shenanigans. Without showing a hint of his intention, he suddenly stood up from his chair and with those



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When sheriff of Ford County, Kansas



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piercing eyes and that low, deep voice that seemed to break off his words, said to the man, "You don't talk to a lady like that!" Everyone in the room was so stunned at Wyatt's reaction that no one made a sound.

During the handsome Wyatt's frequent visits to the Welsh home, he would always arrive neatly dressed and groomed, even after toiling for hours at his prospecting claim near Needles. His conversations with the women were cordial but rarely amounted to much more than small talk. On the other hand,



Josephine Sarah Marcus Earp, c. 1880

Wyatt would spend hours talking with Charlie and the guys.

Mrs. Bosnyak recalled her father telling her that ever since his brothers, Virgil and Morgan, were ambushed shortly after the O.K. Corral gunfight with the Clanton-McLaury gang, Wyatt would never sit inside a room with his back to a doorway or window. Whenever he entered a room, he always sat with his back to the wall. Charlie Welsh, perhaps influenced by his friend's cautious behavior, picked up the same peculiar habit and continued to do so throughout his life.

Such close friends were Wyatt Earp and Charlie Welsh that when Wyatt and

Josephine Marcus Earp, Wyatt's third wife, taken the year before her death.



Sadie joined the rush to the Klondike gold fields in Alaska during the late 1880s, Charlie soon followed with a herd of cattle. While there, Charlie worked as a cattle rancher while Wyatt ran a saloon.

An Adventurer and opportunist, Wyatt Earp had spent much of his life roaming from boom-town to boom-town throughout the west in search of fortune. Sometimes lawman, sometimes gambler, townlot speculator, prospector, and undercover agent—he ventured into almost anything that might turn a profit. Along the way, Wyatt and Sadie met up with some interesting characters such as old Dodge City and Tombstone cronies, Bat Masterson and John P. Clum, as well as other colorful personalities as multi-millionaire Elias Jackson "Lucky" Baldwin, fight-promoter Tex Rickard, authors Wilson Mizner and Rex Beach, and Hollywood celebrities William S. Hart and Tom Mix.

As Wyatt entered his later years, he and his wife began hitting on hard times. Having retained little of his profits from the gambling halls that he once owned or from his various prospecting claims, they were just barely getting by from relatively unsuccessful oil investments.

It was Mrs. Spolidora's feeling, however, that the primary cause of the Earp's troubles was Sadie's compulsive gambling. It got to where Sadie was so busy gambling away their savings with her friend, Mrs. Rose, that she barely found the time to cook for Wyatt except occasional meals of hot dogs and beans.

"Oh, Sadie!", Wyatt would say in

that low voice of his whenever she embarrassed him with her outrageous comments to people", she recalled in reference to Sadie's sometimes eccentric behavior. "He really put up a lot with her."

When Charlie Welsh moved his family to Los Angeles a few years before he died in 1926, Wyatt and Sadie stayed with them until they found a small one-room motor court nearby to rent. However, Sadie, who was accused by author Stuart Lake as being mentally unstable, was finding it increasingly difficult to take care of Wyatt, who was now suffering from cancer. Fortunately, spending his last days in the warm confines of the Welsh home, Wyatt's needs were taken care of by Charlie's widow, Elena.

When Wyatt died on January 13, 1929—two months shy of his eighty first

birthday--the emotionally grieved Sadie left the funeral arrangements in the capable hands of Charlie's daughter-in-law, Alma. Two years later, Stuart N. Lake completed Wyatt Earp: Frontier Marshall, the book that created the Wyatt Earp Legend.

How did this "mythical" biography of Wyatt come about? Did lake live things up after his controlling collaborator (Wyatt and Lake had been corresponding regularly) was gone or did Sadie 'blow things up' to the author while her husband tried in vain to keep the story honest? Perhaps it was Wyatt, as some historians believe, who sought out anyone who would write about his life, regardless of how exaggerated it might turn out. We may never know the real reason. For Grace Spolidora and Elena Bosnyak, however, there will always be fond memories of the man they knew...a likable man, Wyatt Earp.



The small rented cottage in a Los Angeles tourist court, where Wyatt died.



MORGAN EARP, 1871

IT HAPPENED IN SAN BERNARDINO

By Carol Beard
Fourth Grade
Bradley Elementary
Teacher- Melisa Knuckey
Winner-First Place

This year in the fourth grade, I am studying about Indians. This is one legend that I have retold. This is about the San Bernardino mountains, the Indians, and how the Arrowhead was formed.

Once upon a time, long ago, there were Indians that lived below the San Bernardino mountains. These Indians were known as the Coahilla tribe.

There was an Evil Spirit who liked to play mean tricks on the Indians, who

lived below the Arrowhead. The Evil Spirit thought it was fun to throw boulders and gushing water down on the Indian village.

The Indians got mad and wanted to set up a meeting with the Evil Spirit. The Indians took a trip up to where the Evil Spirit lived to see who would win the valley.

The only way to win the valley was to play a game of cards. The Evil Spirit got so mad that Indians were winning, that he threw an ace of spades as hard as he could at the mountains, and when he did, the mountains swallowed him up and trapped him inside forever.

Now we can see that the ace of spades has left a mark, which is now the Arrowhead, which we see on the mountainside.

A BELL FOR AGUA MANSA

By R. Bruce Harley

One of the most poignant fictional stories written about World War II concerned the efforts of a small band of American soldiers to supply a bell for the village church in Adano, Italy. This effort was memorialized in John Hersey's A Bell for Adano made later into a popular movie. A similar story, a true one, occurred almost a century earlier at San Salvador Church, Agua Mansa/La Placita, California.

At the time of the great flood on the Santa Ana River in 1862, many people had been saved by hearing the original church bell sound the warning early in the morning of that fateful day. When Father Pedro Verdaguer was assigned to the parish in 1863, he wrote of the church and its bells, saying that upon arriving in the community...

"I went to the church after dinner to ring the bell and announce to the people that there would be Mass the next day. But where was the bell? I went around the church - no bell, no belfry... a boy appeared, and in answer to my eager question pointed to a big tree near the church. No wonder that I could not see it for it was among the branches of the big tree.

"I was curious to know why the bell had been hung in such an odd place, and was told that being no belfry, the people cut two large poles, put a cross piece on them, and hung the bell. But as the poles were green they soon began to grow, and in time became large trees. After some years one of them

died; and the other continued to grow, so the bell hung in a



rather peculiar and dangerous position. It was then that the bell was taken from the pole and hung in the living tree. Two or three years later the bell became cracked and the tree died. I suppose that when the tree saw that the bell, the object for which it had been planted was dead, it thought it was proper for it to die also.

"But now the old bell was broken and it was absolutely necessary to have another. But how? It was impossible to collect fifty or sixty dollars - the price of even the smallest bell. I heard that an old Mexican in the neighborhood could make a bell. I went to him and he agreed that I should give him two good horses, and twelve dollars. With material necessary, he would make a good bell. I wished a larger bell than the old one, hence it was necessary to have more material. The next day I borrowed a horse and buggy, and set out. I went to the Rubidoux Rancho, to Rincon, Temescal, and Santa Ana (probably Bernardo Yorba's rancho in Santa Ana Canyon), and I got the twelve dollars and

had no difficulty in getting the horses, and all the material I needed, also.

"The man went to work at once at the foot of the hill where Mr. Jensen's house stood; he made the oven and the mold, and soon the bell was made. Hundreds were present when the Mexican broke the mold, and when the bell was seen there was a shouting which resounded from hill to hill. But, alas, the joy was changed to sorrow because we noticed on one side of the top two holes, which had not only disfigured the bell, but were the cause that its sound was not as pleasant as we expected."

The bell was dedicated to Santa Guadalupe and bore an inscription in very crude letters as follows: "S.S.D.A. 1866 N.S. DE GVADALVPE".

An 1883 San Bernardino County history describes the bell thusly: "(It)... is fastened to the branch of a cottonwood tree, its rival in age and ugliness, and the dull chimes at morning and evening are...heard along the gentle waters of the silently flowing river. The old relic is looked upon with much veneration by the Mexicans".

An 1888 traveler noted that bell, now 22 years old, was "suspended from a strong branch of a cottonwood where it still hangs although the tree is dead with the whole crown cut away. The bell...is rudely shaped,...but it has a clear, silvery tone. It is now only rung at the death of one of the (remaining) inhabitants". He also noted that "there are still remaining quite a number of the old (post-flood) adobes along the valley occupied by descendants of the earlier inhabitants".

However, within five years, enough people had moved to

South Colton that a new parish was founded there as Our Lady of the Holy Rosary in 1893, a mission of St. Bernardine. The bell was accordingly moved to the church's belfry. This new church became a full parish in 1913 and changed its name to San Salvador in honor of the first parish in the area. In December 1916, that first Colton church burned completely. The bell was taken from the ruins for safekeeping. However, the ensuing financial hardship in finding funds to rebuild led to the sale of the 956-pound bell to the owner of the Mission Inn in Riverside, a city founded 25 years after its predecessor community, La Placita. According to the deal struck Frank Miller paid \$500 in cash and moved the bell to the Inn's courtyard, where it remains today. He also spent about the same amount of money to purchase a lighter bell for the new Colton church building.

Another interesting facet of the story concerns whether in recent times anyone still living from the earlier period had ever heard the old bell ring. Mrs. F. J. Conteras, nee Fanny Arnaiz, stated at the time of the nation's bi-centennial celebration that "I heard it still ringing in 1906 before the (first Colton) church burned down, and I know it tolled for my husband's father when he died in 1910. They always rang the bell when anyone died, even late at night, and when there was a Mass in church".

Mrs. Conteras' husband was a direct descendant of one of Agua Mansa's original families who came to the valley from New Mexico in the early 1840's. They were Antonio and Cruz Salazar. "They were comparatively wealthy, and a portion of their jewelry was

melted down to make the bell. In spite of what they now say, the bell was still ringing (after 1900). I know because I heard it. I heard that bell time, time, time again... until 1916. It had a different tone, one you don't forget. I would not call it beautiful or dull, but a tone all of its own".

When the replica of the original San Salvador Church at Agua Mansa Cemetery was being planned in the 1970's

there was some talk of the San Bernardino County Museum purchasing the bell and hanging it from a cottonwood tree next to the new structure. However, the Mission Inn went through a series of bankruptcies and purchases in the 1970's and 1980's, and nothing came of the proposal. The Inn is now closed while the current new owners remodel and restore it. Consequently, the bell will not be on public view again until 1988 or later.

TIPS FOR STAGECOACH TRAVELERS

By Russ McDonald



In 1877, Wells Fargo printed a circular designed to make the stagecoach traveler aware of some of the problems of travel. They gave the following advice;

"The best seat inside a stage is the one next to the driver. Even if you have a tendency to seasickness when riding backwards-you'll get over it and will get less jolts and jostling. Don't let any 'sly elph' trade you his mid-seat.

In cold weather don't ride with tight fitting boots, shoes, or gloves. When the driver asks you to get off and walk do so without grumbling. He won't request it unless absolutely necessary. If the team runs away-sit still and take your chances. If you jump, nine out of ten times you will get hurt.

In very cold weather abstain entirely from liquor when on the road: because you will freeze twice as quickly when under its influence. Don't growl at the food received at the station: stage

companies generally provide the best they can get.

Don't keep the stage waiting. Don't smoke a strong pipe inside the coach-spit on the leeward side. If you have anything to drink in a bottle pass it around. Procure your stimulants before starting as "ranch" (Stage Depot) whiskey is not "nectar."

Don't swear or lop over neighbors when sleeping. Take small change to pay expenses. Never shoot on the road as the noise might frighten the horses. Don't discuss politics or religion. Don't point out where murders have been committed especially if there are women passengers.

Don't lag at the wash basin. Don't grease your hair, because travel is dusty. Don't imagine for a moment that you are going on a picnic. Expect annoyances, discomfort and some hardship."

(Printed October 3, 1877, courtesy of Wells Fargo, San Francisco, California.)

TOPSY. THE MAIL DOG OF WATERMAN CANYON

By Arda M. Haenszel

One of the most charming stories in the history of San Bernardino is that of Topsy, the mail dog of Waterman Canyon.

Because they have been featured in literature about Calico, many people are familiar with the exploits of Dorsey, who carried mail from Calico to Bismark in the 1880s. Incidentally, according to an 1885 item in the CALICO PRINT, the dog's name was Jack, though he may have been given the other name later. He wore little saddlebags on his back, and on his trip over the ridge in the Calico Mountains, he would brook no interference from man or beast, though off duty he was a normal, friendly pet.

However, not many people today know that San Bernardino also had a canine mail carrier, like Dorsey, faithful and responsible while serving as Uncle Sam's messenger. It was Earl Buie, columnist for the SUN, who collected the story, as he often did when he put a question to the readers.

In January 1961, Dale H. Tittle of Needles sent him a photograph he had found among his things. On the back was written, "Topsy, U.S. Mail Carrier--owned by J. H. Wagner, San Bernardino, Calif., Waterman Canyon." This information Buie printed in his column, along with a request for more details.

They were not long in coming. Harry Rockoff, who had been a wagon freighter during the construction of the dam at Lake Arrowhead in the nineteen-teens, called Buie to tell him about Topsy. He said that Wagner, Topsy's master, was road foreman on the old Waterman Canyon road, and lived at the toll house in the canyon. He made the little mail bags that fitted Topsy's back, and every day he would send the little dog down the canyon to pick up his paper at the station of the old San Bernardino Valley Traction Line at Arrowhead Springs. (Buie could not resist guessing that the paper would probably have been the SUN.) Rockoff had often seen the smart little part-Shepard dog trotting along the road.

But Rockoff was not the only old timer who had known Topsy. Mrs. Clara Bidgood called Buie and said she knew the dog well. Her husband had been a forest ranger, and Topsy would visit them at their home in the canyon. She

added that Topsy's first master had been George Feetham, who was in charge of the street car station at Arrowhead Springs. Feetham, she said, taught the dog to carry the paper to Wagner, at first tying it around her neck. Later he gave Topsy to Wagner, who made the little harness for her. Everyone in the canyon knew Topsy, she said.

Then Marguerite Stanley wrote to Buie that she and her mother, Mrs. Mary Stanley, had often seen Topsy going up the canyon with the mail bags on her back. They lived in the house, built by Governor Robert W. Waterman on his ranch near the mouth of the canyon, and leased to them by Seth Marshall of the Arrowhead Springs Company.

Mrs. John Bright also wrote that her mother had told her about Topsy. Joe Wagner was a friend of her family. She added that Wagner loved animals.

On reading Buie's (by now) series of columns about Topsy, Mrs. Bud Rickert recalled her mother's reading her a story from a children's book called THE JUNIOR INSTRUCTOR when she was very young. It was a true story of Topsy, the mail dog, illustrated with a picture of the dog. Possibly that was the same photograph sent to Buie by Mr. Tittle of Needles.

According to the story, Topsy once almost lost her life in the performance of her duty. One winter when the streams in the canyon were overflowing, Topsy lost her balance and fell into the water. The pockets in her saddlebag filled with water and pulled her down so she couldn't swim. She managed to keep her head above water as the current bore her along. Luckily she became wedged between two boulders. When she didn't arrive home as usual with the mail, Wagner was worried and went out to look for her---and found her. After being warmed and dried and rested, Topsy felt good as ever.

Yes, there really was a canine mail carrier in Waterman Canyon. A comparison of eyewitness accounts puts the time a few years past the turn of the century. Taught by her first master to carry the newspaper, she began to carry mail as well, and Topsy served as faithfully as any human counterpart. In her photograph, her saddlebag is marked, "Please don't bother me--U.S. Mail."



LYTLE CREEK

By Martha Gaines Stoebe

The party of Mormons that left Salt Lake City in March of 1851 for California was divided into three groups. Arriving in Cajon Pass in June, two of the groups stopped to camp at Sycamore Grove while the group under the direction of Captain Andrew Lytle went on over the little pass to the south and camped near the mouth of a swift-flowing mountain stream. Captain Andrew Lytle had become acquainted with this delightful stream while he was in California with the Mormon Battalion in 1847 and he remembered the short trail from Cajon Pass. The stream must have seemed a blessing to the weary travelers so it's no wonder they named it for their leader, Captain Lytle. The settlers all remained in their camps during that summer, living in their wagons or temporary shelters while the leaders looked around for land to buy and the best location for their city. During that time a daughter was born to Captain and Mrs. Lytle; other children were born in the camps that summer too and a school was started at Sycamore Grove for the older children. No doubt many of the people camping at Sycamore Grove, both adults and children, found their way to the stream to enjoy cooling off during the hot weather.

By the fall of that year the Mormon Stockade was started and most of the first settlers, including the Lytles, built homes inside the stockade; the



CAPTAIN ANDREW LYTLE

town was soon organized, with Mormons in all the leadership positions at first. As more and more people kept arriving, both Mormons and non-Mormons, and as there seemed to be no threat from Indians, houses were soon built outside the stockade, some near the banks of Lytle Creek. The Mormons did not realize it at first, but Lytle Creek was the western boundary of their land.



LYTLE CREEK CANYON



A Lytle Creek residence, about 1910

Captain and Mrs. Lytle returned with their family to Salt Lake City when the Mormons were called back by Brigham Young in 1857, but they returned to San Bernardino in 1860. Mrs. Lytle, nee Hannah Hull of Pennsylvania, wrote in later years that her husband had become interested in mining and in Lytle Creek Canyon when he was in California in 1847 with the Mormon Battalion; since gold was discovered in Lytle Creek Canyon in 1860, he arrived back in San Bernardino at just the right time. His wife said that he continued his interest in Lytle Creek Canyon, but he also held several offices of public trust in the city during the ten years before his death in 1870. Captain and Mrs. Lytle had eight children. The family home was located on Third Street near the Santa Fe depot; Mrs. Lytle continued to live there with some of the children until her death in 1893.

Lytle Creek has its source in the San Gabriel Mountains, draining 45 square miles of watershed into Lytle Creek Canyon which was known to the early Spaniards as Canon de Los Negros; the water poured from the mouth of the canyon south to the Santa Ana River. In the early days and until the 1920s, the water continued to flow all year through the "wash" just west of San Bernardino; the banks of the creek were lined with Sycamores, Cottonwoods, Alders and wild grape vines, and there was always good fishing. Over the years floods have changed the channel of Lytle Creek many times; sometimes the channel would divide and leave an island in the "wash". These islands, as well as the bottom land below the Rialto Bench, offered especially fertile soil and many families settled on this land and lived there until another flood came along. Two Mormon families, the Hancocks and Roberds, built homes and planted their crops and fruit trees on a large island located from about 9th Street to Mill Street. Much later a large island just south of Highland Avenue was the home of the Pelky Cox family; the Cox ranch had been located on the bottom land below the Bench between Highland and Baseline for years until the flood of 1913 washed through it, making a new channel on the Rialto side and leaving the family home and the citrus ranch on an island. George Lord grew his prize-winning muscat grapes on the bottom land under the Rialto Bench north of Highland Avenue. The Raynor family home, located under the Rialto Bench at about 9th Street, was quite a show place in the early days; it had canals through the

grounds and landscaping that made it look like a "little Venice". The Bench is actually the outline of an earthquake fault, and the Raynor home was near enough to one of the splinters of the fault so there were cienegas and artesian wells to keep the water running in the canals. By the 1920s there was no longer enough water, so the Raynors moved their house into the town of Rialto. During all the early years people from San Bernardino and Rialto enjoyed picnicking under the shade of trees beside the delightful stream, and there was good fishing anywhere in the "wash" all year round until the early 1920s. Then, all of a sudden, the water from Lytle Creek no longer flowed swiftly from the mouth of the canyon and, except during a flood, the "wash" dried up. In order to understand the reason for this, it will be necessary to go back to the beginning of the town of Rialto.

Although there were some people living on the west side of Lytle Creek before then, George Lord and the Raynors being among them, the town of Rialto did not begin until the advent of the railroad. When they heard that the Santa Fe Railroad planned to build a line from San Bernardino to Los Angeles, a group of bankers from Los Angeles formed a company called the "Semi-Tropic Land and Water Co." and bought all the land that is now Rialto, Fontana, Bloomington, and more; Water was essential to the new town; Rialto is situated on a plateau with rich, gravelly, loam soil but no water, entirely unlike the San Bernardino valley to the east. The Mormons found a valley with mountain streams running through it, many artesian wells, and water two feet underground for the digging. Needless to say, the first people to live west of Lytle Creek settled on or near the bottom land so they would have plenty of water from the stream.



Semi-Tropic Land and Water Co. on Riverside Avenue, Rialto, 1897



Looking west on Foothill
Boulevard (Highway 66) at
Sierra Avenue, Fontana, 1926.

The company started Rialto out well; they laid out the town near the railroad tracks, built the beautiful Hotel Rialto, planted trees, and built the Rialto Canal, a cement-lined ditch, which brought water for the town directly south from the mouth of Lytle Creek Canyon. It was an attractive town and, after the railroad got started in 1887, people began buying lots and building homes. Unfortunately, the Semi-Tropic Company did not have as good luck with the area that is now Fontana; they called that town Rosena and a few settlers came but they had to give up for lack of water. As a result of this, the company could not pay off its mortgage to the San Francisco Savings Union and it went bankrupt in 1896. Fortunately some Rialto residents had formed a small water company to take over enough water rights in Lytle Creek to keep Rialto supplied. After the bankruptcy, the original company went through several hands and finally became the Fontana Development Company; this company kept its headquarters in Rialto, owned many acres of land in or near Rialto as well as all the land that is now Fontana, and 75% of the water from Lytle Creek. Mr. Miller, President of the Fontana Development Company was a resident of Rialto and in 1911 he was asked to be chairman of the incorporation committee; he was successful at that and the town was incorporated. The first city officers were elected and things went well for a time until it became evident that the Fontana Development Company was trying to run the town; Mr. Miller had many plans for Rialto that did not agree with the ideas of the City Council. The people of Rialto began to be resentful of Mr. Miller, and when he realized that they would not go along with his plans, he moved the Fontana Development Company to the small town of Rosena in 1913,

renamed it Fontana, and put his plans to work there. By the early 1920s, the Fontana Development Company, now the Fontana Union Water Company, diverted its share of the water from Lytle Creek at the mouth of the canyon and took it to Fontana for irrigation, so that's why the "wash" is mostly dry today. There are 500 miles of pipeline in the system to Fontana. The only way to see that swift-flowing stream today is to go into Lytle Creek Canyon; there you can still enjoy camping and picnicking by the stream.

JANET MILES

By Penny Holcomb

Janet Miles: Member first graduation class from San Bernardino Union High School in 1919.

Janet's grandmother came from Scotland to Nova Scotia. Her grandfather whose name was Boyd also came to Nova Scotia with his family who were Royalists living in the vicinity of Boston at the time of the revolution. His family later moved to Ontario, Canada where he was born on their farm. He came to Nova Scotia to visit cousins and there met Janet's grandmother. The Boyds lived in Ontario, Canada and had nine children. Four of the daughters settled in San Bernardino. Mary Boyd Smith married a Bostonian who developed tuberculosis and was advised to move west. In 1880 the Smiths bought land on North "F" Street and built a three room house. That house is still a part of the house in which Janet lives. Janet donated her aunt's wedding dress to the County Museum. Mary became ill and her sister Sarah (known as Sadie) moved to San Bernardino to take care of her. Mary died soon thereafter. Sadie married a building contractor named Raitt whom Sadie met while he was building the old Sturgess Academy. He also built the Court House on Court Street. The street originally being the driveway for the SUHR house, (he was a local jeweler.)

Sadie lived in the house which Mary had owned on North "F" Street. Her husband added a parlor onto the front of the house. Sadie persuaded her sister Adelia who had married Theodor Mills to move from Ontario, Canada to San Bernardino because there was more work to be had. They lived at Arrowhead and 3rd, which was the residential area of the town at that time. Other people besides the Suhrs, were the Skelmans, the Wozencraft and Carters who had a

Racquet store in which Carter underwear for children was sold. One Carter, Mable, married Fred Seccomb. Meantime Sadie's younger sister, Helen Boyd, had also moved to San Bernardino.

Janet was born in 1901. Her mother died when she was three months old. She then went to live with her Aunt Sadie at the "F" street address where she resides today, having lived there with her husband W.D. Miles.

As a child, of course, San Bernardino was a small town—everyone knew everyone else and half of them were related. There was a movie house between F and H on 3rd Street called the Temple. Janet would rake leaves to earn ten cents in order to go to the Saturday matinee. There she saw Flora Fleish, John Bunny, U.S. Hart, and Dustin Forman.

Janet started school at the 9th Street School. Her principal was Bessie Hattery and her teacher was Bess Matt. She then went to the "F" Street school from the 5th grade to the 8th grade. She had the same teacher, Georgia Lawrence.

San Bernardino High School was opened in 1916 and Janet was a freshman, there being no classes held for any higher grades. The school was built quite a ways from town on farm land owned by Mr. Anderson. Everyone walked to school unless it rained, in which case they walked to "D" Street, caught the electric Big Car and rode as far as 17th Street.

The students took Teaching, Engineering and Commercial courses. They had dances and football games, traveling to Riverside, Colton and Rialto. There was singing chorus, drama, Girls League and the plays at the Opera House to attend. Mrs. Martha Waters Kiplinger was the director of the Opera House and there presented many acts and plays of very high quality. Her father was the brother of Byron Waters.

Janet has very generously given some very lovely items to the Historical Society and we value her membership and active support.

Janet also recalls Mam Holcomb visiting Aunt Sadie and talking of the days when she crossed the prairies in a covered wagon, first to Salt Lake and then to San Bernardino. Pap and Mam Holcomb lived on the south side of Union Street not far from Sadie's house along with Mammie nearby and also Charles Holcomb and family in another house nearby. Union Street was referred to as 'Holcomb's Alley.' It only exists between "E" Street and "F" Street.

City of San Bernardino Historical and Pioneer Society

P.O. Box 875

San Bernardino, California 92402

The City of San Bernardino Historical Society was founded on November 16, 1977 and Incorporated by the State as a Non-profit Organization on July 20, 1978.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETINGS

5:30 p.m. Thurs., Jan. 4

MICHAEL HARTLESS of the San Bernardino County Museum, will give a presentation on the old Indian settlement of Amuscupiabit, located in the Cajon Pass.

3:00 p.m. Thurs., Jan. 25

DIRECTORS MEETING

5:30 p.m. Thurs., Feb. 1

DR. LEO LYMAN, history professor at Victor Valley College and descendant of early Mormon pioneer Amasa Lyman, will talk about the Mormons who settled San Bernardino.

3:00 p.m. Thurs., Feb. 22

DIRECTORS MEETING

5:30 p.m. Thurs., March 1

PAULIENA LA FUZE, well known author of the book, SAGA OF THE SAN BERNARDINOS, will talk about the people who settled and worked in the San Bernardino mountain areas.

3:00 p.m. Thurs., March 29

DIRECTORS MEETING

5:30 p.m. Thurs., April 5

CLIFFORD J. WALKER will discuss the subject of his interesting book, BACK DOOR TO CALIFORNIA: The story of the Mojave River Trail.

ODYSSEY is edited by Russ McDonald and printed by ACTION INSTANT PRESS.

Some people enjoy looking for mistakes. So I have included a few in this issue.



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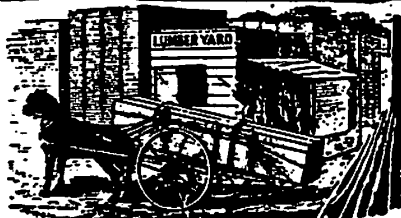
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