

# **JOURNAL of the Riverside Historical Society**

**Number Thirteen**

**February 2009**

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## Forward

Welcome to the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the Journal of the Riverside Historical Society. Through this journal, it is the hope of the Society to bring to the public the latest in research/writing about the history of Riverside. I believe we've continued this tradition with the articles contained herein, and I think you'll agree.

As a salute to the 100th anniversary of the Easter Sunrise Service on Mt. Rubidoux, Glenn Wenzel begins this edition of the journal with an interesting look at the development of that annual event. Glenn has done extensive research into the history of Mt. Rubidoux, and is currently putting it all together in a book which will hopefully be published soon.

Next, Bill Bell and Casey Tibbet give us an examination of the 5-Points in La Sierra. This is an area of the city that is largely omitted when discussing local history, and we are glad that Bill and Casey were able to render an enlightening article about the development of that area and the influence that La Sierra University had on it.

Finally, Kathleen Dever gives us some insight into Judge George Freeman, who played a pivotal role in Riverside's legal history for many years. Much of Kathleen's research was done when she helped to establish the Sunnyslope Cemetery Stroll, an annual fundraiser to preserve Corona's historic cemetery.

I hope you enjoy this latest incarnation of the journal, and will look forward to many others.

Steve Lech  
Editor

## About the Authors

**Bill Bell** is a Redlands native and has lived in the San Geronimo Pass for 25 years. He has worked professionally as a musician and composer and has over 20 years of library experience, both academic and public. He was a member of a grant-funded project, the Riverside Local History Resource Center, and has researched and written extensively on local history in the Inland Empire. For the past two years he has worked as a historical researcher for a local cultural resources consulting firm.

**Kathleen Dever** has been researching Southern California's history since 1974. She has helped the City of Corona set up guidelines for moving historic buildings and helped formulate the city's adoption of the Mills Act. She currently runs a cottage industry business called *History Worth Repeating*. Along with Judy Whitson, she authored an *Images of America* series book entitled *Lake Mathews and Gavilan Hills*.

**Casey Tibbet** was born and raised in Pasadena, California. After graduating from the University of California, Riverside, she became a full-time resident of Riverside and worked as a city planner for thirteen years. In 2003, she returned to UCR where she received an M.A. in History (Historic Preservation). For the past five years she has worked as an architectural historian for a local cultural resources management consulting firm. She is currently a Riverside Historical Society board member and is particularly interested in mid-20<sup>th</sup> century California history and architecture.

**Glenn Wenzel** has served as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Riverside since 1988. His love of history dates back to his undergraduate days in college. A grade school field trip with one of his seven children's classes piqued his interest in Mount Rubidoux and its history. His research concentrated on the connection between Mount Rubidoux and Frank Miller in the early 90s when he was asked to give a Mount Rubidoux history lecture to the Mission Inn Docents. This led to an ever growing collection of postcards and other Mount Rubidoux ephemera.

# **Anecdotes on Frank Miller and the Mount Rubidoux Easter Pilgrimages**

*by Glenn Wenzel*

Have you ever watched the Fourth of July fireworks on Mount Rubidoux? Have you ever hiked to the top? Have you ever attended one of the Easter Sunrise Services? Have you ever wondered about the Riverside historic events which are connected to this landmark towering over the downtown area of Riverside? With the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First Easter service coming in April of 2009 this is a good time to revisit the history of these Easter services on Mount Rubidoux and the historic connections with Frank Miller, the Master of the Mission Inn and early promoter of Riverside. We need to remember that Mr. Miller had a gift of dramatizing events and situations. We will examine facts, look at myths and try to sort through a wealth of information. We will allow some of the writers of a past generation address us. They seem to have a way with words that is lost today. Enjoy them.

## **The Annual Easter Sunrise Pilgrimage**

On Palm Sunday, April 4, 1909, Jacob Riis, the speaker at the dedication of Huntington Drive in 1907, was again at Riverside's Mission Inn to speak. The *Riverside Enterprise* reported that Mr. Riis "prophesied an annual pilgrimage to the summit of Mt. Rubidoux to do honor to the Mission Fathers in honor of the leader of whom, Father Junipero Serra, the cross has been erected upon the summit."<sup>1</sup> Years later in a letter Hutchings recounted that Riis "recalled a Christmas Eve torch light pilgrimage of his boyhood in Denmark and urged Mr. Miller to do that on the mountain. We decided, however, that the weather would be uncertain at Christmas and it was Jacob Riis who gave the final thought of having an Easter Sunrise pilgrimage instead."<sup>2</sup>

The *Riverside Enterprise* on Friday, April 9, 1909, published an article titled "Sunrise Service Easter Morning on Mt. Rubidoux." The article informs us that following Riis' comments the matter was discussed and a

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committee of three was assembled. On April 10 the *Enterprise* carried the following announcement:

The sunrise Easter services on Mount Rubidoux will begin promptly at sunrise, 5:29 a.m. and will be as follows:

Song: *The Morning Light is Breaking*

Silent Prayer.

Cornet solo, *Holy City* by Gustav Hilverkus

Song: *In the Cross of Christ I Glory*

The Lord's Prayer, repeated together. Pastors are requested to lead this from the positions they occupy at the time.

The committee desires it distinctly understood that this service is not under the auspices of any particular religious denomination or sect, but that anyone who believes in the cross as a symbol of Christianity is cordially and respectfully invited to be present.<sup>3</sup>

The Sunday edition of the *Enterprise* promoted the service: "Promptly at 5:20 o'clock this morning, when a golden Easter sun casts its first rays over the picturesque summit of Mount Rubidoux, a devout assembly of Riverside's religious residents will have gathered on the mountain top to hold simple, but impressive services in honor of the day....It is sanguinely expected that today=s sunrise service will be so successful that its popularity will warrant annual repetition of the Easter morning services at the foot of the lofty cross."<sup>4</sup> The *Enterprise* estimated the number of people attending as two hundred or more. The reporter went on and described the atmosphere surrounding this first service as follows:

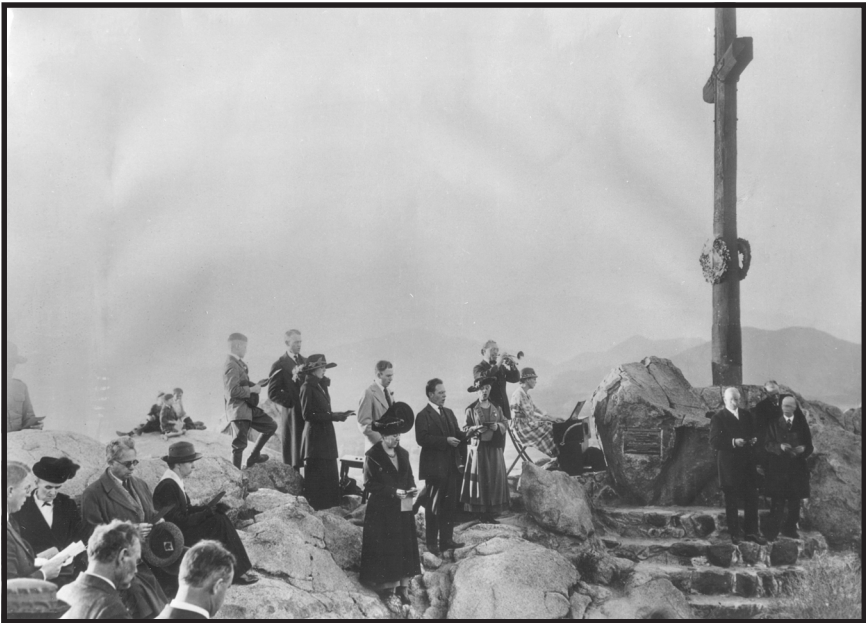
Clothed in her Easter morning garb, Mt. Rubidoux presented to the pilgrims a picture long to be remembered. Far below the beautiful city of Riverside, seeming from this height a city in miniature, patterned perfectly by some master hand, delighted the eye and as the worshipers gazed down upon their homes, the spreading trees, the broad avenues and fruitful orchards,

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and then far off towards the sun-kissed mountain peaks, they felt that they were indeed blessed and turned reverently to the great cross in a spirit of gratitude.<sup>5</sup>

A photograph taken at this first service appeared at least twice in later years in the *Press Enterprise*. This photo shows Gustavus Hilverkus playing the trumpet and Allis Miller seated at a portable organ. Also identified in the picture are Frank Miller, Marion Clark (who became Mrs. Miller in 1910) and DeWitt Hutchings, Allis' future husband.<sup>6</sup> DeWitt Hutchings concurs in his 1926 booklet, *The Story of Mount Rubidoux*: "The Mission Inn cornettist, Gustav Hilverkus, played the Holy City. Mrs. DeWitt V. Hutchings (then Miss Allis Miller), daughter of the Master of the Inn, accompanied the singing on a portable organ."<sup>7</sup>



*1909 Easter Sunrise Service  
(Riverside Central Library Local History Collection)*



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About two years later Elizabeth Freeman, one of those who attended that service, published a commemorative booklet entitled: *A Pilgrimage to Rubidoux*. She included information on the first service, a poem written about the occasion, pictures and a list of 204 people who attended the first service.<sup>8</sup>

Every year since that first service in 1909, except one year in the 1920s and for the war years of 1943-1945, this Sunrise Easter service has been held on the top of Mount Rubidoux. The first year was a success and people wanted the service to continue. However, Hutchings later remembered the beginnings and wrote: "It was rather a struggle at first. No organization wanted to father it and shoulder it, but finally a permanent committee was worked out with the Mayor as permanent chairman."<sup>9</sup> There might be a committee, but Frank Miller and his son-in-law would be the driving forces for years to come.

There are also arguments that there were earlier sunrise services in Riverside and even Easter pilgrimages to the top of Mount Rubidoux. Tom Patterson explained that according to newspaper accounts in 1906 the Methodist Church held an Easter sunrise service at 6:00 o'clock for their young people. But this was held inside the church. There were also pilgrimages up the mount, but they were not on Easter morning.<sup>10</sup> Earlier services were held in other places, but they were held by specific churches or denominations. Frank Miller claimed that the Mount Rubidoux Sunrise Easter Service was the oldest continual outdoor non-denominational Easter service in the United States.

The second service in 1910 kept the simple format with just a couple of additions. DeWitt Hutchings later wrote that Henry Van Dyke made suggestions for the format of the service.<sup>11</sup> A newly composed Easter song by Arthur B. Benton, one of the architects of the Mission Inn, was sung by worshipers.<sup>12</sup>

Over the years the service changed only slightly but included different people. The hymn *In the Cross of Christ I Glory*, sung at the first service in 1909, was included in almost every service since. The song *The Holy City* has been played by a trumpet or coronet almost every year. In 1911 the poem *God of the Open Air* was first read by DeWitt Hutchings. This

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poem would become an annual part of the Easter service. DeWitt would read the poem numerous times over the next four decades.

By 1913 the service was popular with people throughout Southern California. A writer and artist for the *Los Angeles Times*, Hugh McDowell described how he and a group left the *Times* office at 12:45 a.m. traveling along Foothill Blvd. through Cucamonga and down through Wineville, arriving in Riverside at 4:45 a.m. He claimed that they were the first automobile there and made a quick trip up the mountain at that hour. He wrote:

...in the absence of police, the “slow” signs were not considered to be in force and the little Ford car made the top on the high gear and in what must have been somewhere near record time. Remarks by the passengers when the top was reached indicated that there had been mighty little weight on the seats under them when some of the hairpin turns were made on the way up. But to the credit of the artist’s wife be it said, she did not utter a sound of apprehension, although one of the men sat still in the car for half an hour after it stopped, to rest and calm his nerves.<sup>13</sup>

George Wharton James described the opening of the 1913 service: “Exactly at the moment the snow-clad summits of Mt. San Gorgonio reflected the brilliant rays of the morning sun Gustav Hilverkus sent the strains of *The Holy City* echoing from the bell of his cornet over the hushed and attentive thousands.”<sup>14</sup> Dr. Henry Van Dyke, the author *God of the Open Air*, attended this service in 1913 and read his poem and pronounced the benediction.<sup>15</sup> Dr. Van Dyke was a Presbyterian minister with ties to Riverside. DeWitt Hutchings had once been his student at Princeton University, and Riverside resident Cornelius Rumsey had once been a member of Van Dyke’s New York parish. Dr. Van Dyke had stayed at the Mission Inn in May of 1903 and now ten years later was invited back to read his poem. Before reading the poem Dr. Van Dyke explained that its inspiration came from the fact that it was under the open blue sky that the Great Master had lived, taught, lifted up his cross and walked

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among the flowers on the first Easter morning.<sup>16</sup> For this fifth anniversary of the service he wrote four new special lines.<sup>17</sup>

And so, on Easter morn, His victory won,  
Breaking the mortal bars that seal the tomb,  
In a fair garden filled with flowers abloom,  
The risen Jesus met the rising sun.<sup>18</sup>



*1913 Easter Sunrise Service  
Dr. Henry Van Dyke reading  
(Author's Collection)*

occasion, *Anthem to the Easter Dawn*, which was sung by Riverside native, Marcella Craft.<sup>20</sup>

Graduating from Riverside High School in 1893, Marcella studied voice first in Boston before going abroad to Italy and then Germany. She became a celebrated opera singer at the Munich Opera. Frank Miller had

In 1914 Carrie Jacob Bond, the songwriter of *A Perfect Day*, attended the service for the first time. The next year would provide a number of highlights. For the 1915 service the cross, hung with diamonds of glass, was lit up with searchlights for three hours before the service giving a shining brilliance in the dark night. Initial discussions regarding this illuminating of the cross included an idea of shining a searchlight on the cross all the way from the ornamented smoke stack at the Mission Inn. The final decision placed the lights much closer. A picture taken by Harry Scott of the illuminated cross shows the spotlights located just below the cross.<sup>19</sup> Bond would return that year having written a special song for the

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been one of the contributors who had helped in the initial cost for her Boston music studies. When Craft and her mother returned to Riverside in 1914 because of the impending war, they took up residence at the Mission Inn.<sup>21</sup> In 1915 Marcella made her first appearance as soloist for the annual Easter Sunrise Service. Miss Craft was very excited to be home in Riverside for this event. She told the *Daily Press*: "How good it is to be with my own people; people whom I have known all my life. It is a pleasure I have always looked forward to and I can only say that I am happy for the opportunity to sing on Easter morning for Riverside."<sup>22</sup>

Carrie Jacobs Bond related an interesting story about this service:

I wrote an anthem to be sung at the Easter morning service....The orchestra and the choir arrived at the top of the mountain in plenty of time, but the crowd was so dense that the director was not able to get through, and as the sun does not wait for anyone, it commenced to rise and the anthem had to be sung as the sun was rising. Evidently, those people thought they could sing without a director. The band began and so did the singers, but not within two bars were they together. The band was playing as well as it could, and as loudly, and the singers were doing their best. I was just far enough away to be able to hear the most awful discords I had ever heard in my life. I walked straight up that perpendicular hill, cried to those singers, "Stop! Stop!" Of course they could not hear me, but they saw me waving my hands wildly and stop they did. The band saved the day and Marcella Craft sang the solo beautifully, but I think it was one of the most embarrassing moments.<sup>23</sup>

None of the newspaper accounts mention this calamity. Instead they praise the work of the choir, especially the singing of Miss Craft. The reporter raved: "Clear and beautiful above the great chorus rose her voice, carrying the glorious Easter message of the risen Lord."<sup>24</sup> Also in attendance was John Steven McGroarty, the author of *Mission Play*, which had been written at the Mission Inn. He would write an article on the significance of the Easter Pilgrimage in the next day's *Riverside Daily*

*Press*.<sup>25</sup> The 1915 Easter service also witnessed the flags of the nations at war flown beneath the cross while a prayer for peace was offered.<sup>26</sup>



*1915 Easter Sunrise Service  
Marcella Craft at foot of cross  
(Author's Collection)*

Another first in 1915 was the introduction of special excursions to bring people to Riverside for the event. The Southern Pacific on Saturday, April 3, ran a special train consisting of eight Pullman cars which carried people from Los Angeles. The train remained on a siding in Riverside and returned to Los Angeles on Sunday evening. In addition the Pacific Electric ran special excursion cars from Los Angeles, Corona, Redlands, San Bernardino, Arlington and other communities. The estimate of the number of pilgrims was six thousand who ascended by auto and another eight to nine thousand who walked up the paths.<sup>27</sup>

Part of the ritual for many who attended the Sunrise Easter Pilgrimage was arriving on Saturday and spending the night at the

Mission Inn. Shortly before the 1916 service Sara Langstroth described her previous experience.

Four o'clock on Easter Sunday morning! Dark as midnight yet, but no more sleep possible, for throughout the courts and corridors of the inn rang the jubilant notes of a cornet. "Joy to the Word! The Lord is come!" Up one corridor and down another pealed the triumphant strains of the old hymn, rousing the last sleeper. Soon, with the hundreds of other pilgrims stopping at the inn, we were dressed and down in the lobby,

drinking hot coffee, and shivering in the cold of a California early morning, despite the great fires already glowing on the hearths. More than twelve hundred pilgrims had packed the inn to its capacity that night. Many had been turned away....All the interesting people who congregate in southern California in winter had come to Riverside for Easter. And the object of their pilgrimage, as of ours, was the now famous sunrise service held each Easter dawn on the summit of Mt. Rubidoux, that bare and stony cross-crowned peak just a little way beyond the orange city. Outside the inn, in the moonlit darkness of the palm court, the automobiles were champing and snorting. As soon as we had swallowed our coffee we snuggled into our warmest wraps, for believe him not who says warm wraps are not needed in southern California, took our seats, and were soon outside the town and in the long procession of automobiles climbing Mt. Rubidoux.<sup>28</sup>

Physical changes to the mountain were made prior to the 1916 service. The Serra Cross was “turned to face directly east as if to welcome directly the morning sun.”<sup>29</sup> Immediately below the cross many of the huge boulders were moved and cement covered steps were constructed on which the pilgrims could sit and rest. A big wall which cut off the view of the valley and the rising sun was removed and sixteen feet cut away so that the summit area was shifted east enlarging the area. The down road was also widened and three places provided for dropping off passengers.<sup>30</sup>

Beginning at midnight and continuing at twenty minute intervals until the service was ready to start, Harold Gleason, organist at the Mission Inn, played old familiar hymns on chimes installed at the summit for the service.<sup>31</sup>

For the 1916 service George Osbourne, the famous actor who played Father Serra in *The Mission Play*, read the poem by Van Dyke, *God of the Open Air*. A review stated: “The commanding presence of the quiet man, the compelling force of his powerful voice and magnetism of his wonderful

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personality went to make up a perfect rendition” of the poem.<sup>32</sup> Sometimes the lavish praise reached incredible proportions. John Kendrick Bangs, American author and world traveler, proclaimed following the 1916 service:

The quiet, simple dignity of the brief ceremony; the reverential attitude of that vast multitude; the wonderful rugged beauty of the surroundings, spoke more eloquently of the hold of the Nazarene upon the heart and faith of the world today than all the gorgeous magnificence of the service at St. Peters or St. Pauls; moved me more deeply than the pageantry of the royal cortege, and I could not but feel as I descended the hill that memorable morning that I had been brought into a closer, firmer, sweeter relationship to the faith in which I had been reared than by any other event in the whole range of my experience.<sup>33</sup>

Another reporter again attending in 1916 was John Steven McGroarty, this time for the *Los Angeles Times*. McGroarty was moved to write as only a playwright could:

I was among those who ascended the swinging trails of the mountain an hour before midnight to watch the coming of the expected throngs through the hours that were to intervene before the dawn. And never have I been so well rewarded for a sacrifice of sleep and rest and physical comfort. It has left me with memories that neither time nor tide, nor death, itself, can take away...It seemed that I could hear the order to set the stage. The cyclorama of the deep blue sky was made taut, the electrician was in the wings at the dimmers, the blues and yellows and reds were turned on from the borders; then the “foots.”...And then Marcella Craft was singing. It was the dawn of the resurrection. A wistful girl who had gone from Riverside to learn to sing had

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come back in triumph from the alien places and was thrilling the souls of her countrymen on a mountain height above her native city on Easter morning.<sup>34</sup>

Prior to the 1917 service additional physical changes were made to Mount Rubidoux. Sometime in the months before all the old trails were reworked so that the footpaths never crossed the automobile road, but with tunnels and overhead crossings it was now possible for those walking to safely trek to the top.<sup>35</sup>

In 1917 a thick fog fell over the area. A writer for the *Riverside Enterprise* wrote: "The sky was overhung with fog banks, and early in the evening the mist settled heavily down upon the valley, but at the summit of the mountain the cross glowed with clear, unwavering light, a beacon to the thousand of Easter worshipers. Toward the morning the fog grew thicker and thicker, but the steady radiance of the cross was undiminished."<sup>36</sup>

The March 31, 1918 issue of the *Enterprise* first mentions that "the paths will be lighted by Boy Scouts with lanterns."<sup>37</sup> The Boy Scouts after this would become a regular feature for the Easter service. The poem, *God of the Open Air*, was read by Otis Skinner, a famous Shakespearean actor of the day.<sup>38</sup> The reporter described his rendition of the poem in this way: "The voice is so modulated as to bring out every shade of meaning of the great poem. It was a powerful demonstration of the possibilities of a human voice speaking in the open air to thousands of people."<sup>39</sup> With the war still raging in Europe, Frank Miller was quoted: "If we ever needed to observe the Easter service, we need it this year; with no ostentation, but as an expression of the sure and abiding belief in life beyond death for those who have fallen on the battle fields of the world."<sup>40</sup> Another attendee at the 1918 service was a pickpocket. Dr. Truman W. Brophy of Chicago reported that while he was mingling with the crowd at the foot of the cross, someone "relieved him of a purse containing over \$50 in money and a check for \$100."<sup>41</sup> Even at such a sacred rite as the Easter pilgrimage, the evils of mankind were present.

Following the 1919 service Henry Tinsely wrote in the *Enterprise*: "No where else on this round earth was such a celebration yesterday



morning. There under the canopy of heaven, with the sun shedding its earliest rays over the landscape, with the everlasting mountains brooding over the scene, blossoming orchards away in every direction, semi-tropical sky overhead, soft zephyrs caressing the cheek, and thousands of men and women assembled on the summit of Mount Rubidoux to render homage to the resurrected Saviour.”<sup>42</sup> Riverside was proud of her special service then in its eleventh year. And they were proud of their home-town singer who returned after a one year absence. After the service Miss Craft posed for a picture with some of the veterans who were in Riverside for the service after serving in the recent War.<sup>43</sup> In place of the opening cornet rendition of *Holy City*, a trombone quartet played familiar hymn tunes as the prelude. This received mixed reviews. A writer for the *Enterprise* wrote: “In all of Riverside’s Easter observances it is doubtful if any music was more fetching than of the trombones yesterday.”<sup>44</sup> Meanwhile the *Press* recorded: “While it was beautiful, many who had so often heard *The Holy City* by the Riverside cornetist felt that something was missing from the program.”<sup>45</sup>

Towards the end of the 1919 service the people were distracted by the hum of an airplane. Aviator Ovar Meyerhofer, formerly of Riverside, flew over with a cameraman from Heart-Pathe to film the throngs of people. The film was already shown that evening in a Los Angeles moving picture theater and later distributed across the United States.<sup>46</sup>

Two special guests attended the 1920 service. The first was an unwanted guest, an airplane which circled over the mountain during the service and disturbed the listening pilgrims. The *Enterprise* reported that one prominent member of the community remarked afterwards: “of course we can’t control the air and as yet we have no aerial navigation rules or laws – but if kindly words will have no effect with these enterprising movie men, we’ll move a machine gun company or a couple of ‘archies’ up on the mountain next Easter. Still better, perhaps we can engage a combat squadron of airplanes to patrol the air some distance to all sides of the mountain to prevent intruders from molesting the service.”<sup>47</sup> The other special guest was Louis Rubidoux. No, not the early settler for whom the mountain was named, but his grand nephew.

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In preparation for the 1921 service, Chief of Police Diess issued a warning to all airplanes to stay away from the mountain during the service. The chief announced that “any violators will be followed by March Field planes and pilots and passengers will be placed under arrest for disturbing a religious meeting.”<sup>48</sup> The crowd for the 1921 service was estimated at over 25,000. A column in the next day’s issue of the *Enterprise* took a look at a few anecdotes from the morning:

Grown-ups are very much like children after all. Many persons in the great crowd wriggled and shifted and whispered and coughed and tittered like school children.

Silk hose and high heeled slippers were much in evidence. One woman suffered a sprained ankle when her skyscraper heel caught in a rock. Vanity! Vanity! Will they never learn?

As usual hundreds of pilgrims ascended the mountain without having eaten a bite. As a consequence toward the end of the service they were nearly famished, and not a few women showed signs of faintness. Should hot dog vendors ever be permitted on the mountain – perish the thought – they would do an enormous business.<sup>49</sup>

The attendance from 1921 was topped in 1922 as over 30,000 people from thirty-five states and various countries ascended the mount for the Easter service. The road to the top was opened to automobiles at 2:15 and the police counted seven hundred and twenty-five cars which wound their way to the top in “fascinatingly fantastic trail of fire about the rugged mountain.”<sup>50</sup> By 3:00 the area before “the speakers’ stand was packed, the overflow extending along the dip and over to the next hill peak, and still the throngs continue to arrive.”<sup>51</sup> The Boy Scouts had a busy night. For one scout it was too much. The *Enterprise* reported: “There was one pilgrim at the Easter service who failed to hear the opening of the program. He was a little Boy Scout, curled up in the shadow of a

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great boulder near the visitors' platform – fast asleep.”<sup>52</sup> At this service Frederick Warde was a special guest. After performing the part of Father Serra in John McGroarty's *Mission Play* Saturday night in San Gabriel, the seventy-one year old Warde motored to Riverside arriving after midnight. The next morning he arose for the sunrise service to deliver *God of the Open Air*.<sup>53</sup> Miss Craft offered the following comments concerning Warde:

Frederick Warde was wonderful. Dr. Henry Van Dyke's *God of the Open Air* came from his very soul. Never have I heard a more wonderful reader. The fact that he committed the poem to memory in so short a time and was able to deliver it and act it as he did is a marvelous thing to me for a man of his age. No one will ever hold the Easter pilgrims as did this man.<sup>54</sup>

Another guest at this service was Joseph Lincoln, noted author from Massachusetts. He wrote about his impressions: “I confess that while of course eager to witness the Easter services on Mount Rubidoux, I looked forward to the actual witnessing with some doubts. In the old days, the days of its beginning, when perhaps a hundred men and women climbed the hill on foot or horseback to take part in a simple religious service at sunrise, then – well, then the very simplicity and lack of assumption would, one felt, have been attractive and a guarantee of sincerity.”<sup>55</sup> After describing his experiences at the service that year Mr. Lincoln would conclude: “It seems to me that the Easter morning service at Riverside is a very real and sincerely beautiful thing. I am glad that I have been privileged to see and hear it.”<sup>56</sup> Later in 1928 when Authors' Row was added to the top of the Spanish Wing at the Mission Inn, Room 411 was named for Joseph Lincoln.

Rain fell for the first time in 1923, but this did not stop the service for the estimated fifteen thousand who still made the climb. The Rev. Kirchoffer wrote:

“Somehow one felt that the Easter service on Rubidoux had met and passed a very severe test. It never has been difficult to stand through the hours of waiting with the wonder of a clear dawn breaking over the mountains and the valley, but it was different in the rain. One could not feel that those who were there had come for something more than a sunrise, something more than a song and a poem. There were some, evidently a great number, who had come to honor their risen Lord.”<sup>57</sup>

As the great number of people waited in the rain suddenly “a faint delicate line of blue was penciled cross the eastern sky by momentarily parted clouds. At the moment, two girls in flowing white robes stepped from behind the two loftiest rocks on the mountain, just below the towering cross, and lifted their trumpets. As the last notes of the trumpet solo from Verdi’s *Aida* died away, Miss Helen Hancock appeared on the platform in a fold of the rock well below the trumpeters, and began to play *The Holy City*.”<sup>58</sup> Following this opening the rain again began to fall and would continue throughout the service.

Marcella Craft was not able to leave Munich this year. In her place Harry Robertson, a tenor from San Francisco, was the soloist. His performance was described: “He stood there hatless, head thrown back and with the rain pelting him from all sides and gave the number in his masterly and sympathetic way.”<sup>59</sup> For those who did not venture out in the rain the service was repeated that evening in the Music Room of the Mission Inn.<sup>60</sup> Later that day the Rev. Kirchoffer drove some friends back up the mountain and wrote about a glorious sight they saw.

“It was still raining, but to the west the sun broke through the black-banked clouds for a few minutes. Then the miracle happened. Rising almost out of Fairmount Park a perfect rainbow raised its arch over our beloved Riverside. Oh, the delicacy, the beauty, the wonder and the hope of it. And at the end of the bow a pot of gold? No, far better than that. It

ended, so far as we could tell, directly over the site of the new Community Hospital. Significant? Yes, Hopeful? Yes, again. Can it not mean that we are going to connect up Easter, with its message of the Risen Lord, directly with our community life, and carry on in a more worthy way His work of ministering to the physical ills of men.”<sup>61</sup>

In 1924 all the usual preparations were made. Marcella Craft left Europe early in order to be back in Riverside for Easter, the choirs were trained, the trumpeter lined up, Dewitt Hutchings was ready to read once more the poem, *God of the Open Air*. However, on Thursday of Holy Week, only days before Easter, the committee in charge of the event met and unanimously cancelled the event for 1924. Why? Hoof and mouth disease was ravaging areas in California and there was fear of its spreading.<sup>62</sup>

Some Easter celebrations were held that year. The Sunday edition of the *Enterprise* showed a picture of the cross on Mt. Rubidoux with the caption underneath that stated: “The Cross on Mount Rubidoux were it capable of thought, doubtless would be surprised and grieved this morning, for in place of the customary Easter throngs there will be only silence and solitude.”<sup>63</sup> However, the solitude was broken by a group of 200 pilgrims who despite the lack of a formal service climbed the mount to watch the Easter sunrise.<sup>64</sup> The Sunday edition also carried on the editorial page the article titled: “Rubidoux Easter Dawn Service Is Pictured.” The author in very picturesque words described the annual Easter pilgrimage so that at least in their minds the people could ascend the mountain for Easter morning.<sup>65</sup> In addition Frank Miller arranged a special Easter service at nine o’clock at the Glenwood Mission Inn that included all the features of the sunrise service, except the mountain.<sup>66</sup>

As promised the Easter Sunrise Pilgrimage returned in 1925 with over 25,000 pilgrims climbing the mountain for the service. Many ascended to the top two to three hours early in order to obtain a superb seat to view the sunrise. The early morning sunrise was described:

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The balmy air, the wide expanse of star studded blue lighted by an all but full moon which flooded the landscape with sleeping silver in the early morning hours, the absence of earthly fog, the unobscured horizon to eastward – all were perfect for full possibilities to tempt the artist’s brush as the dawn broke and the heavens and landscape took on the progressing change of colors in the prospect of the rising sun.<sup>67</sup>

In 1926 the number of people who attended the service on top of Mount Rubidoux again surpassed 30,000 people. A visiting journalist, Dr. Frank Crane, marveled at this number. He wrote: “Here you have to get up at an ungodly hour in the morning, climb a good sized mountain, go without your breakfast, and yet the top of the mountain is crowded.”<sup>68</sup>

The number of attendees dropped in 1927 as rain and wind the evening before discouraged them. According to the *Enterprise* only about



*1926 or later Easter Sunrise Service  
Peace Tower in background  
(Author's Collection)*

15,000 people gathered on Mount Rubidoux even though Dr. Henry Van Dyke was present for the second time to read his poem, *God of the Open Air*.<sup>69</sup> The good weather did not last. As the sun rose, so did the wind "from the north, increasing with fury swept across the mountain top like the wrath of God." The velocity of the wind prevented those who were not close to the open-air pulpit from hearing Dr. Van Dyke read his poem.<sup>70</sup>

The 1928 service was ushered in with perfect weather. In light of the previous year's difficulty in hearing parts of the service amplifiers were added.<sup>71</sup> As in the past attendees came from all over. The registers of the main hotels in Riverside listed people from twenty-one different states and from Mexico, Canada, Japan, England and France.<sup>72</sup>

Although reporters and attendees saw a perfect service, someone responsible for the planning would see the flaws. Following the services DeWitt Hutchings often wrote a critique pointing out mistakes that would then be used by the committee for future years. Among other suggestions in his 1928 report he wrote: "Mr. Miller felt cold and therefore judged for the whole audience that the service should start ahead of the scheduled time. This was a mistake, as the time is figured out very carefully to have the sun come up during the singing of the anthem, *Lovely Appear Over the Mountain*. If the sun and anthem do not come together, an important emotional opportunity is lost."<sup>73</sup> DeWitt was not afraid to criticize even his own father-in-law. The early start was also noted by W. L. Leamon in his review of the service: "To the writer the program's start did not appear to be properly timed. The service was half over before the sunrise. *Lovely Appear Over the Mountains* is a beautiful and appropriate anthem for an Easter Sunrise service, but its rendition should be timed with the sun to fit in perfectly."<sup>74</sup> This was also the first year it was reported that the choir was vested wearing white robes. Mr. Leamon in the *Daily Press* raved, "The great chorus robed in white and seated on the western terrace gave an added touch to the impressiveness of the picture."<sup>75</sup> Again Dewitt, the perfectionist complained, "I feel the ponchos should be longer. All kinds of combinations of pants showed beneath them."<sup>76</sup>

A second and unusual Easter service was observed in 1928. In July of that year the Tenth World Sunday School Convention was held in Los Angeles. While in California the delegates from Japan were the honored guests of Frank Miller at the Mission Inn for two days. That first evening a program was held at the First Congregational Church. The Japanese expressed their high regard for Frank Miller and presented him with a special gift. Mr. Miller, in turn, spoke of the hospitality the Japanese had shown him when he visited their country. Throughout the program peace and friendship were stressed. The next morning they arose at 3:30 a.m. for a trip up Mount Rubidoux. A group of nearly 500 people drove up the mountain to the Peace Tower where the Japanese delegates were told the history of the tower and bridge and shown the Japanese garden below the bridge. They then preceded the rest of the way up the mount to participate in a replica of an Easter Service.<sup>77</sup>

For the 1929 service people from Fox Films took Movie-Tone pictures. These pictures were then released in every Fox Theater across the country and even abroad. What splendid publicity this gave to Riverside and the Easter service!<sup>78</sup> The *Los Angeles Times* reported: "On practically the same spot where the Franciscan Fathers with their little band of Indians celebrated Easter more than a century ago, four trumpets welcomed the dawn at the inauguration of yesterday morning's services."<sup>79</sup> Between the Mission Inn and Mount Rubidoux people were determined to make Riverside the site of a mission and the location of activities of the Franciscan padres of the Spanish period, a totally inaccurate, but romantic dramatization.

Heber Grant, the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, was in Riverside in April of 1930 for the dedication of a new Mormon church. Frank Miller invited him to the Easter service which Grant graciously accepted. After the service a reporter interviewed Grant and recorded this statement: "I consider myself fortunate that I was in Riverside at Easter time. It was all so unusual, beautiful beyond words. My journey to dedicate the local branch of our church proved timely, and, as a guest of Frank Miller, I was privileged to hear this historic and memorable service."<sup>80</sup> Another dignitary present was Dr. John A. Moorehead, president of the Lutheran World Convention. He delivered



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the prayer in which “he thanked God for the victory of the cross and made appeal to Jehovah for peace throughout the world.”<sup>81</sup> The idea that the prayer would include a plea for world peace came from a proposal by Frank Miller at one of the planning meetings for the 1930 service.<sup>82</sup>

While the *Daily Press* wrote about the 1933 service: “The sweet notes of the bugles signaled the birth of another Easter day,”<sup>83</sup> DeWitt Hutchings would write in his review of the service: “It was very unfortunate that the cornet player was so poor. This is the first thing on the program, and it is an unpleasant way to start it.”<sup>84</sup> When DeWitt Hutchings rose to read the poem *God of the Open Air* in 1933 he announced that this would be the twenty-third reading of the poem. Before reading he then asked for a time for silent prayer as the author, Dr. Henry Van Dyke had recently died. “A vast silence came over the throng which was broken by the clear, penetrating voice of the reader.”<sup>85</sup> After the service DeWitt



*DeWitt Hutchings reading poem at  
Easter Sunrise Service  
(Mission Inn Foundation Collection)*

would write that the cross was not lit enough to be seen while the Peace Tower was brightly illuminated. He then remarked, “The feature of the Mountain for this service is the Cross.”<sup>86</sup> He also wrote that someone was needed to stop kids from sliding around, to keep the young people from taking so many of the chairs that were set up and to stop photographers from taking pictures around the cross. He bluntly gave the solution, “...if it cannot be done without having someone to arrest the people who do this, do so.”<sup>87</sup> DeWitt again is a hard critic, desiring to make the Pilgrimage as perfect as possible for the Easter occasion.

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The year 1934 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first Easter Sunrise service on Mount Rubidoux. As DeWitt Hutchings read the poem *God of the Open Air* the scene was described: "Frank Miller of the Mission Inn was there, sitting on a rock, his head bowed in contemplation; white-haired Dr. Rufus B. von KleinSmid of the University of Southern California was near by...and many another notable sat beside simple folk in a communion of spiritual fellowship. Except for the words of the poem, there was a great hush."<sup>88</sup> Other dignitaries present in 1934 were Dr. James E. West, chief scout executive of the Boy Scouts of America, and Arthur A. Schuck, National Director of Operations for the Boy Scouts. At the Mission Inn after returning from the service Dr. West declared, "I was very highly pleased to note, personally, the Boy Scouts and their leaders giving of themselves in service to others on the mountain trails and at the top of the mountain."<sup>89</sup> Frank Miller, who had welcomed Dr. West to the Inn, expressed his "appreciation for the service the Boy Scouts rendered to the Easter service on Rubidoux mountain. He also told of his admiration for the service the Boy Scouts give to citizenship in general."<sup>90</sup>

On April 21, 1935, the Reverend Tertius Van Dyke, Henry's son was a guest at the service. He had the privilege of reading his father's poem during that service. One source states that after reading the poem, the son unveiled a bronze tablet in honor of his father.<sup>91</sup> The service program for that day reads that the unveiling was to be done by Frank Miller Hutchings.<sup>92</sup> Most likely they both took part in the ceremony. During the unveiling of this tablet a tribute to Dr. Van Dyke was made by DeWitt Hutchings.<sup>93</sup> The Rev. Van Dyke was greatly impressed with the service on Mount Rubidoux and wrote his impressions for the newspaper:

The first impression made upon a newcomer to the Easter service on Mount Rubidoux is one of the glory of God in the heavens above and in the earth beneath. The moon over the cross, the delicate light of the coming dawn over the serrated mountains, the tender mists that floated lightly in the rich plains were not only beautiful, they spoke unmistakably of the

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Great Creator of the ends of the earth....Of course it was a peculiar happiness for me to be here with my wife and with one of my sisters who had also been present when our father last read his ode in 1927. To read the ode in this service was a great day, for I do not hesitate to say that I am second to none in my admiration for *God of the Open Air* and its author.<sup>94</sup>

Just a few months after this, on June 15, 1935, Frank A. Miller, the Master of the Inn and the main force behind the continuing Easter Sunrise Service, died. At 4:30 on the Sunday afternoon of September 22, 1935, hundreds of people gathered on Mount Rubidoux for a simple tribute to Frank. The memorial address was delivered by Dr. Rufus von KleinSmid, president of the University of Southern California and the chancellor of the Institute of World Affairs. Mayor E. B. Criddle also spoke and read a telegram from former President Herbert Hoover. Parts of the service resembled the Easter services. A trumpet soloist played *The Holy City*. *In the Cross of Christ I Glory*, one of Frank's favorite hymns, was sung by a choir and the people. The Peace Tower, dedicated to Frank Miller, had two large wreaths of mourning.<sup>95</sup>

The next spring the April 12, 1936 Easter Service was also dedicated to the memory of Frank Miller. During the service a "Tribute to Frank A. Miller" was given by Dr. W. F. Bohn, Assistant to the President of Oberlin College. Oberlin College was the alma mater of both Christopher Columbus Miller and Mary Miller, Frank Miller's parents. This address marked a departure from the normal format of the service. Another tribute, *The Lengthening Shadow*, written by Los Angeles Times publisher Harry Chandler, was included in the service folder. Listen as Chandler paints us a picture of Frank Miller:

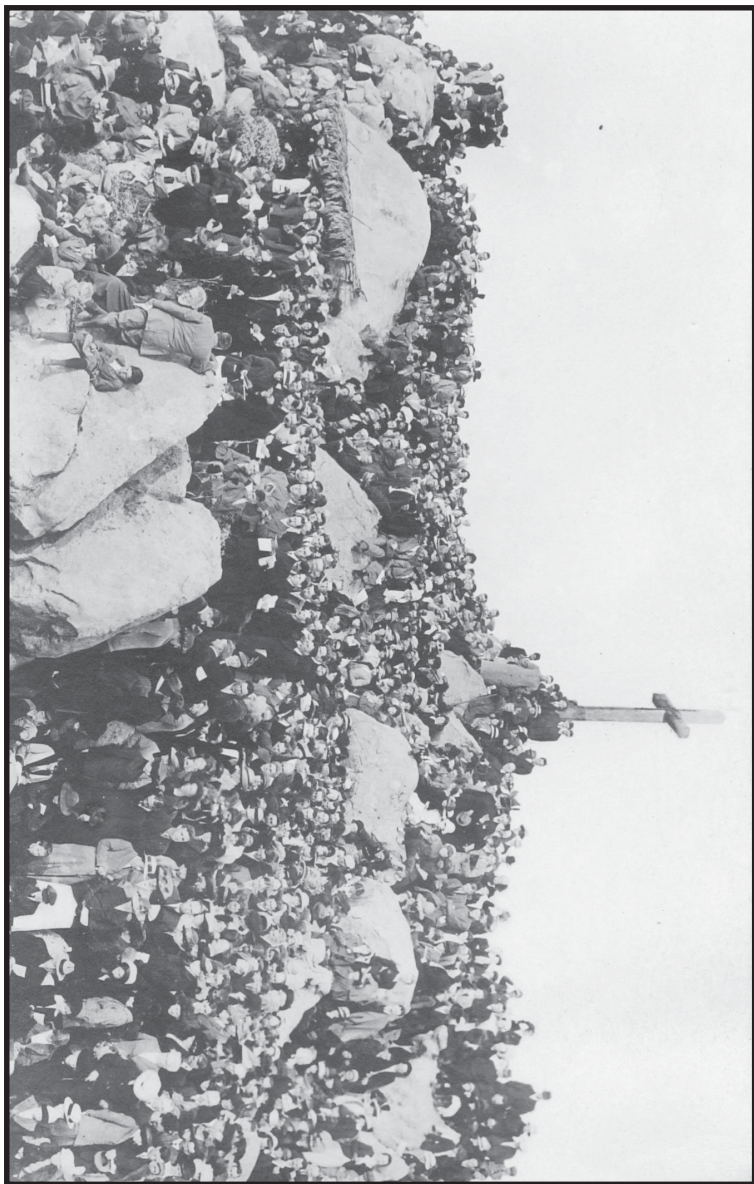
It remained for a modern-day man, a thoughtful, kindly, practical, vigorous man with a knotted cane and a great black cape to add a new luster to the age-old rite of Spring. Frank Miller was a man who had taken unto himself a bit of the shining shadow of the Master. It shone in his face, it glowed in his deeds, it colored his words. Frank Miller lived very much

in the world but he looked beyond it. He saw in everyday things, in everyday men, in nature, the elements of the immortal, the truth of the eternal verities. So he saw in Easter Dawn the chance for a new vision for a people who had no vision, for a world that was sunk in sloth. He and Jacob Riis went up a mountaintop, and gave the earth a new idea of Easter.<sup>96</sup>

The Rev. Horace Porter, Miller's pastor at the First Congregational Church (1909-1917) and later the mayor of Riverside, spoke about Frank Miller and the Easter service: "For every succeeding Easter for a quarter of a century, for as long as he lived, Mr. Miller arranged the pilgrimage and the service. It became the joy of his life."<sup>97</sup>

About five months after the 1936 service DeWitt Hutchings, Frank's son-in-law, sent a letter to Mayor Criddle in which he wrote: "Having served my apprenticeship for over twenty-five years in carrying out faithfully, and to the best of my ability, Mr. Miller's ideas in certain religious work, notably concerning the Easter and Armistice Services, I beg to resign from the Easter Committee of which I have long been Secretary....My decision to resign is final."<sup>98</sup> DeWitt went on to suggest that Mrs. Frank (Marion) Miller be asked to serve as secretary on the Committee as she had helped in arranging the past service. Mr. Criddle wrote asking Mrs. Miller to serve and she consented as future correspondence came from her. DeWitt would continue for a good number of years as a participant, reading the poem, *God of the Open Air*. Later on DeWitt must have consented to return to the committee because in a 1943 article he is again listed as the secretary.<sup>99</sup>

The Miller family would still be a vital part of the annual Easter service. And the main structure of the service had been set and would remain this way for the next twenty years, as long as the family had a close connection. In 1955, two years after the deaths of DeWitt and Allis Hutchings, the Miller family deeded Mount Rubidoux to the city of Riverside, ending the family's connection to the mountain and the Easter service. The connection does remain in the name of the park: Frank A. Miller Mount Rubidoux Memorial Park.



*Crowd at early Easter Sunrise Service (Author's collection)*

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 6, 1909.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Hutchings to Mr. John Rinehart, March 26, 1927. Frank Miller Collection. Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

<sup>3</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 10, 1909

<sup>4</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 11, 1909.

<sup>5</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 13, 1909.

<sup>6</sup>*Riverside Press Enterprise*, March 28, 1959 and April 22, 1979.

<sup>7</sup>Hutchings, *The Story of Mount Rubidoux*.

<sup>8</sup>Freeman, *A Pilgrimage to Rubidoux*.

<sup>9</sup>Letter from Hutchings to Mr. John Rinehart, March 26, 1927. Frank Miller Collection. Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

<sup>10</sup>Patterson, *Riverside Press Enterprise*, March 19, 1968 and April 22, 1979.

<sup>11</sup>Letter from Hutchings to Mr. John Rinehart, March 26, 1927. Frank Miller Collection. Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

<sup>12</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, March 25, 1910.

<sup>13</sup>*Los Angeles Times*, April 6, 1913.

<sup>14</sup>James, "The Romance of A Mountain," *Out West*, May 1913, page 267.

<sup>15</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, March 19, 1913.

<sup>16</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, March 24, 1913.

<sup>17</sup>Hall, *Through the Doors of the Mission Inn*, page 41.

<sup>18</sup>Hutchings, *The Story of Mount Rubidoux*.

<sup>19</sup>Personal Postcard from photo taken by Harry Scott.

<sup>20</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 3, 1915.

<sup>21</sup>Hall, *Through the Doors of the Mission Inn*, page 18-19.

<sup>22</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 1, 1915.

<sup>23</sup>Bond. *The Roads of Melody*, pages 158-9.

<sup>24</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 5, 1915.

<sup>25</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 5, 1915.

<sup>26</sup>Hutchings. *The Story of Mount Rubidoux*.

<sup>27</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 3, 1915 and April 5, 1915.

<sup>28</sup>Langstroth, "Easter on Mount Rubidoux." *Christian Endeavor World*, April 20, 1916, page 563.

<sup>29</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 24, 1916.

<sup>30</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 24, 1916, *Los Angeles Times*, April 15, 1916.

<sup>31</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 24, 1916, *Los Angeles Times*, April 5, 1916.

<sup>32</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 24, 1916.

- <sup>33</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 24, 1916.  
<sup>34</sup>*Los Angeles Times*, April 24, 1916.  
<sup>35</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 3, 1917.  
<sup>36</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 9, 1917.  
<sup>37</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, March 31, 1918.  
<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*  
<sup>39</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 2, 1918.  
<sup>40</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, March 31, 1918.  
<sup>41</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 1, 1918.  
<sup>42</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 21, 1919.  
<sup>43</sup>Photograph in the collection of the Riverside Central Library CLD1  
<sup>44</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 21, 1919.  
<sup>45</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 21, 1919.  
<sup>46</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 21, 1919.  
<sup>47</sup>*Riverside Enterprise* April 5, 1920.  
<sup>48</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, March 27, 1921.  
<sup>49</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, March 28, 1921.  
<sup>50</sup>*Los Angeles Times*, March 28, 1921.  
<sup>51</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 17, 1922.  
<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*  
<sup>53</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 16, 1922.  
<sup>54</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 17, 1922.  
<sup>55</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 17, 1922.  
<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*  
<sup>57</sup>*Riverside Press Enterprise*, April 2, 1923.  
<sup>58</sup>*Los Angeles Times*, March 25, 1923.  
<sup>59</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 2, 1923.  
<sup>60</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 2, 1923.  
<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*  
<sup>62</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 18, 1924.  
<sup>63</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 20, 1924.  
<sup>64</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 21, 1924.  
<sup>65</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 20, 1924.  
<sup>66</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 21, 1924.  
<sup>67</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 13, 1925.  
<sup>68</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 5, 1926.  
<sup>69</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 19, 1927.  
<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*  
<sup>71</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 9, 1928.



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<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup>Hutchings, *Criticism of 1928 Easter Sunrise Service*. Frank Miller Collection, Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

<sup>74</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 9, 1928.

<sup>75</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 9, 1928.

<sup>76</sup>Hutchings, *Criticism of 1928 Easter Sunrise Service*. Frank Miller Collection, Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

<sup>77</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, July 18, 1928. *Riverside Daily Press*, July 19, 1928. *Los Angeles Times*, July 20, 1928.

<sup>78</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 1, 1929.

<sup>79</sup>*Los Angeles Times*, April 1, 1929.

<sup>80</sup>Hall, *Through the Doors of the Mission Inn, Volume Two*, page 133.

<sup>81</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 21, 1930.

<sup>82</sup>Minutes from the Easter Committee, March 14, 1930. Frank Miller Collection, Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

<sup>83</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 17, 1933.

<sup>84</sup>Hutchings, *Remarks on Mount Rubidoux Easter Service, 1933*. Frank Miller Collection, Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

<sup>85</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 17, 1933.

<sup>86</sup>Hutchings, *Remarks on Mount Rubidoux Easter Service, 1933*. Frank Miller Collection, Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup>*Los Angeles Times*, April 2, 1934.

<sup>89</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, April 2, 1934.

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup>Hall, *Through the Doors of the Mission Inn*, page 43.

<sup>92</sup>Service folder from *Henry van Dyke Memorial Program 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Mount Rubidoux Easter Sunrise Pilgrimage to the Junipero Serra Cross, April 21, 1935*.

<sup>93</sup>*Los Angeles Times*, April 22, 1935.

<sup>94</sup>*Riverside Enterprise*, April 22, 1935.

<sup>95</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, September 21 and 23, 1935.

<sup>96</sup>*Easter Sunrise Pilgrimage In Memory of Frank A. Miller*, April 12, 1936, pages 19-20.

<sup>97</sup>Patterson, *Colony for California*, page 260.

<sup>98</sup>Letter from Hutchings to Criddle, September 25, 1936. Frank Miller Collection, Riverside Metropolitan Museum.

<sup>99</sup>*Riverside Daily Press*, March 5, 1943.



# A Brief History of Five Points

*by Bill Bell and Casey Tibbet*

Located in Riverside's La Sierra community, Five Points is centered on the intersection of La Sierra Avenue, Pierce Street, Hole Avenue, and Bushnell Avenue (Figure 1-map). The starburst intersection was created as a transportation shortcut for the once remote La Sierra area and resulted from needs associated with the community's growth and the founding of the Seventh Day Adventist campus.<sup>1</sup> Properties along the intersection developed primarily in the 1930s with most of the surrounding residential development occurring between 1938 and 1967. The following is a brief history of the Five Points area, which today consists of a unique and often overlooked mix of small commercial and industrial developments, residences, and semi-rural properties.

The La Sierra Valley was originally inhabited by Native American peoples, including the Serrano, the Luisiño, the Cupeno, the Gabrieleno, and the Cahuilla. Because of seasonal water sources and a mild climate, the valley was conducive to early agriculture and hunting. As Europeans began arriving in the late 1700s the area that would come to be known as Riverside County opened its passes and valleys to the expeditions of Don Pedro Fages in 1772 and Juan Bautista de Anza in 1774 and 1776. After California became the property of Mexico in 1821, the missions were secularized into land grants called "ranchos."<sup>2</sup>

The area that would become today's La Sierra community was connected historically with the large Santiago de Santa Ana grant in Orange County. Brothers Bernardo and Tomas Yorba pastured their herds on land bordering the eastern edge of the massive Santiago de Santa Ana land grant owned by their father, Jose Antonio Yorba. As their herds moved farther east, they began calling this area La Sierra, probably because of the hill and mountain views.<sup>3</sup> Near the end of the Mexican period of rule (1848) Bernardo Yorba petitioned Governor Pio Pico for the La Sierra Rancho grant, claiming continual land usage for more than 20 years as justification for being awarded the grant. Bernardo's widowed sister-in-law, Maria Vicenta Sepulveda, had other ideas for the land and filed a



*Figure 1 - Aerial photo of 5-Points*

separate petition on her behalf and in protest of Bernardo's request. A compromise was reached by the Governor, splitting the rancho into two equal ranchos of approximately 17,500 acres each.<sup>4</sup> The La Sierra (Yorba) Rancho covered the western portion and the La Sierra (Sepulveda) Rancho covered the eastern portion.<sup>5</sup> It is the La Sierra (Sepulveda) Rancho that covers present-day La Sierra. Vicenta Sepulveda sold a portion of the La Sierra (Sepulveda) Rancho to Abel Stearns, son-in-law of their neighbor to the east, Juan Bandini.<sup>6</sup> Before his death in 1871, Stearns sold his land to a corporation later called "Stearns Rancho," which eventually sold off portions of the acreage until going out of business in the 1920s.<sup>7</sup>

Willits J. Hole, one of the founders of La Habra in 1896 and a developer and sales agent for the Stearns Rancho Group, relocated to the La Sierra area in the early 1900s.<sup>8</sup> In 1909 Hole acquired personal ownership of 20,000 acres, which included the entire 17,500-acre La Sierra (Sepulveda) Rancho.<sup>9</sup> After selling off portions of the rancho land, Hole improved 11,550 acres for agriculture and established Hole Ranch, composed of four specialized farms encompassing today's Five Points area and portions of Riverside, Corona, and Norco.<sup>10</sup> Around 1912 a large residence was constructed on the ranch property at what is now the west end of Cypress Avenue.<sup>11 12</sup> This building was designed by Arthur Benton, primary architect of the Mission Inn.

Mr. Hole made many improvements to his land that facilitated his agricultural enterprises and ranch lifestyle. One of his greatest accomplishments "was to rehabilitate a section of lowlands which had been known as 'starvation acres' because it was so frequently flooded by irrigation and storm waters."<sup>13</sup> In order to make this land productive, Hole contracted with William E. Pedley, a well-known waterworks engineer, to construct a dam and reservoir. They connected the dam to the West Riverside Canal, extended irrigation canals from the reservoir to the high ground, and drained the low ground with a network of underground pipes. With proper drainage and irrigation, these 1,500 acres, located near the intersection of Pierce and Collett streets became "rich valley land that was very productive," and Hole was able to grow vegetables, fruit, alfalfa, walnuts, and citrus fruits.<sup>14 15</sup> Over the next few decades Hole sold off portions of the ranch for both agricultural and residential uses. This led to the La Sierra community's first period of residential development, with the earliest subdivision maps recorded in 1911, 1924, and 1925.

The first major subdivision of Hole Ranch was recorded by the Riverside Groves and Water Company (Myron and Marshall Tilden) in 1911. This included property owned by both the Company and the German American Savings Bank, for which W. J. Hole was a signatory.<sup>16</sup> This subdivision, Tract No. 2 of La Sierra Heights, consisted of roughly 126 residential lots ranging from approximately 7 to 27 acres in size and

included most of the Five Points area.<sup>17</sup> Development of the new lots was apparently slow to occur, as there were reportedly just six houses in the valley in 1916.<sup>18</sup> However, things began to change in 1922, when the Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists purchased from Hole more than 300 acres in the southwest portion of the ranch for development of a secondary school.<sup>19</sup>

La Sierra Academy was established in 1922 to replace an SDA school that the community had outgrown in the San Fernando Valley.<sup>20</sup> The Adventists founded La Sierra Academy as a preparatory high school with a mission to “train our young people to render efficient service in their stewardship to God, whether in public or private life.”<sup>21</sup> As part of this emphasis on service, administrators required students to devote twelve hours per week to campus maintenance and working on the school farm.<sup>22</sup> In its first year, the school had an enrollment of 74 students taught by a staff of 9 teachers.<sup>23</sup>

A few years later, the administration decided to expand La Sierra Academy’s curriculum to include courses in teacher training and commerce. Due to this, in 1925, La Sierra Academy became La Sierra Academy and Normal School.<sup>24</sup> That same year, the school recorded a subdivision map for a portion of its land located at the southwest corner of Pierce Street and La Sierra (then Holden) Avenue. The map consisted of sixteen 7,500-square foot lots that fronted on Holden Avenue.<sup>25</sup> This was one of nine residential subdivision maps recorded in 1924 and 1925 in the Five Points area.<sup>26</sup> Most of these subdivisions created fewer than 50 lots, and those were typically 50 feet wide and approximately 5,000 square feet to just under one acre.<sup>27</sup> The exception was the La Sierra Gardens subdivision (1924), which was a re-subdivision of Tract No. 2 of La Sierra Heights – this subdivision included a total of 538 lots.<sup>28</sup> Development, however, occurred slowly throughout this time, and most of the area maintained its rural character until the post-World War II period.<sup>29</sup>

With the addition of post-secondary coursework, La Sierra Academy earned accreditation as a two-year college in 1927 and was renamed Southern California Junior College.<sup>30</sup> In 1928, the college constructed an elementary school on the campus to serve as a demonstration school for its teacher-training program and to accommodate a growing community of

Adventists.<sup>31</sup> Shortly after being accredited as a two-year academic institution, the Southern California Junior College sought accreditation as a four-year institution. In the early 1930s, an accreditation committee visited the campus and suggested expanding the school's science curriculum.<sup>32</sup> In response, the college built San Fernando Hall, a state-of-the-art science facility.<sup>33</sup> The college built two new dormitories in the late 1930s, and increased its course offerings to include pre-medical, dental, and nursing classes.<sup>34</sup> In 1939, the school earned the right to confer Bachelor degrees and changed its name to La Sierra College.<sup>35</sup> In 1940, La Sierra College separated its demonstration school from the college and relocated the elementary school to new facilities on the northwest corner of Rindge Road (now Golden Avenue) and Pierce Street.<sup>36</sup>

In the years after World War II, Southern California experienced an unprecedented development boom brought on primarily by the resettlement of returning soldiers. Between 1946 and 1961, developers drawn to the La Sierra area by its proximity to two growing cities (Riverside and Corona), a college, and relatively level topography, recorded more than 20 new subdivision maps in the Five Points area with more than 450 lots.<sup>37</sup> The La Sierra community more than doubled its population during this time, from 3,802 residents in 1950 to about 11,000 residents in 1960.<sup>38 39</sup> The extension of State Route 91 through western Riverside County in the late 1950s, less than two miles south of the Five Points intersection, provided another benefit to locating in the area.<sup>40</sup> As stated in a 1960 promotional street map produced by the La Sierra Chamber of Commerce, the La Sierra area had several amenities for new residents, including proximity to a "beautiful freeway . . . convenient business center . . . advanced schools and colleges . . . choice recreational facilities . . . employment in modern industries," and "outstanding residential areas."

In conjunction with this growth in population, La Sierra College's enrollment also increased substantially.<sup>41 42</sup> Some were returning students who had interrupted their studies to enlist in the military, while others were just beginning college, using government grants like the G. I. Bill to fund a college education. Many servicemen returning to school were married and demand increased for more independent housing arrangements like apartments and houses rather than gender-exclusive dorms. The La





Sierra College Board of Trustees responded by authorizing a series of building projects along Raley Drive west of Pierce Street.<sup>43</sup> The projects were aimed at accommodating married students and housing additional teaching staff; according to yearbooks and newsletter articles, though, students and alumni continued to live “around the village” in residences off-campus.<sup>44</sup>

As the college expanded, stores and services were established that reflected the SDA community’s interests, including a natural food processing plant, a primary school, a bindery, and an off-campus church.<sup>45</sup> When asked during oral history interviews what impact La Sierra College had on the community of La Sierra, long-time residents Marjorie von Pohle and Arlene Hamilton both responded, “the college *was* the community.”<sup>46 47</sup>

In the 1960s, the SDA community in La Sierra gradually became outnumbered by new residents from Orange and Los Angeles Counties who settled in new developments and commuted to work.<sup>48</sup> Even so, Adventists continued to serve on the La Sierra Community Services District Board and the Alvord School District Board of Trustees, and led an effort to establish a community park.<sup>49</sup>

La Sierra College joined with Loma Linda University in 1967 to form a two-campus university, renaming the institution the La Sierra Campus of Loma Linda University.<sup>50</sup> In 1991, La Sierra College separated from Loma Linda University and became La Sierra University.<sup>51</sup>

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, economic activity in La Sierra was limited to the agricultural activities of Hole Ranch. However, as La Sierra College expanded, the school sought vocational opportunities for its students outside of agriculture and developed the Loma Linda Food Company located at 11503 Pierce Street. Loma Linda Foods began as a food processing facility circa 1905 to support the Sanitarium Food Company, the bakery created to serve Loma Linda’s growing medical school and the original Loma Linda Sanitarium, established in 1905.<sup>52</sup> The business prospered and sold its product line to health food stores and through mail orders.<sup>53</sup> In 1933, the name of the company was changed to Loma Linda Food Company and in 1935, it became a “perpetual nonprofit corporation” owned and operated by the General Conference of Seventh-Day

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Adventists.<sup>54</sup> The success of the Loma Linda Food Company progressed until demand for its products required a larger production facility.

The Southern California Junior College (now La Sierra University) brought the Loma Linda Food Company to the La Sierra area by offering to donate land with enough space for their new facility.<sup>55</sup> Construction of the new plant, located on the north side of Pierce Street in the Five Points area, began in November 1937, and the four-story facility began operations on July 16, 1938.<sup>56</sup> Their most popular product was Ruskets, a whole-wheat biscuit cereal. Other meatless products, principally soy-based, were added and hundreds of college students became part-time employees at Loma Linda Food Company.<sup>57</sup>



*Figure 3 - Loma Linda Food Company advertisement 1947.  
(Local history file, La Sierra Branch Library)*

Both during and after World War II, the popularity of soy foods grew in America. Because of this, the Loma Linda Food Company expanded its product line by taking over the business of Dr. Harry Miller's International Nutrition Laboratories, Inc. at Mt. Vernon, Ohio.<sup>58</sup> The



company expanded its plant in 1953 by constructing a research and development building just west of the production facility.<sup>59</sup> In 1959, a *Riverside Press* article described the Loma Linda Food Company “doing a multi-million dollar business annually throughout the United States with 38 food products, best known of which are Ruskets breakfast food and Gravy-Quik.”<sup>60</sup>

In 1966, the Loma Linda Food Company celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary and had 300 workers and 100 salesmen producing and distributing more than 36 products under the Loma Linda Foods label.<sup>61</sup> Through the 1970s, the Loma Linda Food Company continued expanding its product line, using new technologies in the processing of soy. In April 1980, management of the Loma Linda Food Company was taken over by an Adventist-run Australian company, Sanitarium Health Foods Company.<sup>62</sup>

Loma Linda Foods was not the only industry in the area. In February 1959, the Ace Drill Bushing Company broke ground on a 25,000-square foot, concrete tilt-up expansion facility on 10 acres donated by La Sierra College at the corner of Pierce Street and Rindge Road (now Golden Avenue).<sup>63</sup> The Ace Drill Bushing Company started its operations in 1950 at a plant in nearby Arlington and, by 1959, was serving thousands of customers and distributors throughout North America.<sup>64</sup> Company president A. Fisher cited two reasons for building the new plant: to expand production capability through greater efficiency and to continue fostering the vocational ties between the plant and La Sierra College.<sup>65</sup> By 1959, Ace had already worked with 700 students.<sup>66</sup> To the *Arlington Times*, Fisher stated, “Many former employees are now operating businesses of their own, a number of them in the La Sierra and Arlington communities.”<sup>67</sup>

Because Five Points was part of Hole Ranch until at least 1922, commercial development in the area is relatively recent compared to that in other parts of Riverside. The majority of the commercial businesses in the survey area are centered at the Five Points intersection and along short segments of each of the streets that make up that intersection. The earliest maps found showing this intersection date to 1924 and 1927.<sup>68</sup> <sup>69</sup> According to longtime resident George Allen, “La Sierra started out with one small grocery store, one feed store, and a small barber shop.”<sup>70</sup> In

1937, Allen operated a barber shop on Holden (La Sierra) Avenue, in Five Points.<sup>71</sup> Aerial photographs from 1938 show scattered residential development throughout the area and a few buildings at or near the Five Points intersection with most of the area still used as farmland.

Throughout the 1950s, more businesses were established in La Sierra and the area around the Five Points intersection steadily developed as well, with the exception of the south side of Pierce Street.<sup>72 73</sup> In 1952, the second section of the new La Sierra Shopping Center opened at Holden Avenue and Pierce Street.<sup>74</sup> The offices of project manager George Bowes (Bowes Real Estate) were located there along with La Sierra Preferred Insurance agency.<sup>75</sup> Other businesses in the area during the 1950s and early 1960s include the College Dairy Store on Pierce Street near La Sierra Avenue, Lorenz Broom and Mop Company, Lorenz Sponge Company, and Ray Knoefler Honey Company.<sup>76 77</sup>

In 1964, the La Sierra area, including Five Points, was annexed into the City of Riverside. According to a City plan prepared at that time, in the Arlanza/La Sierra area, there were approximately 275 acres of commercial development with another 340 acres of planned commercial development.<sup>78</sup> By 1967, it appears that most of the Five Points area was developed.<sup>79</sup>

To many passing through the Five Points area the only notable feature is the five-spoke intersection. The area's unique history, largely influenced by Hole Ranch, the Seventh Day Adventists, and events of the post-WWII era, is not reflected in impressive buildings with high style architecture or a trendy "old town" commercial center. Instead, the modest commercial and residential buildings reflect La Sierra's specific heritage: "a late urban start centered in a deep-rooted rural landscape that supported a simple lifestyle."<sup>80</sup>

<p><b>LA SIERRA COLLEGE MARKET</b></p> <p>•</p> <p>Staples • FRUITS and VEGETABLES</p> <p>Prices and Service Yours</p> <p>OV 8-8489</p>	<p>See Books! Model <b>VISITORS WELCOME</b></p> <p>Books and Stationery at 2, 3 and 4 per cent</p> <p><b>Learn Land Facts</b></p> <p>11501 Fresno Blvd.</p>	<p><b>LA SIERRA COLLEGE PRESS</b></p> <p>Lithographers Printers • Publishers</p> <p>11797 Cedar Drive OV 8-4889</p> <p><b>LA SIERRA COLLEGE DAIRY</b></p> <p>AVAILABLE WINNING MILK</p> <p>Call and order today 11501 Fresno Blvd., 276 Fresno Plaza and Post Office — Drive to</p>	<p><b>LORENZ BROOM and MOP CO.</b></p> <p>La Sierra</p> <p><b>Lucky's Market</b></p> <p>4252 La Sierra Avenue "La Sierra Market" "La Sierra Plaza" Orange Street — Low Prices</p>	<p><b>La Sierra PHARMACY</b></p> <p>2507 Green Street PER SERVICE Overland 9-5431</p> <p>4252 La Sierra Avenue La Sierra</p> <p><b>West Coast Auto Tool Co.</b></p> <p>2507 Green Street Overland 9-5431</p>	<p><b>AGI</b></p> <p>11290 Fresno Plaza, La Sierra, Calif.</p>	<p><b>Village Cleaners</b></p> <p>11037 HOLE AVENUE</p> <p>—•—</p> <p>Overland 9-5431</p>	<p><b>BERTY'S TEXACO SERVICE</b></p> <p>SERVICE IS OUR BUSINESS</p> <p>Freshness First and Public Safety</p> <p>11009 Hole Avenue Overland 9-5431</p>	<p><b>HERSEY'S WEDDING &amp; MACHINE SHOP</b></p> <p>Print — Stenciling — Enamels</p> <p>11004 Hole Avenue OV 8-1934</p> <p><b>THE ESQUIRE BARBER SHOP</b></p> <p>10334 HOLE AVENUE</p> <p>La Sierra California</p>	<p><b>MOTOR PAINTS &amp; EQUIPMENT CO.</b></p> <p>15011 HOLE AVENUE</p> <p>Overland 9-5431 California</p>	<p><b>LA SIERRA SHOPPING CENTER THE FURNITURE PALACE</b></p> <p>Overland 9-5434</p> <p>QUALITY FURNISHINGS • DECORATING SERVICE</p> <p>Join the Happy Circle</p> <p><b>STATER BROS. MARKETS</b></p> <p>EVERYDAY LOW PRICES</p> <p>Fresh Blue Chip Steaks</p> <p><b>CINDY'S DRIVE-IN</b></p> <p>Hotburgers — Melts Cakes — Fresh Pies</p> <p>For Information on Fresno Golf Club North Co. — Overland 9-4334</p>	 <p><i>Kindly note, coming High 40 Caliber</i></p>	<p><b>La Sierra</b></p> <p>4904 La Sierra Avenue, La Sierra, California</p>	<p><b>La Sierra</b></p> <p>4904 La Sierra Avenue, La Sierra, California</p>	<p><b>BAKER'S FLOWERS</b></p> <p>WEDDING CARDS</p> <p>Flowers for All Occasions</p> <p>5203 Ridge Road • OV 9-3388</p> <p><b>MARTIN Electric Company</b></p> <p>11333 Woodland Drive Overland 9-5431</p> <p><b>Sierra Fountain Lunch</b></p> <p>4923 La Sierra Avenue Food Restaurant Spot</p> <p><b>La Granada SWIM PARK</b></p> <p>Heated Pool Swimming Overland 9-5431</p> <p>15000 W. Avenue, La Sierra</p>	<p>We stand between you and loss!</p> <p>Call <b>Preferred Insurance Agency</b></p> <p>For all your insurance needs</p> <p>Overland 9-5431</p>	<p><b>CARLINS TV CENTER</b></p> <p>TV &amp; RADIO SERVICE</p> <p>Overland TV and Radio Service</p> <p>ZENITH • RCA • VICTOR</p> <p>OPEN OV 8-5750 SUNDAY</p> <p>11058 Hole Avenue — La Sierra</p>	<p><b>ALLEN'S BARBER SHOP</b></p> <p>Newly Public</p> <p>4904 La Sierra Avenue, La Sierra, California</p>	<p><b>SHOE BOX</b></p> <p>"Little Footstep Shop"</p> <p>4909 La Sierra Avenue Overland 9-5431</p>	<p><b>La Sierra</b></p> <p>4904 La Sierra Avenue, La Sierra, California</p>	<p><b>BELONGIA VARIETY STORE</b></p> <p>4901 La Sierra Avenue Overland 9-5431</p> <p><b>LA SIERRA CALIFORNIA</b></p> <p>We are 25¢ per stamp</p>	<p><b>"Morton has the key"</b></p> <p>To all your real estate needs...</p> <p><b>SIERRA VISITA RANCHO DEVELOPMENTS</b></p> <p><b>VIRGIL W. MORTON</b></p> <p>Realtor</p> <p>Overland 9-5431</p> <p>11311 Fresno Plaza • La Sierra, California</p>	<p><b>WHITEFIELD'S SHOE BOX</b></p> <p>"Little Footstep Shop"</p> <p>4909 La Sierra Avenue Overland 9-5431</p>	<p><b>REAL ESTATE</b></p> <p>For Details, See Us</p> <p>SEE</p> <p>7-1011 Hwy. 190, Fresno, California, 93701</p> <p><b>VOOCHEEN</b></p> <p>RENTAL — AIRPORT SERVICE</p> <p>11001 Hole Avenue, La Sierra, OV 8-1131</p> <p>15001 Fresno Rd., Fresno, OV 8-1131</p> <p>15001 Fresno Rd., Fresno, OV 8-1131</p>	<p><b>SECURITY-FIRST NATIONAL BANK</b></p> <p>BRANCH</p> <p>15001 Fresno Rd., Fresno, OV 8-1131</p>
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(Figure 4 - Promotional sheet for La Sierra and its businesses, circa 1960 on file La Sierra Branch Library)

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Bill Wilkman, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 Primary and Building, Structure, and Object Records for Five Points, May 5, 2008. On file at the City of Riverside Planning Department.
- <sup>2</sup> Steve Lech, *Along the Old Roads, A History of the Portion of Southern California that became Riverside County, 1772-1893*. Published by the author, 2004.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Tom Patterson, oral Interview conducted by Andrea Urbas, M. Arch for Griffin Industries in 1999.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> City of La Habra, A Brief History of La Habra. Accessed online in January 2008 at <http://www.ci.la-habra.ca.us/article.cfm?id=78>, 2006.
- <sup>9</sup> Jane Davies Gunther, *Riverside County, California, Place Names: Their Origins and Their Stories*. J. D. Gunther, Riverside, 1984.
- <sup>10</sup> C. J. Pruett, *History of the Hole Ranch*. Hobart Press, Corona, Ca., 1973.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> City of Riverside, Historic Resources Database Inventory. Accessed online June 2007 through January 2008 at <http://olmsted.riversideca.gov/historic/> 1996-2006.
- <sup>13</sup> George Ringwald, "Pioneering Period Over, La Sierra Comes of Age," *Riverside Press*, October 2, 1953.
- <sup>14</sup> C. J. Pruett, *History of the Hole Ranch*. Hobart Press, Corona, Ca., 1973.
- <sup>15</sup> Jane Davies Gunther, *Riverside County, California, Place Names: Their Origins and Their Stories*. J. D. Gunther, Riverside, 1984.
- <sup>16</sup> Tract No. 2 of La Sierra Heights, MB 7/66, 1911. On file, City of Riverside Public Works Department.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> George Ringwald, "Pioneering Period Over, La Sierra Comes of Age," *Riverside Press*, October 2, 1953.
- <sup>19</sup> Tom Patterson, *A Colony for California*, The Museum Press, Riverside, California, 1996.
- <sup>20</sup> Historic Resources Group (HRG), *Historic Assessment Report, La Sierra University*, 1996.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> George Ringwald, "Pioneering Period Over, La Sierra Comes of Age," *Riverside Press*, October 2, 1953.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> La Sierra Academy Tract No. 1, MB 13/73, 1925. On file, City of Riverside Public Works Department.

<sup>26</sup> Holden Avenue Tract, MB 67-69; La Sierra Casa Tract, MB 12/59; La Sierra Gardens, MB 11/42-43; and Map of Lemon Heights, MB 12/31. All recorded in 1924. Ader's La Sierra Subdivision, MB 12/89; Campbell's La Sierra Subdivision, MB 13/45; La Sierra Home Tract, MB 12/84; La Sierra Vista Tract, MB 12/69; and Reiche's La Sierra Subdivision, MB 13/60. All recorded in 1925. All maps on file, City of Riverside Public Works Department.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> La Sierra Gardens, MB 11/42-43, 1924. On file, City of Riverside Public Works Department.

<sup>29</sup> Riverside County Assessor, Real property ownership records, 1920-1925 Book 5, Map 6; 1926-1931 Book 6, Maps 23, 31, 32, 33, and 33e; 1927-1933 Book 6, Map 26; 1932-1938 Book 6, Maps 32a and 32b; and 1937-1942 Book 6, Maps 26, 26a, 27, 31, 31a, 32, 32a, and 32b. All On file, Riverside County Assessor's Office, Riverside.

<sup>30</sup> Historic Resources Group (HRG), *Historic Assessment Report, La Sierra University*, 1996.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Carleton Subdivision, MB 21/45; Lorenz Subdivision, MB 21/28; and Marolo Tract, MB 21/15 recorded in 1946. Unit No. 1 of the J. R. Southworth Subdivision, MB 22/54 recorded in 1947. Luckey Tract, MB 23/58 recorded in 1949. Norwood Manor Unit No. 1, MB 24/15 recorded in 1950. Butler Subdivision Unit No. 1, MB 24/80-81 recorded in 1951. Butler Subdivision Unit No. 2, MB 25/52; Norwood Manor Unit No. 2, MB 25/64-65; and Sierra Vista Rancho Subdivision, MB 25/81 recorded

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in 1952; and Butler Subdivision Unit No. 3, MB 25/93. All maps on file, City of Riverside Public Works Department.

<sup>38</sup> Beaumont Library District, Historical US Census Populations of Places, Towns, and Cities in California, 1850 to 1990. Accessed online at [http://bld.lib.ca.us/virtualreference/calif\\_historical\\_census\\_population.htm](http://bld.lib.ca.us/virtualreference/calif_historical_census_population.htm).

<sup>39</sup> La Sierra Chamber of Commerce, "Welcome to La Sierra, California." Pamphlet printed circa 1960. On File, Riverside Public Library, La Sierra Branch.

<sup>40</sup> *Riverside Press-Enterprise*, "The Freeway Opens," September 20, 1957 and "Freeway Work Will Start Soon," December 9, 1957.

<sup>41</sup> Historic Resources Group (HRG), Historic Assessment Report, La Sierra University, 1996.

<sup>42</sup> La Sierra University History Room, Campus yearbooks, newsletters, Board of Trustees minutes, various years.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Marjorie von Pohle, oral history interview conducted at the Riverside City Hall in the Community Development Department's Planning Division conference room on June 12, 2008.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Arlene Hamilton, oral history interview conducted at the Riverside City Hall in the Community Development Department's Planning Division conference room on June 12, 2008.

<sup>48</sup> T. E. Foreman, "Development of La Sierra Area Has Been 50-year Story," *Riverside Daily Enterprise*, September 8, 1964.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Historic Resources Group (HRG), Historic Assessment Report, La Sierra University, 1996.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> T. E. Foreman, "La Sierra Most Likely to Succeed," *Riverside Press*, March 18, 1959.

<sup>53</sup> William Shurtleff and Akiko Aoyagi, *Loma Linda Foods: Work with Soyfoods*. Unpublished manuscript from a Soyinfo.com Exhibit entitled, "The History of Soy Pioneers Around the World." Lafayette CA, Soyinfo Center, 2004.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

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- <sup>59</sup> George Ringwald, "Pioneering Period Over, La Sierra Comes of Age," *Riverside Press*, October 2, 1953.
- <sup>60</sup> T. E. Foreman, "La Sierra Most Likely to Succeed," *Riverside Press*, March 18, 1959.
- <sup>61</sup> William Shurtleff and Akiko Aoyagi, *Loma Linda Foods: Work with Soyfoods*. Unpublished manuscript from a Soyinfo.com Exhibit entitled, "The History of Soy Pioneers Around the World." Lafayette CA, Soyinfo Center, 2004.
- <sup>62</sup> Soyinfo Center, *Soy From a Historical Perspective*, 2006, accessed online at [www.soyinfocenter.com](http://www.soyinfocenter.com) on January 2, 2008.
- <sup>63</sup> *Arlington Times*, "Ground Broken Friday for Construction of Plant," February 12, 1959.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>65</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>67</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>68</sup> La Sierra Gardens, MB 11/42-43, 1924. On file, City of Riverside Public Works Department
- <sup>69</sup> Riverside County Assessor, Real property ownership records 1927-1933, Book 6, Index map. On file, Riverside County Assessor's Office, Riverside.
- <sup>70</sup> C. J. Pruett, *History of the Hole Ranch*. Hobart Press, Corona, California, 1973.
- <sup>71</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>72</sup> Aerial Photographs, 1953 and 1959, provided by GeoSearch.
- <sup>73</sup> La Sierra Chamber of Commerce, "Welcome to La Sierra, California," pamphlet printed circa 1960. On File, Riverside Public Library, La Sierra Branch.
- <sup>74</sup> *Arlington Times*, "Second Section of New Shopping Center Opens," December 5, 1952.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>76</sup> *Arlington Times*, "Dairy Store to Open Sunday." February 12, 1959.
- <sup>77</sup> T. E. Foreman, "La Sierra Most Likely to Succeed," *Riverside Press*, March 18, 1959.
- <sup>78</sup> Art Nauman, "City's Land Use Plan for La Sierra Ready for Hearings," *Riverside Press*, June 12, 1964.
- <sup>79</sup> Aerial Photographs, 1967, provided by GeoSearch.
- <sup>80</sup> Bill Wilkman, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 Primary and Building, Structure, and Object Records for Five Points, May 5, 2008:A-41. On file at the City of Riverside Planning Department.



## Postcards From Around Riverside



*Images of Postwar Riverside - These images show two icons of postwar Riverside. Above is Sage's Complete Shopping, located at Magnolia and Beatty, circa 1962. Sage's was a very popular place to shop in the 1950s and 1960s, but unfortunately closed around 1972. It is fondly remembered by many long-time Riversiders. Below is a picture of the original Riverside Plaza, sometime around its opening in 1957. The Plaza still remains, but certainly not in this form!*





# The Judge and Mrs. Freeman

by Kathleen Dever

George Robert Freeman, commonly known as G. R., came to California as a young lawyer from Galesville, Wisconsin. His college education started under the wing of his attorney father in 1888. He then attended Galesville University and the Columbian University of Law (now George Washington University) in Washington D. C. In 1892, he graduated from the Chicago School of Law. That same year he secured work in California as a San Bernardino Deputy County Clerk and Clerk of the Superior Court. After two years he left San Bernardino to join his brother, E. W. (Edwin) Freeman, in his law practice in the fledgling town of South Riverside.

One of G. R.'s first cases is described in the April 27, 1936 *Golden Jubilee Edition of Corona's Daily Independent*. His client was accused of stealing four silver dollars and a razor from another person. G. R. argued his case on the grounds of "lack of evidence" and won the judge's decision. After the courtroom cleared, G. R.'s client approached him and thanked him for helping out a poor but honest man. He then reached into the back of his frock coat and handed his surprised lawyer four silver dollars. The article stated: "History does not reveal who got the razor."

G. R. met his future bride in South Riverside. She had resided there since 1892, when her father, A. C. Miller, left his job as an inventor for the D. M. Osborn Company of Auburn, New York. A. C. was the inventor of several patents for the company. One of his patents perfected the original knotting device used in a twine binder harvesting machine.

A. C. worked in South Riverside as a "zanjero," an irrigation worker. He also bought, along with a partner, the *South Riverside Bee* newspaper. A. C. Miller stayed only a few years in South Riverside, before moving on to Los Angeles. His son, Charles R., and daughter, Mabel Ann, remained in the new colony.

Charles started work for "*The South Riverside Bee*" as a Printer's Devil and was involved in the city's newspaper business for more than half

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a century. He served on the Corona city council from 1948-1956 and took his turn as mayor.

It was at this time and place that G. R. Freeman met and courted Miss Mabel Miller. Mabel was employed as one of South Riverside's early school teachers. Mabel belonged to the Y. P. S. C. E. (Young People's Society of Christian Endeavors), a club of the Congregational Church. Her lovely lyric soprano voice was often featured in their concerts.

Before Riverside County was formed, brothers E. W. and G. R. Freeman were assemblymen representing South Riverside, then part of San Bernardino County, in the state legislature and in the national congress. Both were instrumental in helping the citizens of South Riverside set up the petition for the incorporation of South Riverside under the name Corona. E. W. delivered this petition to the County Board of Supervisors in May of 1896.

Upon his mother's death in 1896, G. R. returned to Galesville, Wisconsin to help his elderly father, George Y. with his law practice. George Y. had served as a Trempealeau County District Attorney and Commissioner in the General Land Office under President Grover Cleveland. Mabel soon joined G. R. in Chicago, Illinois, and they wed there in December of 1896. Their first son, Edwin R., was born in Galesville in 1898. Less than a year later the family moved back to Corona and G. R. took over his brother's business. Galesville was sad to see the Freemans leave, as evidenced in an article from the *Galesville Independent* which, which was reprinted February 4, 1899 in *The Corona Courier*: "Galesville loses a prominent business man and Corona gains one...Mr. Freeman is a public spirited man, ready to push any enterprise that is of public benefit."

The Fourth of July in 1899 must have been a joyous occasion for the Freemans - their seven-month old son Edwin was named the most beautiful baby in Corona's Baby Show. He took home a gold locket in the contest, when his good looks bested seven other babies. In 1901 the Freemans' second son, Lorraine, was born in Corona. The Freeman boys grew up in Corona, and their parents continued their civic service.

Mabel displayed her musical talent as a board member of the Tuesday Musical Club. She was often a soloist in their local fundraiser programs for civic projects. Mabel also kept herself busy by buying real estate in Corona. She had homes built on the lots, and then would sell or rent the homes, often to local school teachers. The family lived in at least three homes in Corona; the earliest one, located on Victoria Avenue, is commonly known as The Freeman Home.

In 1904 G. R. Freeman was appointed one of the original trustees for the Corona Public Library. He had helped to initiate the 1900 ballot measure for the institution of the library. G. R. spent twenty years advising Corona as the city attorney, as well as running a private practice. In a 1909 biographical sketch in *The Industrial Edition* of the *Corona Courier*, it was noted that Freeman tried more cases before the Superior Court of Riverside County than any other attorney in the county. Freeman was frequently called to Los Angeles to argue the defense of some of his clients before the state Appellate and Supreme and Federal Courts, and he won most of his cases. To help the local economy, G. R. lectured before Corona's Congregational Brotherhood in December of 1910. His talk, entitled *The American's Civic Duties*, declared that "the high cost of living is due to our methods of doing business." He was City Attorney during the time of Corona's famous Road Races on Grand Boulevard. In addition to his heavy work load, G. R. ran on the Republican ticket and was elected to the State Senate in 1911. He served one term.

The Freemans left Corona in 1921, shortly after G. R.'s August 4<sup>th</sup> appointment to Riverside County's Superior Court by California Governor William D. Stephens. He was Riverside County's fourth Superior Court Judge, having been appointed to fill a newly-approved superior court position authorized by the State Legislature. It was acknowledged by attorneys that Freeman was one of the hardest working judges on the California bench as well as the most considerate. The vast majority of Judge Freeman's decisions were upheld by the Supreme and Appellate courts. He was renowned for his expertise in California law and water case litigation.

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Beginning in 1937, Judge Freeman presided over the Metropolitan Water District condemnation case against the owners of land in the Cajalco Reservoir now known as Lake Mathews. At the time, this trial, which lasted eleven months, was the longest jury trial in the county's history.

Freeman also presided over a 1939 retrial case which received wide public attention. It involved comedian W. C. Fields, a Hemet doctor, and a dispute over unpaid doctor bills of \$12,000. According to the book, *Through the Doors of the Mission Inn* by Joan H. Hall, "During the trial, W. C. Fields entertained the spectators with facial contortions and funny snorts." Fields was admonished by Judge Freeman, "that smart cracking may be all right in some places, but it had no place in court."

After living in Riverside for a few years in a bungalow on Homewood Court in the "Wood Streets," the Freemans moved to a large house nearer to the Riverside County Court House. This home stood on the southwest corner of Lemon and Thirteenth Streets. In the early 1930s the couple built and moved into a new home in the Bedford Place Tract on Lime Street. Of their three Riverside homes, only the Homewood Court bungalow stands today. Mabel's deep love of her residences can be sensed in her poem, "Home of My Own."

It was only after her children were grown that Mabel began to write poetry and to set many of her verses to music. Her writings give one a unique look into Riverside County's history. Many of her poems were dedicated to local people she loved and places she frequented in Riverside County. *Underneath the White Rose Tree* was set to music and dedicated to her husband. Mabel penned the following poem after Frank Miller, the builder and owner of the Mission Inn in Riverside, passed away (Frank Miller was not closely related to Mabel Miller Freeman).

### *In Memory of Frank A. Miller The Master of the Mission Inn of Riverside, California*

A shadow has fallen on Mount Rubidoux,  
The city is grieving to-day,  
The Master beloved of the old Mission Inn,  
Has recently passed away.

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A husband devoted, a brother most true,  
A father so tender and wise;  
A giver of gifts, of hearts broken, a mender,  
A saint on this earth in disguise.

Not the edifice fair of mortar and stone,  
That he toiled for and builded alone,  
But Love's lantern he carried, while with us he tarried,  
Attracted all men to his home.

The above poem was included in *April Fantasy, the Poems of Mabel Freeman*. It was published in 1938 by the Fine Arts Press. Although some of her poems are considered politically incorrect by today's standards, they are a true reflection of the social atmosphere of 1930 Riverside. In her book, Mabel included poems entitled *Darkey Lullaby* and *Sundown in Chinatown*. These selections point out to today's readers the racial injustices shown to people of color in early Riverside County. *Darkey Lullaby* is dedicated to Mabel's own grandchildren and *Chinatown* is dedicated to Lung Wong. The illustration that accompanies *Chinatown* shows a sleepy, opium-smoking Chinese man.

At the time of her death, Mabel was a proud member of the Los Angeles Branch of the National League of American Pen Women and a member of Riverside's Wednesday Evening Club. She died in August of 1944 at the age of seventy-one.

Judge Freeman was the last charter member of the Riverside's Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks Lodge No. 643 and was President of the De Anza Historical Society. He was honored for his outstanding community work by the Fraternal Order of Eagles in 1947. Judge Freeman retired after twenty-five years on the bench. He died at age 86 in September of 1953. The Freemans are buried under a large shade tree at Sunnyslope Cemetery in Corona.

## Notes

## Notes

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