

THE ALPINE ECHO

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ECHOES OF THE PAST

The Old Timer

By Niel Galloway

I am going to start this early A. M. before I get tired. Now Bea La Force mentioned that well in front of the log cabin. A family by the name of Sherman started that place. He moved there from Japatul. He was a Spanish-American War veteran. They had three children, two boys and a girl. The girl Lucy married Rush Duncan. Sherman moved one of San Diego's old open street cars onto that corner and sold pop and ice cream on weekends and holidays. Artie liked pop, so on the sly drank some pop and filled the bottles with water and put the cap back on. When Pop Sherman found it out, Artie took his meals standing for awhile. Lucy moved to Washington. I don't know where the two boys are. One of the incidents I remember about that well—which was a dug well and had boards around it about three feet high to which there was a pulley and rope and bucket to draw the water up, an Alpine visitor was leaning over to look into that well and his gold watch fell in. He was told that A. L. McNett could probably get it—McNett came down with a horse and large bucket, hitched the horse to it and bailed that well out, so retrieved the watch. After that there was a pump installed. I think it was Fosters that put it there. Fosters came there from Peutz Valley and built onto that old street car and started the Log Cabin Café. He died quite a long time ago. His wife, Emma, passed on quite recently. She was 90 years old or better.

After Mr. Foster died, Clarence took over until they sold it. The Fosters had three children, two boys and a girl. It was a well known eating place and always served excellent meals.

In 1909 the people of San Diego county voted something over one million dollars to improve the roads of San Diego county.

Before that they were mostly narrow trails in the back country and the county got around once a year to grade them with horse equipment. Now these roads were all put in with mules after the bonds passed so they had to select the easiest places to build them. I can't remember who all the road commissioners were but Ed Fletcher, Scripps and Spreckels and two more prominent people were the commissioners then. They built roads to their places first and as the roads advanced Eastward, the money got less and less so the roads got narrower and narrower. However, that was the start of good roads. The present Highway 80 was part of it. This was all dirt roads maintained by horses. As horses couldn't get on all the roads soon enough after a rain some of the roads got pretty rough. In 1915 I purchased my first auto, a 1913 four cylinder Buick from D. H. Ogden. He advanced to a 6 cylinder Buick, then 2 Stutz, a Steamer and later a Lincoln. Some of us got together to improve that road. We made some split log drags out of the butts of old telephone poles and after each rain all winter smoothed out this road. I started at the El Capitan School three miles west of here and went part way up the Alpine grade, now Arnold Way. Mr. Frazee, a caretaker of the old Arnold home, picked it up there and carried it above the Willows; D. H. Ogden took it from there to the foot of the Viejas grade; Marshall and Palmer of the Hulbert Grove graded it clear to their place. There was an article in the San Diego Union stating that was the finest piece of road in San Diego County. This work was all donated. We were not so burdened with taxes as we are now. We maintained that road until the first pavement was put in in 1921, or perhaps the County had some mechanized equipment before that, I don't remember. I think Palmer, Fred Walker, my brother and I are all that is left of that team.

Now I am going to get back to the Viejas valley again. Ogden went into the pure-bred registered Herford cattle. He would never tell what he paid for a bull by the name of Repeater. After Baron Long got the ranch, he traded the bull to Ben Garboni for a few tons of hay. However, it was \$5,000 or more Ogden paid and you could pick out his ancestors in Garboni's herd for several generations. Ogden had George Benton working there when he sold. As I told you earlier George Benton working there when he sold. As I told you earlier George Benton took part in many cattle drives across the Imperial desert in the very early days, when there was no settlers there at all. George had several sons and two daughters. I think they are all living except Frank. He lived on Tavern Road when he died. Jake lives in El Cajon, Lawrence in Ramona, Clarence in the north, Elmer is superintendent of Corta Madera ranch. The two girls live in La Mesa. I will write about the Corta Madera and Robert Benton later. He was George's brother. He raised a lot of cattle in Mexico and had them confiscated by the Mexican government.

After Ogden sold the Viejas to Baron Long, he moved to San Diego and then Bonita where he died. He was a heavy drinker when I first knew him. He had two boys from his first marriage. I guess the drinking was too much for his first wife. One of his first boys worked for the county for years, in fact, just recently retired. He had one son after his second marriage. This son worked in the assessor's office for Crowell D. Eddy, the county assessor, for years before Crowell put his own son in. There was some irregularities there and Eddies' son resigned. Ogden got to seeing snakes and pink elephants. After that he never drank again but played at politics in San Diego and made life miserable for a lot of them office holding politicians. He believed in honesty in office and I think he was instrumental in forcing some out of office, some of the incompetent office holders.

Douglas Ogden was always a very good friend of mine clear up until he died, from a heart attack. He had a bad heart for several years. His wife knew nothing about it until the night he died. She was one of the Emorys.

Douglas and some more of us once tried to change the form of taxation. We proposed to have a transaction tax of 2 per cent. No taxes on real estate until you sold it. Every time you got a dollar you paid 2 cents. That would be paid for everything and none of this deferred taxation by bonded indebtedness. It would give our aged citizens \$100 the first of each month less any other income they may have. They had to spend it each month on themselves, if not they got that much less the next month. You would have got a tax bill on the county and city bonds. You voted but that 2 per cent would have paid for all the state bonds and run the government. We thought the man that got the most money was the most able to pay the tax. That sales tax was one of our temporary taxes to take care of the schools. It is still temporary and took away from the schools like all taxes. They are never repealed. The right to tax is the right to confiscate your property. I have known of several that lost everything.

During the '29 depression Ogden got some gold and put it in his safe deposit box, quite a lot of it. When he went to get some; it was gone and he had a deposit slip on the bank for it. That was one of Roosevelt's. Up to that time Ogden was a good Democrat. That cured him. We better get our government back to the people instead of turning it over to the Bureaucrats. It takes two or more government dollars to get one back, a very poor percentage.