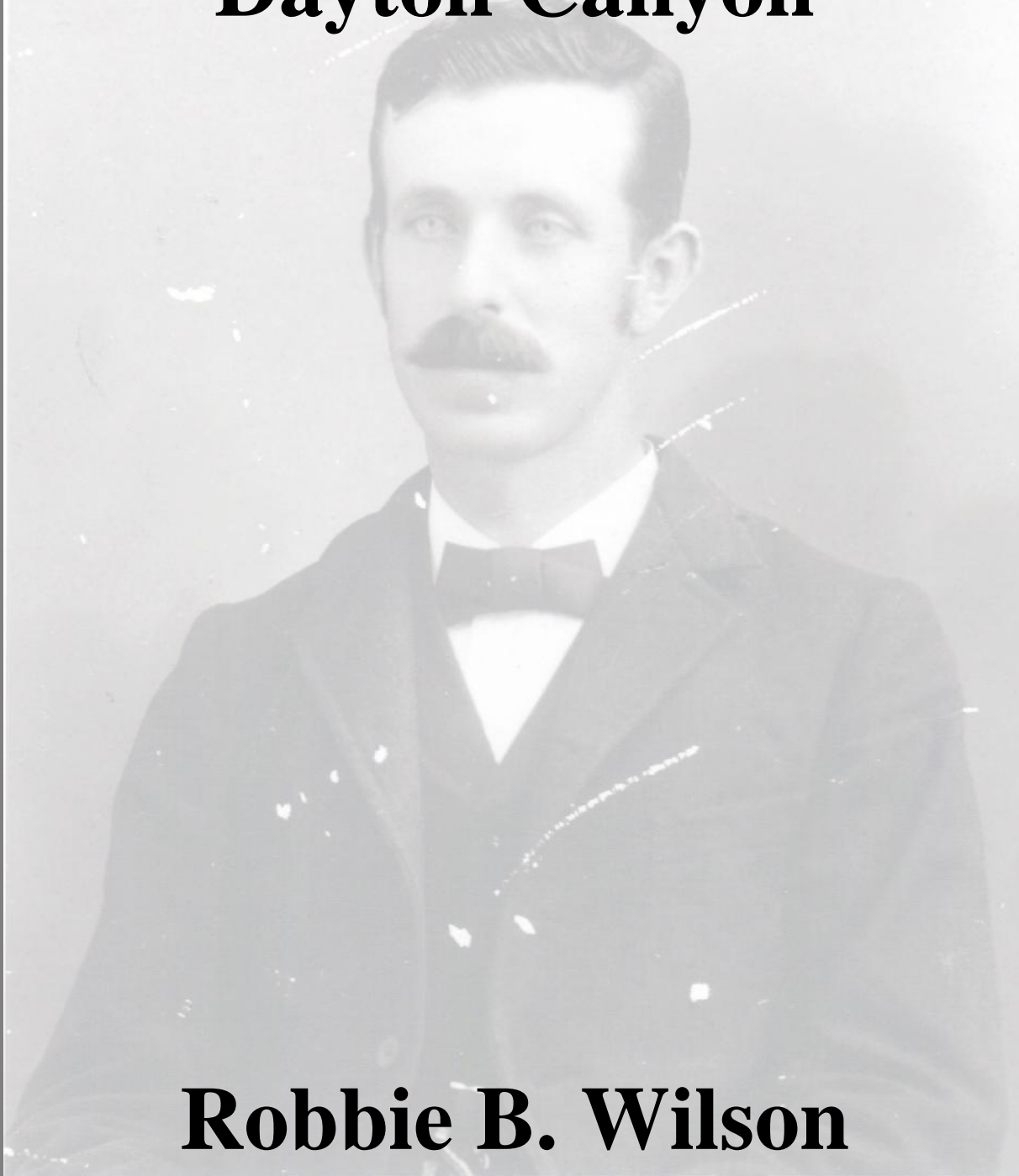


**The History and Mystery  
of  
Dayton Canyon**



**Robbie B. Wilson**



# The History and Mystery of Dayton Canyon

Researched, Written, & Edited by  
Robbie B. Wilson



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## DEDICATION

This book is affectionately dedicated to my late great-aunt Glenna Adkisson-King without whom this history would have never gone beyond the terse notes that I first recorded back in the winter of 1978.

I employ the adverb “affectionately” because Aunt Glenna was a relative whom I personally knew and with whom I shared a relationship beyond the mere exchange of family history.

A fond and initial memory of Aunt Glenna was when she visited our home in Woodland, California (the city where I was born), during the mid 1970s while she was vacationing at the home of my maternal grandparents, Helen and Freeman Bunch, her sister and brother-in-law, in Davis, California. I specifically remember Aunt Glenna seated on the couch in our living room browsing through Mom’s photo albums while others reminisced about past events, and when something humorous was mentioned, Aunt Glenna, in reaction, would throw her head back in laughter with the open photo album over her face.

I began writing to Aunt Glenna (who was a resident of Winter Park, Florida) in the late fall of my seventh-grade year and received my first letter from her (which I still have) that was dated December 16, 1977. She began with these words: “Hi Robbie! I was so thrilled to have your letter. It was so thoughtful & kind for you to remember me.”

However, it wasn’t until after our move to Coalfield, Tennessee, in June 1978 that I got to know Aunt Glenna on a personal level. My then-widowed grandmother Bunch sold her home in Davis in July 1978, and Aunt Glenna rode the bus from Florida to California so she could accompany my grandmother during their vehicular diversions, including Washington state, en route to their final destination: Piney Flats, Tennessee, where Mom’s brother, Larry, lived (and still lives) and where my grandmother would live until her death in January 1981.

My grandmother and Aunt Glenna’s itinerary was temporarily altered by the unexpected death of their older sister Bertie Poarch in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in

September 1978 whose funeral my mother, Carol, and I attended via plane (I had also corresponded with Aunt Bertie), so this was my first occasion to see Aunt Glenna since the mid 1970s before she and my grandmother arrived at our Coalfield home the last day of November. We spent our first Christmas in Tennessee with my grandmother and Aunt Glenna at my grandmother's Piney Flats home, and they returned to our home in Coalfield for the New Year's holiday. My grandmother drove Aunt Glenna back to her Winter Park home that January where she remained throughout the winter before returning to her home in Piney Flats in the early spring.

In June 1979, my grandmother accompanied Mom, my fraternal twin brother, Rhett, and younger sister, Tami, and me to Aunt Glenna's home in Winter Park where we stayed while visiting area sites that included Disney World (my grandmother and Aunt Glenna accompanied us that day). This was my first "memory trip" to Aunt Glenna's home (my first brief visit was in August 1966 when I was one).

Aunt Glenna passed away at the age of ninety-two on April 17, 1996, at a nursing-home facility in Apopka, Florida, and was cremated. Her late son, Ralph Haynes (1936-2011), and daughter-in-law, Ginger, brought me her ashes that I buried beside my grandmother Bunch's grave in my great-grandmother Adkisson's paternal family cemetery in Coalfield, the Davis Cemetery, on June 24.

When I consider the numerous questions I submitted to Aunt Glenna about the Dayton case, I certainly feel sympathy for her. Since I was eager to discover everything I could about Lou and Clyde's personal history, many of my questions were redundant and some beyond the scope of what she knew. However, she patiently answered these teenaged inquiries in her own hand to the best of her ability. Although she stressed more than once that she knew very little about her aunt Lou whom she never met and who essentially remained a "name" or "word" to her, Aunt Glenna's knowledge about the Dayton history was actually quite substantial.



A favorite picture of Aunt Glenna.



Last surviving children of Walker Adkisson (l to r): my grandmother, Helen Bunch (1915-1981), Aunt Glenna (1903-1996), and Uncle Ralph (1906-1996) at his Brisbane, California, home in October 1978. It was most likely made the day my grandmother and Aunt Glenna left for Washington state en route to Tennessee. This was the last picture with the three of them together.



## FOREWORD

One year after watching Alex Haley's *Roots* on television, I officially embraced genealogy and the collection of old pictures as a lifelong avocation. I was thirteen, and the date was January 13, 1978 (I had written this date in a hardback genealogical book that Mom had purchased for me in which one could record personal information).

That same winter when we visited the Brisbane, California, home of my grandmother Bunch's brother and sister-in-law, Ralph and Martha Adkisson, I copied (by hand) a handwritten history of the Adkisson and Davis families that included fragmentary notes about the Dayton history: "Lou and a Dayton—went to California to take nursing, burned to death, raised bees, wrote books on health, and stored honey for seven years before eating." Also, my grandmother had her mother's original postcard picture of Lou (which is now mine), so I was fortunate to have a face to accompany my original notes. (A duplicate with better clarity can be found on page 97.)

Since I was primarily focused on my direct paternal and maternal ancestry, in addition to other collateral family history, between 1978-1980, I didn't reserve additional thought beyond my initial Dayton notes until I met an aged Coalfield cousin Earl Butler<sup>1</sup> (see page 27) in 1980. In answer to my question about *how* Lou had "burned to death," he told me that both she and her husband had burned to death in their house that caught on fire. He further told me that the fire's cause was questionable. (Earl shared additional information during a 1981 interview.)

The next pieces of the Dayton puzzle were received when I vacationed at my grandmother Bunch's home in July 1980 during which occasion she mentioned some facets of Lou and Clyde's history. One disclosure, which I would later find to be incorrect, was that their large ranch was located in the Salinas, California, area (she also named Oakland in conjunction with this locale). However, I now know that these locales pertained to the three grandchildren of her uncle John Adkisson (see note 136 on page 85).

Nevertheless, the most important connection that my grandmother provided

between my July visit and her flight to Washington state in September 1980 was her cousin-in-law from Crossville, Tennessee: Onie Wyatt-McCampbell<sup>2</sup> (see note 44 on page 74 and note 102 on page 81). I had previously asked my grandmother about relatives who might have old pictures of the Adkisson family, and she told me about Onie.

After I contacted Onie via telephone, my mother drove our longtime church friend Armethia Wiggins-Lively (1926-2013) and me to Onie's Crossville home one Saturday afternoon after church during September 1980. Besides sharing some singular accounts about the Daytons, Onie gave me some of her original Adkisson pictures to keep and lent me the remaining ones that she wanted returned so I could make negatives and reprints. Two originals that she let me keep were of Lou and Clyde (see pages 91 and 95). The picture of Clyde is definitely unique because it has turned out to be the only picture I've ever discovered, and I also learned his initials at that time since he had written them on its back (i.e., "C. W."). There's no question—at least from my perspective—that the Dayton history would have been partly minimized had there not been a photograph of him. Moreover, the timing of my trip to Onie's home was, I believe, providential, because within a short space of time after I had returned the borrowed pictures to her via the mail, her Crossville home accidentally burned to the ground.

Following my grandmother Bunch's graveside service on January 21, 1981, I interviewed Aunt Glenna at our Coalfield home before she left with her son, daughter-in-law, and two granddaughters to return to Florida. I asked her general questions about her immediate family's past and wrote her responses in a notebook that I still have. This interview, incidentally, would later serve as the impetus of our family-history correspondence between April 1981-June 1983 (Aunt Glenna also visited our home again briefly in June 1982).

Meanwhile, between my grandmother's death and Aunt Glenna's August 8, 1981, letter to me, another aged Coalfield cousin Maude Estes-Hembree<sup>3</sup> (see page 24) shared some details about Lou and Clyde that I had never heard before (see page 57).

In her August 8, 1981, letter, Aunt Glenna began her "Dayton narrative" with the following words: "Aunt Lou Adkisson Dayton oldest [youngest] daughter of William Adkisson was educated & a smart person. She took nurses [nurses']

training in S.D.A[.] hospital in Michigan. After graduating, she began her work as nurse in hospital. One of her patients from California liked her so well, she willed Aunt Lou most all her property in Cal. Aunt Lou took her back home to Cal. promising to care for her till she passed on. The patient was a wealthy woman. She owned one whole canyon - with lots of land near Salinas[,] Calif. This patient had one son & he & Aunt Lu married.”

This initial narrative—which was completely new information to me—is what ignited my interest in learning everything that I could about the Dayton history. Too, since I’ve been a lifelong Seventh-day Adventist (Aunt Glenna had also belonged to the same faith since her baptism in May 1959), I was especially interested to learn via her September 11, 1981, letter that Lou, also a Seventh-day Adventist, had taken her training and begun her career at the renowned Battle Creek Sanitarium in Battle Creek, Michigan, since the locale of Battle Creek was once the epicenter of denominational history.

Aunt Glenna had told me in her August 6, 1981, letter that she was sixteen or seventeen at the time of Lou and Clyde’s death<sup>4</sup> (she was actually eighteen). So, with her starting point of 1919-1920, I decided to write to the Department of Health in Sacramento in September for a copy of their death records (I also wrote to Monterey County where Salinas is located). When I received the copies from Sacramento in December (see pages 149 and 150), I learned their given names of “Lula” (i.e., Lulu) and Clyde and their death date of April 12, 1922. However, since their place of death wasn’t identified by a county, and since the cemetery wasn’t identified by a town or city, I wrote another letter to Sacramento. When I received the reply and learned that their residential history, as well as burial, was indigenous to Los Angeles County, my grandmother and Aunt Glenna’s location of Salinas was understandably dropped from the record.

My next discovery apart from oral tradition—that Clyde had been married before Lou—came about when I received a copy of their marriage record (which includes their signatures and her correct spelling of “Lulu”) from Sacramento in March 1982 (see page 148).

After receiving the death record of Clyde’s mother, Filetta, and his first wife, Katie, from Sacramento in June 1982, I realized that Aunt Glenna’s original narrative about Lou caring for his mother at the sanitarium in Michigan wasn’t

correct. Instead, the patient for whom Lou cared would have actually been Clyde's first wife.

What, then, of the "inheritance" that Lou was supposed to have received from this "Mrs. Dayton" from California? Logically, it could have been nothing more than the one half of Filetta Dayton's settled estate that went to Clyde and indirectly to Lou (Clyde's sister received the other half).

Aunt Glenna told me in June 1982 that her uncle Thomas "Tommy" Adkisson received letters from Lou often and that she remembered him discussing a letter he had recently received from Lou while all were seated at the dining-room table during a meal at my great-grandparents' Coalfield home. Aunt Glenna recalled Tommy stating that Lou had mentioned being willed half of everything this "Mrs. Dayton" had owned and that the condition of this inheritance was if Lou would return to California with her and be her private nurse. Since Filetta Dayton's estate was settled in December 1914 when Aunt Glenna was eleven years of age, the only logical explanation I can provide is that Aunt Glenna misunderstood which Mrs. Dayton Tommy was discussing and assumed that Filetta and Katie were one and the same person.

In my last set of Dayton questions to Aunt Glenna that she answered in her June 10, 1983, letter, I shared the contradictions between her original narrative and the actual records. However, her age of eighty understandably prevented her from making the alignment, so this letter was our final correspondence about the Dayton history.

Although my college years (1983-1988) prevented a detailed focus on any genealogical pursuits, a latent interest in the Dayton history remained, and I would reserve my next concentration for Lou and Clyde's property. Since I wanted to know the amount of their acreage that, according to Aunt Glenna, was supposed to have included an entire canyon, I wrote for a copy of their probate record during 1986-1988 and learned that they had had separate estates (I would later write for a copy of Clyde's mother's probate record).

Since their entire property (that was exclusive to Clyde's estate) consisted of separate tracts without place names, I wrote a letter to a Glendale title company that included the probate descriptions and asked about the location and then-

current condition/improvement of each tract. The respondent sent me a copy of the assessor's maps and enclosed a Los Angeles County atlas on which he indicated (in red pencil) the location of each tract. His brief description of the general area also confirmed that Lou and Clyde had indeed lived in a region of canyons (see pages 141-146). However, I was still unaware on which tract their home and bee yard would have been located.<sup>5</sup>

After I received the letter from the Glendale title company, my research on the Daytons, due to my graduation from college in 1988 and the start of my teaching career in 1989, went into moratorium until the release of the 1920 Census (that I viewed at the National Archives in July 1993, my second visit,<sup>6</sup> while vacationing at my aunt's home in Rockville, Maryland) followed by my attempt of a brief narrative about Lou and Clyde's history for the January 9, 1997, "Sharing the Past" feature in my county's newspaper, the *Morgan County News*. (I had written this article to commemorate the approaching seventy-fifth anniversary of the fire.)

The year of 2002, which was the eightieth anniversary of the Dayton tragedy, turned out to be my "jackpot year" in relation to the finality of my extended research. First, I decided to purchase a headstone for Lou and Clyde's grave and called the Evergreen Cemetery office on February 27 to initiate this transaction.

Then, two months later on April 26, I received my most anticipated find: a copy of my first newspaper article about the 1922 fire (see number 18 on page 131) from a public library in Ventura (transcripts of all newspaper articles are included in the appendix). Since Lou and Clyde's property had bordered Ventura County, I was hoping that a county newspaper on microfilm might have mentioned the tragedy, so my intuition yielded a dividend. Too, after I had received the death records back in December 1981, I wrote to the Los Angeles Public Library to see if an account could be found in the *Los Angeles Times*, so I was more than disappointed when the female respondent replied that she had conducted a search of this newspaper for April 12-15 and found nothing. Knowing that the *Los Angeles Times* was a prominent newspaper, I felt that the further pursuit of other newspaper accounts would be futile, so additional efforts in this direction came to a halt.

In retrospect, I now understand why the respondent wasn't able to find an article due to the discovery of their remains on Sunday, April 16. I also view her

oversight as providential since the rest of my experiences during the time frame of 2002-2003 would have never occurred if she had located that first article of April 17. My present narrative would also be less thorough and less accurate.

Nevertheless, this first newspaper article from Ventura County was unsettling to say the least since a murder-suicide scenario had never been mentioned via our oral tradition—or even considered. Moreover, I was similarly taken aback by the description of Lou and Clyde’s home as a “cabin.” Until then, I (via Aunt Glenna) had envisioned their dwelling as a large structure because of their wealth. Finally, when I read about an actual “Dayton Canyon,” I again thought about Aunt Glenna’s accuracy when she related that they had owned an entire canyon.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, May of 2002 would be my most prolific month. Since I had found the Ventura County newspaper article, I decided to contact the Los Angeles Public Library again and initiate a second search of at least the *Los Angeles Times*. However, the person with whom I spoke told me that I would have to employ an individual from their list of researchers, so once I received this paper, I decided to contact George Fogelson of Redondo Beach. George proved to be my most important link with regards to the numerous newspaper accounts and other records. He was also the one who put me in touch with Cecilia Rasmussen from the *Los Angeles Times* who wrote an article about the Daytons in early October (see page 156).

That same month (before contacting George), I was engaged in an internet search of “red ripe honey,” and a resulting link directed me to Catherine Mulholland’s *The Owensmouth Baby* at the Amazon website in which I excitedly learned that she had mentioned Clyde in her book. Needless to say, I wasted no time in ordering a used copy.

Thus, in one week’s time—and eighty years after the fire—I received Ms. Mulholland’s book (on May 20), the pictures of Lou and Clyde’s newly-placed headstone (May 21), and the first set of newspaper accounts via George Fogelson (May 25). (I received his second set on May 30 and a lone article on June 3.<sup>8</sup>)

After receiving Ms. Mulholland’s book, I got her mailing address and wrote her a letter (her response is included on pages 135 and 136). Meeting her was definitely one of the many highlights of my plane trip to California in June 2003 to see sites

related to the Dayton history (my dated journal entries are included on pages 151-153).

The final records in my genealogical quest of the Daytons turned out to be Clyde's land patent files that I received from the National Archives right before my 2003 trip to California. These two sources have definitely added grist to my current narrative as readers will see.

In relation to people, my final contact (after my California trip) was Mark McNeil of Tucson, Arizona. His great-grandfather, John L. McNeil, was a brother to Clyde's first wife, Katie, and I found his contact information in September 2003 while browsing a McNeil genealogical website. When Mark answered my initial e-mail, I was especially glad to learn that he had two pictures of his great-great-aunt that he sent to me via attachments (see pages 92 and 93).

Sometimes, it's easy to envelope relatives from the past in a romanticized mantle—especially when there is limited information. Even so, the reality portrayed in the 1922 newspaper articles dissolves any lacquer about life in Dayton Canyon and, instead, reveals a flesh-and-blood couple plagued by conflicts during that final year that were obviously the outgrowth of their environment: cramped living quarters, lack of modernization, monotony and boredom, and a variance towards the practical enjoyment of money (e.g., Clyde's opposition toward Lou's desire to take a trip to northern California). Too, there's the inference that she might have considered leaving him but wanted to ensure some type of financial compensation. After all, she had assisted him with his beekeeping livelihood in this isolated canyon for over twelve years. Then, there's the consideration of her heart malady. That is, would she have lived much longer if the fire had never occurred? Finally, was the "mystery" of Dayton Canyon a double homicide or a murder-suicide? Even beyond a decade of my initial reading of the newspaper accounts, I still can't answer this question with complete certainty, but I explain in the narrative why I lean toward the second theory.

When I consider the original notes I started with and the bulk of information that my research has yielded, I'm glad to say that I've had the privilege of visiting the key milestones in the history of Lou Dayton: her Coalfield birthplace; Battle Creek, Michigan (on June 19, 1993), where she was educated and began her temporary career; Dayton Canyon where she lived and died; and her final resting

place in the Evergreen Cemetery. (I'm also glad that Aunt Glenna had the opportunity to see her grave in October 1982.)

Robbie Brent Wilson  
Coalfield, Tennessee  
December 2013



My grandmother, Helen Bunch, and fifteen-year-old I at the hospital in Johnson City, Tennessee, on November 19, 1980. We briefly discussed her aunt Lou Dayton that day. My grandmother passed away at her home two months later.



## NOTES

1. He is buried in the Anderson Memorial Gardens that is located near Clinton, Tennessee.
2. She is buried in the Tollett's Chapel United Methodist Church Cemetery in Crossville. (My first visit to her home was during the summer of 1968 when I was three.)
3. She is buried in the Estes Cemetery in Coalfield.
4. My grandmother Bunch had told me that she was a small girl when they died.
5. Jean Jauck (see my June 10 and 17, 2003, entries on pp. 151 and 153) told me in an undated letter that I received on November 25, 2002, that their house had been located on the Lot 1 tract of 18.82 acres.
6. My first visit to the National Archives was in March 1987 while also vacationing at my aunt's home in Rockville, Maryland. During my two-day visit to the archives on March 23 and 24, I viewed the 1900 and 1910 Los Angeles County Censuses for Clyde and Katie, him and Lou, his parents, and his sister and brother-in-law.
7. She told me in June 1982 that her uncle Tommy Adkisson was the one who told her immediate family about Lou and Clyde owning the "one whole canyon" and that Tommy had received this information in a letter from Lou.
8. See number 7 on p. 119. (The final article that George copied for me is number 2 on p. 110 that I received on December 6, 2002. Jean Jauck had mentioned this miscellaneous article in her November 2002 letter.)



# Narrative



## PREFACE

“A familiar sight in the early days was the Red Ripe Honey Man trundling his wheelbarrow through the town as he sold his honey and doubtless advised the residents about the proper foods to eat. He held certain theories about diet which were sometimes printed in the *Owensmouth Gazette*. One column which survives from 1917, entitled HOW HONEY HEALS, declared that ‘there is not any kind of food that is nutritious if it is white, unless it is combined by its molecules with red or green.’ Therefore, his theory followed that one should eat the green leaves of vegetables, red honey, and fruits which are red in their pulp to enjoy good digestion. Moreover, by eating these foods uncooked, one would reduce the desire for ‘cooked foods, and fat foods, and drinks which take the living elements out of food.’ This prophet of health, C. W. Dayton, lived reclusively with his wife in the hills west of town, was regarded dubiously by some of the settlers, and came to a violent end” (Catherine Mulholland’s *The Owensmouth Baby*, pages 160 and 161).

A key misconception about Clyde W. or “C. W.” Dayton, for whom Dayton Canyon and Dayton Creek were named, was the length of time he had actually inhabited this remote upper region of the San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles County, California, that bordered Ventura County. Walter A. Knapp (1911-2001), for example, who was the son of Owensmouth “pioneer” Frank J. Knapp Sr.,<sup>1</sup> remembered Clyde and recollected in writing that he had first settled Dayton Canyon as early as 1870. Clyde, however, was a nine-year-old boy living in the state of New York, his birthplace, in 1870.

He had been born on November 28, 1861,<sup>2</sup> to Ralph Erastus<sup>3</sup> Dayton and the former Filetta Antoinette<sup>4</sup> Woolsey. They were also natives of New York,<sup>5</sup> and according to the 1900 Los Angeles County Census, they had been married for forty years and were the parents of two surviving out of three children. Clyde’s other sibling, a younger sister named Clara, had been born on October 18, 1865,<sup>6</sup> in the specific birthplace of Horseheads, New York.<sup>7</sup>

During the 1880s when he was in his twenties, Clyde became the first member of his immediate family to migrate to California.<sup>8</sup> Presumably, he initially settled in the southern part of the state, but there is no record of a specific residence for him until the time of his first marriage in September 1896: Florence.

His parents, Ralph and Filetta, moved to Los Angeles County in the early

1890s,<sup>9</sup> but they likewise lacked a residential record until the 1900 Census was taken at which time they were living at 980 East 57<sup>th</sup> Street in Los Angeles.

According to the census, they owned this home, and he was a retired farmer.<sup>10</sup>

How and when Clyde initially met his first wife, Katie May<sup>11</sup> McNeil (also spelled *McNeill*), who was fifteen years his junior<sup>12</sup> and a native of Nashua, Iowa,<sup>13</sup> isn't known; but she, too, was a resident of Florence at the time of their marriage on September 13, 1896, in the city of Los Angeles. Katie had been a Seventh-day Adventist for five years when she and Clyde first married,<sup>14</sup> so the fact that they were married by a Seventh-day Adventist minister, an Elder B. L. Howe,<sup>15</sup> indicates that Clyde would have belonged to the same faith (whether he had been a lifelong Seventh-day Adventist or a later convert isn't known).

Nearly four years later when the 1900 Census was taken, Clyde and Katie were still living in Florence and owned their farm on which he was beekeeping.<sup>16</sup>

Clyde's sister, Clara, was the last member of the Ralph Dayton family to settle in southern California. She, her husband, William A. Blinn, and their only child, a daughter named Bernice<sup>17</sup> (who had been born on October 12, 1892, in Greenfield, Iowa<sup>18</sup>), moved to Los Angeles from his birthplace of Bradford, Iowa,<sup>19</sup> during the late 1890s.<sup>20</sup> William was a creamery operator,<sup>21</sup> and by the time of the 1900 Census, the couple owned their home at 1056 East 21<sup>st</sup> Street in Los Angeles.<sup>22</sup>

A year following the taking of the census, Clyde, who was seeking mountainous property that would be conducive to the raising of bees, applied on July 2, 1901, for the homesteading of 18.82 acres in the area that would later be named after him, Dayton Canyon.<sup>23</sup> He listed his current post-office address as Florence on the application but added that his new post-office address would henceforth be Chatsworth (the founding of Owensmouth was still eleven years in the future).

According to Clyde's affidavits in his first land-entry file, he and Katie initially moved to this 18.82-acre tract on August 10, 1902, and camped until their house that he built, a 12' x 18' plastered structure with a porch, was ready for occupancy nearly four months later. He also mentioned his main livelihood, a bee house and an apiary of two hundred hives (his mother's and another's affidavit placed the estimate between three and four hundred), and described the gradual cultivation of between two and three acres for the growing of eighty fruit trees and a garden. Other key improvements included fencing and piped water.

Just over a year after Clyde and Katie had first settled Dayton Canyon, his father, Ralph, passed away at the age of eighty-four on September 18, 1903.<sup>24</sup> He had died at his and Filetta's Los Angeles residence on 57<sup>th</sup> Street<sup>25</sup> due to "malnutrition as [a] result of chronic gastroenteritis."<sup>26</sup> His funeral was held at the



home on September 20 (which fell on a Sunday) at 2 p.m.<sup>27</sup> and concluded with his burial in the Evergreen Cemetery in Los Angeles.<sup>28</sup>

According to Katie Dayton's death record, she had suffered from "pulmonary tuberculosis" for "several years" at the time of her death in December 1905 at the young age of twenty-eight. Presumably, she had experienced remissions and relapses throughout her life, but her condition eventually warranted out-of-state treatment at the renowned Seventh-day Adventist institution in Battle Creek, Michigan: the Battle Creek Sanitarium. It was here that she would meet my great-great-aunt, Lulu Adkisson, who would become Clyde's eventual second and last wife.

\*\*\*\*\*

Lulu (pronounced as *Lula*) Ann<sup>29</sup> Adkisson, commonly known as "Lou" (or "Lu"), was the last of twelve children born to native Tennesseans William Adkisson and the former Louisa Ann<sup>30</sup> Butler in July 1869<sup>31</sup> in Kring Hollow that is located in the Coal Hill Road community near Coalfield, Tennessee, in Morgan County. (My maternal great-grandfather, A. Walker Adkisson, had been the eleventh child born on September 13, 1865.) Lou's specific birthplace was in the vicinity of the family cemetery where her parents and paternal grandparents, James Adkisson and the former Catharine McCabe, both natives of Virginia,<sup>32</sup> are

buried.<sup>33</sup>

James Adkisson had served in the War of 1812 and was preceded in death over two decades by his wife, Catharine, who passed away on October 19, 1846,<sup>34</sup> at the age of fifty-five. The 1850, 1860, and 1870 Morgan County Censuses reveal that he, his son and daughter-in-law, William and Louisa, and grandchildren lived in the same household. However, by the time of the 1880 Census, James had been dead for nearly five years,<sup>35</sup> so son William was now listed as “head of the household.”<sup>36</sup>

Interestingly, Lou’s maternal grandparents, Elias Butler and the former Elizabeth Winters, also natives of Virginia, were living in the vicinity of Lou’s parents and widowed grandfather Adkisson when the 1860 and 1870 Censuses were taken (their dwelling numbers were back-to-back). Similarly, Elias and Elizabeth Butler, like James Adkisson, had undoubtedly passed away by the time of the 1880 Census.

Although Lou’s mother’s cause and date of death will never be known, Louisa Adkisson (who was also known as “Lou” by family members) had probably passed away by 1890. Maude Estes-Hembree (1905-2007), whose mother, Annie Butler-Estes (1871-1966), was a double cousin to Lou,<sup>37</sup> told me about her mother visiting Lou’s home on an occasion when Lou’s father, William (whom Annie

addressed as “Uncle Will”) was a widower.<sup>38</sup> Maude (via her mother) recalled that the Adkisson home located at Whetstone Mountain (i.e., “on the south side”) was a log structure with a porch and a “magnet” for social gatherings. One of the inside rooms was a parlor that contained an organ, and whenever family members or friends would visit the home, Lou would play this organ<sup>39</sup> and sing for them. Two specific songs that Lou was remembered playing and singing during this particular visit were “Lord, I’m Coming Home” and “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.” Maude further related that her mother was single and “around twenty” on this occasion which would date the event “around 1891.” Moreover, Annie’s sisters Mary Butler-Davis<sup>40</sup> (1868-1946) and Mecie Butler (1873-1944) were among the relatives who frequented the Adkisson home.

Among her siblings who would become Seventh-day Adventists, Lou, according to church records, had been one of the first family members to accept this faith.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, it’s possible that she and her brother Thomas or “Tommy” might have joined simultaneously.

In September 1888, a Seventh-day Adventist church was organized in Graysville, Tennessee (in Rhea County); and two years later in November 1890, the church building was officially dedicated.<sup>42</sup> From that locale, workers began to travel to Roane and Morgan County to engage in evangelistic efforts for the

purpose of establishing local churches. According to the records of the Roane Community Seventh-day Adventist Church (formerly called the Harriman Seventh-day Adventist Church), Pastor James W. or “J. W.” Scoles and his wife (from Graysville<sup>43</sup>) came to Roane County in July 1892 where he conducted a five-week series of meetings that led to the establishment of the first Seventh-day Adventist Church at Webster in 1893. Lou’s brother Tommy (who was a charter member of the Harriman Seventh-day Adventist Church that was organized in 1928) became a member at the conclusion of Scoles’s meetings in August 1892.

Again, whether Lou was a member of her brother’s group isn’t known, but church records further state that a Brother Charles E. or “C. E.” Sturdevant (also from Graysville<sup>44</sup>) arrived thereafter to assist the new believers in Roane County while Scoles and his wife continued on to Coalfield to conduct another series of meetings. The Coalfield Seventh-day Adventist Church record states, “Our first recollection in regard to giving the message dates back to 1892 when Eld[.] James Scoles assisted by his wife and Brother Sturdevant began his work of proclaiming the message that is so rapidly going to every ‘nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.’” So, if Lou hadn’t already joined the church prior to Coalfield’s earliest evangelistic effort, then she most likely became a member at that time. The Graysville Church records indicate that she first joined the Graysville

congregation (i.e., via letter only) on December 11, 1892, until January 1, 1893.<sup>45</sup>

Perhaps this short duration had something to do with the founding of the Webster congregation.

Presumably, Lou continued living at the Whetstone Mountain home in Kring Hollow from 1893 and onward since she and her widowed father, William, were the only family members living in the household when the 1900 Morgan County Census was taken.

Earl Butler, whose father, Charles J. or “Charlie” Butler (1866-1939), had been a double cousin to Lou,<sup>46</sup> was the only relative I ever met who actually remembered her. Earl, who was born in January 1896 (and died in March 1987), told me back in 1981 that he barely remembered Lou and was six or seven years of age when she left Tennessee which would date her move to Michigan in 1902 or 1903.

My first assumption is that she left for Battle Creek no earlier than June 1903 since Seventh-day Adventist denominational sources indicate that the previous sanitarium had burned in February 1902 and wasn't rebuilt until 1903 with the dedication taking place the end of May. Secondly, I assume that her father had passed away before her move which would place the time frame for his unknown date of death between 1900 and 1903.<sup>47</sup>

According to Aunt Glenna, a Seventh-day Adventist minister and his family (from a non-Coalfield location) had been conducting evangelistic meetings in the general vicinity of Lou's Kring Hollow home at the time she decided to go to Battle Creek to enroll in the School of Nursing.<sup>48</sup> It was my understanding that this minister had been influential in her decision to relocate in order to pursue this goal, and he was also said to have helped her find a residence and employment when she first enrolled.<sup>49</sup>

Although the level of her degree is unknown, Lou did graduate from the School of Nursing and began her career in the Battle Creek Sanitarium where she would eventually find herself assigned to the oversight of patient Katie Dayton.<sup>50</sup> And, while Katie's period of admittance to this institution is likewise unknown, her death record indicates that she had only been in the state of California for "two weeks" at the time of her December 1905 death.

According to Aunt Glenna's letters, Clyde accompanied "Katie" to Battle Creek when she was first admitted. When he was asked in his February 1908 homestead affidavit about his and his family's "continual residence" on the Dayton Canyon property since August 1902, he gave the following answer in part: "My wife died 2 years ago last Dec. 18 [16] - We resided there continuously except absences of a month at a time." Perhaps this response included an implied

reference to Katie's hospitalization in Battle Creek.

Furthermore, since Clyde's occupation of beekeeping and the "conditions" of settling Dayton Canyon would have prevented him from remaining in Battle Creek indefinitely, I assume that his mother, Filetta, either accompanied the couple from California at the onset of Katie's admittance or later arrived prior to Clyde's departure so she could remain behind to offer familial support to Katie. In her February 1908 affidavit from Clyde's first land-entry file, Filetta gave the following response when she was asked about his periodic absences from the property: "He was never absent for any length of time - I was there about twice a year to see them and to care for his wife when she was ill - I do not know of any absences of more than a week."

Despite Aunt Glenna's misapplication of Filetta Dayton for Katie Dayton, she was always consistent in her recollections that the "Mrs. Dayton" in Battle Creek liked Lou so well that "she" asked Lou to accompany her back to California so Lou could help care for her until she passed away. Since I believe that Filetta Dayton was likewise present during part or all of Katie's admittance, this offer of relocation to California might have included a stipend and a rent-free dwelling. Too, from Lou's perspective the move was a chance to see a new state that was noted for opportunity,<sup>51</sup> and as a matter of sole conjecture, perhaps Lou was

viewed as a potential second wife for Clyde by Katie and/or Filetta since Katie's prognosis had become terminal.

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The rebuilt Battle Creek Sanitarium in 1903 where Katie Dayton and Lou first met.



Katie and Lou (and most likely Filetta Dayton<sup>52</sup>) would have arrived (via train) in Los Angeles no later than December 2 since, as has been mentioned, Katie's death record indicates that she had been in California for "two weeks" at the time of her December 16,<sup>53</sup> 1905, death.

Furthermore, Katie didn't return to Dayton Canyon but spent her final days (i.e., this period of "two weeks") at a Los Angeles residence that was located at 970½ East 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Filetta, who was the informant on Katie's death record, listed the identical address for her residence, so this fact clearly shows that Filetta was staying at the same location in order to provide care for Katie.<sup>54</sup> (Katie had undoubtedly been brought to this Los Angeles locale from Michigan so she could have easier access to a doctor's care.<sup>55</sup>)

In addition, I assume that the dwelling on East 10<sup>th</sup> Street might have been an interim residence for Clyde and Katie between their initial move from Florence to Dayton Canyon, or, if not, it could have been one that was temporarily rented. Too, this location wasn't Filetta's stationary address in 1905, as her 1908 affidavit and the 1910 Census indicate that she was still living at her and her late husband's home on East 57<sup>th</sup> Street. When Clyde was asked in his 1908 affidavit about the ownership and storage of personal property unrelated to the Dayton Canyon claim, he responded in part: "About \$100 worth of furniture & tools at a place owned by

me in Los Angeles.” Therefore, it’s highly possible that the locale of Katie’s death was the place to which he referred in his foregoing statement.

Katie expired during the early morning of Saturday, December 16, her last “Sabbath,” at two o’clock,<sup>56</sup> and her funeral was held at the residence on Tuesday afternoon, December 19, at two o’clock.<sup>57</sup> Her burial in the Evergreen Cemetery concluded the service.<sup>58</sup> Clyde affirmed his affection for Katie by inscribing “A Dearly Loved Sweetheart Wife Moulders Beneath This Stone” as her headstone’s epitaph,<sup>59</sup> and his initials of “C. W. D” (there was no period after the “D”) conclude the sentiment.

Little is truly known about Lou’s personal life in Los Angeles County, California, between 1906 and 1909. However, her marriage record reveals that she was living in Los Angeles and working as a seamstress when she and Clyde married in October 1909. And, while it isn’t known whether she lived with Filetta Dayton in part or in total during this isolated period of nearly four years, Lou would have unquestionably maintained a minimal relationship with Clyde’s mother since Filetta was undoubtedly the instrument through which Lou and Clyde’s courtship was initiated.

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Meanwhile, Clyde continued living in Dayton Canyon and applied on

November 27, 1907, for the homesteading of an additional 40 acres that was contiguous with his initial tract of 18.82 acres.

Furthermore, he was required to publish a “final five-year proof” of his original claim in a Los Angeles paper, the *Graphic*, from December 28, 1907, through January 25, 1908,<sup>60</sup> prior to his February 5, 1908, affidavit and that of his mother Filetta’s and Arthur H. Nash’s. The *Graphic* article read as follows:

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.  
Land Office at Los Angeles, Cal.,  
December 13, 1907.

Notice is hereby given that Clyde W. Dayton of Chatsworth, Cal., has filed notice of his intention to make final five year proof in support of his claim, viz: Homestead Entry No. 9610, made July 2, 1901, Add’l Hd. No. 11518, Nov. 27, 1907, for the NW¼ of NW¼, and NE¼ of NW¼ (Lot 1,) Section 34, Township 2 N., Range 17 W., S.B.M., and that said proof will be made before Register and Receiver at Los Angeles, Cal., on February 4, 1908.

He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon, and cultivation of, the land, viz:

Elijah W. Woolsey [his maternal uncle], of Watts, Cal.; A. H. Nash, of Rivera, Cal.; Clara D. Blinn, of Los Angeles, Cal.; Filetta A. Dayton, of Los Angeles, Cal.

FRANK C. PRESCOTT, Register.

Dec. 28-5t. Date of first publication Dec. 28-07.

(The NW¼ of NW¼ [or Northwest Quarter of Northwest Quarter] included the 40 acres, and the NE¼ of NW¼ [or Lot 1] included the 18.82 acres.)

Out of the four witnesses whom Clyde named in the foregoing publication, only his mother and Arthur Nash provided affidavits. Since the questions on both

of the February 5,<sup>61</sup> 1908, documents were identical, I've grouped their complementary responses together. Their testimonies definitely provide a firsthand account of the initial conditions and Clyde's settlement of Dayton Canyon:

#### HOMESTEAD PROOF—TESTIMONY OF WITNESS

Ques. 1: What is your name, age, and post-office address?

FAD: Filetta A. Dayton; 73; 980 57<sup>th</sup> St., Los Angeles, Cal.

AHN: Arthur H. Nash; 57 years; Rivera, Cal.

Ques. 2: Are you well acquainted with the claimant in this case and the land embraced in his claim?

FAD: I am with both.

AHN: I am with both.

Ques. 3: Is said tract within the limits of an incorporated town or selected site of a city or town, or used in any way for trade or business?

FAD: No. No.

AHN: No. No.

Ques. 4: State specifically the character of this land—whether it is timber, prairie, grazing, farming, coal, or mineral land.

FAD: Mountain land -

AHN: Mountain land - chiefly valuable for raising bees & garden -

Ques. 5: When did claimant settle upon the homestead, and at what date did he establish actual residence thereon? (State fully *facts* upon which you base your answer.)

FAD: He went there with his wife about 5 or 6 years ago - I cannot give the exact date - His wife died 2 years ago, and they had been living there 3 or 4 years then - I did not see them go there, but I corresponded with them constantly, and sold honey for them shipped from the homestead.

AHN: I was there in April, 1903 - He was living there at that time - had a house built & was raising bees -

Ques. 6: Have claimant and family resided continuously on the homestead since first establishing residence thereon? (If settler is unmarried, state the fact.)

FAD: He has lived there all the time, and has made that his home - His wife lived there until her death about 2 years ago -

AHN: He lived there continuously all the time - His wife lived there with him until her death about a year ago - He has lived there since.

Ques. 7: For what period or periods has the settler been absent from the land since making settlement, and for what purpose; and if temporarily absent, did claimant's family reside upon and cultivate the land during such absence?

FAD: He was never absent for any length of time - I was there about twice a year to see them and to care for his wife when she was ill - I do not know of any absences of more than a week.

AHN: I was there 2 or 3 times a year during the 5 years, and never found him away except once - I knew of his coming to town, but he never stayed away long -

Ques. 8: How much of the homestead has the settler cultivated, and for how many seasons did he raise crops thereon? If used for grazing only, describe fencing, state number and kind of stock grazed and by whom owned.

FAD: He has a garden and some fig & olive trees - He always had about \$500 to

\$1000 worth of honey in barrel.

AHN: 2 or 3 acres, any how [anyhow] - possibly 4 or 5 - garden raised - trees & grape vines [grapevines] -

Ques. 9: What improvements are on the land, and what is their value?

FAD: House; bee house; 300 or 400 hives of bees - has piped water to his land - He has done a great deal of grading & leveling - value about \$1000, I think, considering his work & its value to him.

AHN: House, one story - bee house - 350 hives of bees - about 1¼ mile of water pipe - grading - value about \$300 -

Ques. 10: Are there any indications of coal, salines, or minerals of any kind on the homestead? (If so, describe what they are, and state whether the land is more valuable for agricultural than for mineral purposes.)

FAD: Not to my knowledge.

AHN: Not to my knowledge.

Ques. 11: Has the claimant mortgaged, sold, or contracted to sell, any portion of said homestead?

FAD: Not to my knowledge.

AHN: Not to my knowledge.

Ques. 12: Are you interested in this claim; and do you think the settler has acted in entire good faith in perfecting this entry?

FAD: No - I do.

AHN: No - I do.

Clyde's affidavit, which included fourteen questions, follows in its entirety:

## HOMESTEAD PROOF—TESTIMONY OF CLAIMANT

Ques. 1: What is your name as you wish it to appear in your patent; age, and post-office address?

A: Clyde W. Dayton; 46 years; Chatsworth, Cal.

Ques. 2: Are you a *native-born* citizen of the United States, and if so, in what State or Territory were you born?

A: I am - New York.

Ques. 3: Are you the identical person who made homestead entry No. 9610 & addl HE 11518, at the Los Angeles land office on . . . July 2/01 & Nov. 27/07 . . . , and what is the true description of the land now claimed by you?<sup>62</sup>

A: I am - Lot 1, NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, Sec. 34, T. 2 N. [Township 2 North] R. 17 W. [Range 17 West] S.B.M. [San Bernardino Meridian]

Ques. 4: When did you first establish actual residence on the land? State *fully* acts performed by you in this connection. When was your house built on the land and when did you commence permanent occupancy thereof as a place of abode? (Describe said house and other improvements placed on the land by you, giving total value thereof.)

A: About Aug. 10/02 - built my house on Lot 1 about Nov. 1/02 - moved into it Dec. 4/02 - My wife & I went there and camped until our house was completed - house, plastered, 12 x 18 - porch - a bee house & apiary - 200 stands of bees - piped water on the place two miles - have graded some - value about \$300.

Ques. 5: Of whom does your family consist; and have you and your family resided continuously on the land since first establishing residence thereon? (If unmarried, state the fact.)

A: Myself at present - My wife died 2 years ago last Dec. 18 [16] - We resided there continuously except absences of a month at a time -

Ques. 6: When and for what period or periods (giving dates) have you been absent from the homestead since making settlement, and for what purposes; and if temporarily absent, did your family reside upon and cultivate the land during such absence? If married woman, state whether the husband has unperfected homestead entry, and whether he has resided on this land with you?

A: My wife, while living, or myself would come to town once or twice a year to sell honey, remaining here sometimes several weeks - One of us usually stayed on the place, while the other was away -

Ques. 7: How much of the land have you cultivated each season, and for how many seasons have you raised crops thereon? If used for grazing only, describe fencing, state number and kind of stock grazed, and by whom owned.

A: Between 2 & 3 acres - 80 fruit trees set out - garden, acre to ½ acre - 4 years - about 20 or 30 rods of fencing.

Ques. 8: Is your present claim within the limits of an incorporated town or selected site of a city or town, or used in any way for trade and business?

A: No - No.

Ques. 9: What is the character of the land? Is it timber, mountainous, prairie, grazing, or ordinary agricultural land? State its kind and quality, and for what purpose it is most valuable.

A: Mountainous - valuable chiefly for bee culture.

Ques. 10: Are there any indications of coal, salines, or minerals of any kind on the land? (If so, describe what they are, and state whether the land is more valuable for agricultural than for mineral purposes.)

A: No.

Ques. 11: Have you ever made any other homestead entry? (If so, describe the same.)



A: None, except these two -

Ques. 12: Have you sold, conveyed, agreed to sell, or mortgaged any portion of the land; and if so, to whom and for what purpose?

A: No.

Ques. 13: Have you any personal property of any kind elsewhere than on this claim? (If so, describe the same, and state where the same is kept.)

A: About \$100 worth of furniture & tools at a place owned by me in Los Angeles - This is stored, I [am] [housing?] furniture at my homestead.

Ques. 14: Describe by legal subdivisions, or by number, kind of entry, and office where made, any other entry or filing (not mineral), made by you since August 30, 1890.

A: No.

Nearly six months later on July 27, 1908,<sup>63</sup> Clyde was granted his patent for the 58.82 acres in Dayton Canyon.

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The following month, on August 28, Clyde, who still had a Chatsworth mailing address, applied for another patented tract of property that was separate from and north of the Dayton Canyon site: 80 acres for the acquisition of timber or stone (as opposed to “homesteading”) that was described as the “East ½ [Half] of the Northeast ¼ [Quarter] of Section 28 in Township 2 North of Range 17 West of the San Bernardino Meridian.”<sup>64</sup>

Just as he had been legally required to do with the Dayton Canyon property, he also published his proof of claim to this 80-acre tract in the *Graphic* from September 5 through October 31, 1908.<sup>65</sup> This second notification read as follows:

### NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

Department of the Interior. U.S. Land  
Office at Los Angeles, Cal., Aug. 28, 1908.

Notice is hereby given that Clyde W. Dayton of Chatsworth, Los Angeles County, California, who, on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1908, made timber or stone entry, No. ----, for the E.½ of the N.E.¼, of Section 28, Township 2 N., Range 17 W., S.B.M., has filed notice of intention to make final proof, to establish claim to the land above described, before Register and Receiver U.S. Land Office at Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California, on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1908.

Claimant names as witnesses: Arthur H. Nash, August Schweikhard, Ferdinand Tetclaff [Tetzlaff], Charles Woolsey, all of Chatsworth, California.<sup>66</sup>

FRANK C. PRESCOTT, Register.

Sept. 5-9t. first publication Sept[.] 5-08.

The complementary November 10, 1908,<sup>67</sup> affidavits of Arthur H. Nash and August Schweikhard follow:

### TIMBER OR STONE ENTRY—TESTIMONY OF WITNESS

Ques. 1: What is your age, occupation, post-office address, and where do you live?

AHN: 58. Bee keeper [Beekeeper]. Riveria [or Rivera], Los Angeles Co., Cal.

AS: 52 years. Farmer. Chatsworth, Cal.

Ques. 2: By whom have you been employed during the last six months?

AHN: By myself.

AS: Hubert & Wright, Fernando, Cal.

Ques. 3: Are you acquainted with the land above described by a personal examination of each of its smallest legal subdivisions? Describe the tract fully.

AHN: Yes. It is very hilly, rocky & covered with brush.

AS: I am. It is hilly & rocky and covered with brush.

Ques. 4: When, with whom, and in what manner was such examination made?

AHN: Last September. With Mr. Dayton, and he showed me the stake at that time. We made the examination on foot.

AS: Nov. 9, 1908. With Mr. Dayton. The examination was made on foot over two ends of it.

Ques. 5: Is it occupied or are there any improvements on it not made for ditch or canal purposes, or which were not made by, or do not belong to, the said applicant?

AHN: Not occupied. The only improvement is a spring developed & owned by claimant.

AS: Not occupied and the only improvements are a developed spring belonging to claimant.

Ques. 6: Is it fit for cultivation?

AHN: There might be a few acres fit for gardening if the brush was cleared off.

AS: No.

Ques. 7: What causes render it unfit for cultivation?

AHN: It is mountainous, covered with brush & the soil is rocky.

AS: Because it [it's] too hilly & rocky.

Ques. 8: Are there any salines or indications of deposits of gold, silver, cinnabar, copper, coal, or other minerals on this land? If so, state what they are.

AHN: Not that I know of.

AS: Not to my knowledge.

Ques. 9: Is the land valuable for mineral, or more valuable for any other purposes than for the timber or stone thereon, or is it chiefly valuable for timber or stone? (Answer each question.)

AHN: No. No. Only valuable for its stone, worthless for anything else.

AS: No. No. Chiefly valuable for its stone.

Ques. 10: From what facts do you conclude that the land is chiefly valuable for timber or stone?

AHN: There is plenty of rock there that could be quarried.

AS: Because it cannot be cultivated, and it is worthless for anything else.

Ques. 11: How long have you known the applicant?

AHN: Since 1894. 14 years.

AS: About ten years.

Ques. 12: What is his financial condition so far as you know?

AHN: He is pretty well fixed.

AS: He is in pretty good standing.

Ques. 13: Do you know of your own knowledge that applicant has sufficient money of his own to pay for this land and hold it six months without mortgaging it?

AHN: Yes.

AS: I do. I am sure.

Ques. 14: Do you know whether the applicant has, directly or indirectly, made any agreement or contract, in any way or manner, with any person whomsoever by which the title he may acquire from the Government of the United States may inure in whole or in part to the benefit of any person except himself?

AHN: No.

AS: I do not.

Ques. 15: Are you in any way interested in this application or in the land above described, or the timber or stone, salines, mines, or improvements of any description thereon?

AHN: No.

AS: I am not.

Clyde's November 10 affidavit, which contained almost twice as many questions, follows in its entirety:

#### TIMBER OR STONE ENTRY—TESTIMONY OF CLAIMANT

Ques. 1: What is your age, occupation, post-office address, and where do you live?

A: 47 years.<sup>68</sup> Mechanic. Chatsworth, Cal.

Ques. 2: Are you a native-born citizen of the United States; and, if so, in what State or Territory were you born? Are you married or single?

A: Yes. New York. Widower.

Ques. 3: Are you the identical person who applied to purchase this land on the 28 day of August, 1908, and made the sworn statement required by law upon that day?

A: I am the identical person.

Ques. 4: Have you made a personal examination of each smallest legal subdivision of the land applied for?

A: I have.

Ques. 5: When, under what circumstances, and with whom was such examination made?

A: I have known the land seven years and saw it last Nov. 9, 1908. I went there with Mr. Schweikhard to show him a stake, we went there to examine it.

Ques. 6: How did you identify said land? Describe it fully.

A: By corner post. It is very mountainous & rocky. It is all brush land [brushland].

Ques. 7: Is the land occupied, or are there any improvements on it? If so, describe them and state whether they belong to you.

A: No. The improvements are a developed spring and a pipe leading from it developed by myself and belong to me.

Ques. 8: Is the land fit for cultivation, or would it be fit for cultivation if the timber were removed?

A: Not fit for cultivation. No, not any.

Ques. 9: What is the situation of this land, what is the nature of the soil, and what causes render the same unfit for cultivation?

A: There are canyons running through it, rough & rocky. The soil is decomposed rock. The stony condition of same.

Ques. 10: Are there any salines or indications of deposits of gold, silver, cinnabar, copper, coal, or other minerals on this land? If so, state what they are.

A: No.

Ques. 11: Is the land valuable for mineral, or more valuable for any other purposes than for the timber or stone thereon, or is it chiefly valuable for timber or stone? (Answer each question.)

A: Not valuable for mineral land. No. Valuable for its stone.

Ques. 12: From what facts do you conclude that the land is chiefly valuable for timber and stone?

A: It is more valuable for stone than anything else. Because that is the only thing on it that can be used is the stone. Mostly valuable for building purposes.

Ques. 13: How many thousand feet, board measure, of lumber do you estimate that there is on this entire tract? What is the stumpage value of same?

A: No stumpage value.

Ques. 14: Are you a practical lumberman or woodsman? If not, how do you arrive at your estimate of the quantity and value of lumber on the tract?

A: No.

Ques. 15: What do you expect to do with this land and the stone when you get title to it?

A: I expect to build a house with the stone on the land, and keep it.

Ques. 16: Do you know of any capitalist or company which has offered to purchase timber land in the vicinity of this entry? If so, who are they, and how do

you know of them?

A: No, I do not.

Ques. 17: Has any person offered to purchase this land if you acquire title? If so, who, and for what amount?

A: No.

Ques. 18: Where is the nearest and best market for the stone on this land at the present time?

A: It would be Los Angeles.

Ques. 19: What has been your occupation during the past year; where and by whom have you been employed, and at what compensation?

A: Farmer. By myself.

Ques. 20: How did you first learn about this particular tract of land, and that it would be a good investment to buy it?

A: I found the land while hunting. Have known the land about 7 years.

Ques. 21: Did you pay or agree to pay anything for this information? If so, to whom, and the amount?

A: I did not agree to pay anything.

Ques. 22: Did you pay out of your own individual funds all the expenses in connection with making this filing, and do you expect to pay for the land with your own money?

A: Yes. I do.

Ques. 23: Where did you get the money with which to pay for this land, and how long have you had same in your actual possession?



A: I sold honey for it. I have [had] it five years.

Ques. 24: Have you kept a bank account during the past six months? If so, where?

A: Yes. The National Bank of California, Los Angeles. Farmers & Merchants National Bank, Los Angeles.

Ques. 25: Have you sold or transferred your claim to this land since making your sworn statement, or have you directly or indirectly made any agreement or contract, in any way or manner, with any person whomsoever, by which the title which you may acquire from the Government of the United States may inure in whole or in part to the benefit of any person except yourself?

A: I have not. I have not.

Ques. 26: Do you make this entry in good faith for the appropriation of the land and the stone thereon exclusively for your own use and not for the use or benefit of any other person?

A: I do.

Ques. 27: Has any person other than yourself, or any firm, corporation, or association any interest in the entry you are now making, or in the land or in the timber thereon?

A: They have not.

Ques. 28: Have you since August 30, 1890, entered and acquired title to, or are you now claiming, under an entry made under any of the nonmineral public-land laws, an amount of land which, together with the land now applied for, will exceed in the aggregate 320 acres?

A: No.

Over ten months later on September 24, 1909,<sup>69</sup> Clyde received the patent for this 80-acre tract north of his Dayton Canyon homestead.

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The following month, on October 22,<sup>70</sup> Clyde and Lou were married in the city of Los Angeles. And, while it's possible that Clyde might have purposely postponed their marriage until he had acquired the patents for the 138.82 acres, the fact that he had secured this acreage before he and Lou were wed would undoubtedly account for her siblings' exemption from the distribution of these three tracts when the estate was settled in 1924 (the property went to his sister, Clara).

On October 18, 1913,<sup>71</sup> just four days before Clyde and Lou's fourth wedding anniversary, his seventy-nine-year-old<sup>72</sup> mother, Filetta, suffered a railroad accident in Florence that resulted in her death.<sup>73</sup> Filetta Dayton had been living in Florence for three years when she died,<sup>74</sup> and according to the *Los Angeles Times* account (see page 106), she had dismounted from a Watts railroad car on the evening<sup>75</sup> of October 18 and was struck by a Long Beach train while crossing the railroad tracks (the newspaper article indicates that her death was almost instantaneous). Her brother of Watts, E. W. Woolsey, had oversight of her funeral arrangements,<sup>76</sup> and she was buried beside her husband, Ralph, in the Evergreen Cemetery in Los Angeles on October 21.<sup>77</sup>

Filetta Dayton's probate record reveals that E. W. Woosley was also appointed

as administrator of her estate that was ready for distribution over a year later on December 7, 1914.<sup>78</sup> And, since Clyde and his sister, Clara, were her only heirs, they were each granted “[a]n undivided half interest of the cash, the notes, and real estate.”

Filetta’s estate began with a balance of \$9,837.64 and after deductions was left with a net worth of \$8,434.21.<sup>79</sup> Of this distributive amount, \$5,000.00 applied to two property tracts that were described in the record as follows:

Lots Fifty-one (51) and Fifty-two (52) in the Harwood Tract, as per map recorded in Book 60, Page 7 of Maps, records of Los Angeles County.

Lot One Hundred Eighty (180) of the Central Avenue Home Tract, as per Map [map] recorded in Book 4, Page 17 of Maps, records of Los Angeles County.

Lots 51 and 52 were appraised at \$3,000.00, and Lot 180 was appraised at \$2,000.00. (When Clyde’s estate was settled in 1924, the two Harwood Tract lots were listed with his original property of 138.82 acres. Interestingly, the appraisal value of Lots 51 and 52 in 1924 was \$2,500.00.)

Since Aunt Glenna, as has been previously mentioned, consistently but mistakenly maintained that the “Mrs. Dayton” whom Lou cared for at the sanitarium in Battle Creek, Michigan, was both Clyde’s mother *and* a Seventh-day Adventist, I have no way of actually knowing if Filetta was of the same religious persuasion as he, Katie, and Lou. However, a clue that she might have belonged

to this faith can be found on the first page of her probate record where an amount of \$20.14 described as “Interest collected on So. Cal. Ass’n of Seven Day [Seventh-day] Adventist’s [Adventists] Note” was added to the amount of inventory and appraisalment.

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The year before Filetta Dayton’s tragic death, Clyde and Lou witnessed the “birth” of a new town to the east of their canyon abode: Owensmouth. Then, less than a month after Filetta’s death, the aqueduct was finally opened. When I look at pictures of Owensmouth’s opening day on March 30, 1912, and the opening of the aqueduct on November 5, 1913, in Catherine Mulholland’s *The Owensmouth Baby*, I can’t help but wonder if Clyde and Lou might have been standing among the onlookers.

When I received the copies of their death records back in 1981, I couldn’t completely decipher the name of “Owensmouth” due to the handwriting and the absence of an identifying California county, so I sent another inquiry to the Department of Health, and the respondent wrote the following reply:

“Owensmouth was so called because it was the terminus of the aqueduct which brought water from the Owens Valley to Los Angeles. It was called that from 1912-1931 when it was renamed Canoga Park. Owensmouth was annexed to the

city of Los Angeles in 1917 but retained its place name until 1931.”<sup>80</sup> (Too, since the name of their cemetery that appeared to be “Evergreen” likewise lacked a California locale on the death records, I further asked the Department of Health about its whereabouts. Once I learned that it was located in Los Angeles via the aforementioned response, I contacted the cemetery office shortly thereafter.)

In two of her letters to me, Aunt Glenna succinctly described Clyde and Lou in the following words: “They were more or less ‘back to nature’ people,”<sup>81</sup> and “They were very busy people.”<sup>82</sup> In view of my research, these descriptions are certainly accurate, as day-to-day life in Dayton Canyon centered around Clyde’s large apiary of bees and the cultivation of vegetables.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, besides the sale of their honey and vegetables,<sup>84</sup> their personal income was further derived from the sale of health literature that Clyde authored and self-published.<sup>85</sup>

The April 17 and 18, 1922, *Los Angeles Times* articles mentioned that Clyde had his own printing press at the homestead, and it was upon this machine that he prepared the pamphlets that Lou occasionally mailed to my great-grandmother Artelia Davis-Adkisson (again, Lou’s sister-in-law) in Coalfield, Tennessee. Aunt Glenna indicated that “Mom would hear [from Lou] once or twice a year & receive literature quite often.”<sup>86</sup>

Elaborating, Aunt Glenna mentioned<sup>87</sup> that the pamphlets were primarily

devoted to topics such as the nutritional and preparative aspect of honey (e.g., “honey was good to cure illness”) and raw vegetables (Clyde and Lou were vegetarians), and she also added that while the information contained in these brochures was based on Clyde’s personal opinions, the tenor of whatever he wrote and advised harmonized with the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s general emphasis on healthful living. In short, the pamphlets were based on foods that were part of their diet and the proper way to prepare them for consumption.

Aunt Glenna further recalled<sup>88</sup> that Lou would send two types of pamphlets to my great-grandmother (her name and address would be written on the pamphlets). Both were thin and folded with an occasional leaf or two, but one was smaller like a square, and the larger one was long and narrow. Sometimes they were mailed together (the smaller would be folded inside the larger) or arrived separately.

Aunt Glenna also mentioned that the pamphlets were on subjects that Lou assumed would be of interest to my great-grandparents and their children or on a topic about which Lou felt they should be informed. However, despite Lou’s sincere intentions, my great-grandmother would occasionally remark after reading these brochures, “For goodness sake, don’t she think we know anything?” or “Don’t she know we know that?” That is, my great-grandmother didn’t appreciate the “implication” that, perhaps, Lou assumed she knew more than they about

whatever topic or topics had evoked my great-grandmother's responses. However, Aunt Glenna was quick to add that my great-grandmother would have been glad to see Lou (i.e., my great-grandmother's reactions didn't mean that she disliked Lou).

Aunt Glenna also mentioned via her letters a "weekly paper on health" that Clyde was supposed to have written and published, in addition to ads for his "red ripe" honey.<sup>89</sup> However, instead of his writing and publishing a weekly periodical on health, I assume her recollection actually applies to articles that he might have submitted to the *Owensmouth Gazette*—such as the March 30, 1917 (incidentally, Owensmouth's fifth birthday), one that Catherine Mulholland made reference to in her *The Owensmouth Baby* on pages 160 and 161 (see pages 137 and 138 for a transcript of the entire article). Similarly, any advertisements for his honey would have undoubtedly appeared in the same newspaper. On the other hand, the "books" Clyde authored and published that Aunt Glenna likewise mentioned in her letters evidently coincide with the "booklets" that are described in the April 18, 1922, *Los Angeles Times* article.

Interestingly, an article that originally appeared in the *Owensmouth Gazette* but was reprinted in the September 21, 1917, issue of the *Van Nuys News* (see page 110) indicates that a mountain fire that had destroyed a rancher's home and "[s]everal thousand acres of brush land [brushland]" on "Sunday last" (i.e.,

September 16) continued moving in the direction of Clyde's bee yard on "Monday evening" (i.e., September 17). Consequently, certain individuals went to Dayton Canyon prepared to fight the fire if necessary, but the wind ended up diverting the flames in an opposite direction, and the fire abated before reaching Clyde and Lou's homestead (I, of course, view this outcome as providential).

I had never heard of Clyde's "red ripe" honey until I first met my grandmother Helen Adkisson-Bunch's first cousin-in-law Onie Wyatt-McCampbell (of Crossville, Tennessee) in September 1980. However, it wasn't until I discovered Catherine Mulholland's *The Owensmouth Baby* in May 2002 that I was able to substantiate the "validity" of this peculiar adjective. In addition, when I initially met Onie, I didn't know that the following account about the preparation of Clyde's particular brand of honey that she related to me had actually originated with her brother-in-law John McCampbell (1886-1967)<sup>90</sup> until a subsequent interview (via the telephone).<sup>91</sup> John had actually gone to Owensmouth, California, from Crossville, Tennessee, via train during the time frame of 1918-1919<sup>92</sup> and was the only relative of Lou's to visit the Dayton Canyon home while she was living. John's parents, Oliver and Margaret Adkisson-McCampbell (Lou's brother-in-law and sister), had moved from Colorado (where their son Walter was then living) to Crossville during the summer of 1918 (where they



remained until their deaths and are also buried), and it was sometime after this relocation that John left Crossville and went to Lou's.<sup>93</sup> According to Onie, John's California visit consisted of a "long period of time."

John also related that Clyde buried "all or some" of his and Lou's money (John assumed it was buried in fruit jars) in the bee yard somewhere among the bee hives.<sup>94</sup> The reason he knew this was because he worked for Clyde (i.e., helped prepare the honey for sale), and whenever he was paid by Clyde, Clyde would go outside into the bee yard and eventually return inside the house with the money that was *always* in gold and silver coins.

John further described the bee yard as large and situated near the house and also mentioned cactus plants that grew on the homestead (Onie said that it seemed as if these cacti grew in the bee yard<sup>95</sup>). Moreover, John mentioned that Clyde specialized in the preparation and sale of "red ripe" honey. As part of the preparatory process, the honey was stored in large barrels<sup>96</sup> in the bee yard where the sun would shine on it and consequently "ripen" it. That is, the heat of the sun would cause the honey to boil and rid it of impurities. Clyde would then skim the waste, such as the comb, that had gathered on the surface, and afterwards, it would be clear and have a reddish hue—hence its name. It was then prepared for sale.

Aunt Glenna also told me<sup>97</sup> that John mentioned Clyde and Lou's diet of raw

vegetables and honey and how he wasn't used to eating vegetables raw—he was used to them being cooked.

The earliest note that I have about Clyde and Lou's honey is still ambiguous after all these years: "stored honey for 7 years before eating."<sup>98</sup> Aunt Glenna at least clarified in her letters to me that this honey was supposed to have been stored in the bare ground and that this seven-year period was supposed to have enhanced its "medicinal value" (which resulted in higher income). However, she added, "What it did [i.e., *how* this storage period increased the honey's potency] I have no idea."<sup>99</sup>

Earl Butler (see page 27) also told me that Clyde shipped his honey by the "railroad carloads." Interestingly, Clyde's mother, Filetta, made the following statement in her February 5, 1908, affidavit: "I . . . sold honey for them [i.e., Clyde and Katie] shipped from the homestead." In addition, Walter Knapp (see page 20) was evidently referring to honey that Clyde was going to ship via the train when he related this firsthand account in writing: "He [Clyde] raised bee's [bees] and sold honey, . . . . He would haul his honey to the R. R. depot in Owensmouth in an old wooden wheel-barrow [wheelbarrow]. He would always stop on his way home for a glass of wine<sup>100</sup> and visit with my dad for a little. If he had an extra jar of honey he'd give it to us kids."<sup>101</sup>

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## THE FIRE

Mary Jane Adkisson-Cozart, Lou's sister who died in October 1916, once sent their sister Margaret McCampbell two gold bar pins of hers so that Margaret could have them for a keepsake. About three weeks before the April 12, 1922, fire, Margaret wrote a letter to Lou (they corresponded regularly) and sent her the larger of Mary Jane's bar pins, and the next thing anyone knew was that Lou and Clyde's house had burned to the ground with them inside.<sup>102</sup>

Maude Estes-Hembree (see page 24), who was nearly seventeen when the fire occurred, told me<sup>103</sup> that Lou and Clyde took a large wagonload of honey into town one day to sell and received about \$4,000.00. Afterwards, they returned home with the money, and the next thing anyone knew was that their house had burned to the ground with them inside. (Maude added that Lou and Clyde would regularly take wagonloads of honey into town to sell and would receive large amounts of money.)

As for details of the fire and its aftermath, Walter Knapp recollected the following in writing: "The most terrible crime [happened] to Mr. & Mrs[.] Dayton, for which Dayton Canyon was named. . . . Well anyway one morning

some ranchers saw a cloud of smoke in Dayton Canyon[.] When they got there they found his small home burned to the ground, they wet what was left of it. When the [sheriff] got [there] he found that both bodies had been wired to [their] beds with baling wire, they had been robbed, tied to [their] beds and the house set on fire. The [murderer] was never found. [There] were some suspicions but that is about all.”<sup>104</sup>

When Maude Hembree’s and Walter Knapp’s recollections are weighed against the newspaper accounts, most of what they related was inaccurate. For example, when Maude mentioned the transportation of their honey via “wagonloads,” some of the newspaper articles countered this assumption by stating that Clyde transported everything he sold via his wheelbarrow. For instance, the April 17, 1922, *Los Angeles Times* article described him in these words: “It was the old man’s most noted peculiarity [peculiarity] that he never used automobiles or wagons and transported his supplies and his products of his bee ranch to and from Owensmouth, . . . on the wheelbarrow.” Even Aunt Glenna mistakenly assumed that Clyde and Lou transported their wares via a wagon first and then later by truck. Too, Clyde’s settled estate consisted of a sole cash balance (minus the value of the property) of \$4,108.15. Perhaps this figure was the basis of Maude’s monetary recollection. The key inaccuracy in Walter Knapp’s account involves

the detail of Clyde and Lou being tied to their “beds” (it was a single bed or cot) with baling wire. No such detail was mentioned in any of the newspaper articles which are consistent about the condition of their tenuous remains at the time of discovery.

On the other hand, while Aunt Glenna’s recollections about the fire were nearly accurate, she, too, related some minor misinformation. According to her, no one knew the time of day when the fire had occurred, but it was one to three days before Clyde and Lou’s remains were discovered. A man (who seemed to have been hunting<sup>105</sup>) saw smoke, went to investigate, and found their house burned to the ground and their remains on what had been the bed (he knew their identities). He immediately reported his findings to the nearest authorities, and the investigation ensued. The smoke he had seen was from “heavy sills and beams in the ceiling” that were still smoldering at the time of discovery, and he believed that Clyde and Lou had been murdered and placed in the bed otherwise they would have run from the “bedroom” in an effort to save themselves. Aunt Glenna also recollected that their bodies were completely burned up and their bones just found.<sup>106</sup> Likewise, she heard that oil cans were found near the former home and therefore assumed that oil had been poured on the house to ignite the fire.<sup>107</sup>

A key misconception that Aunt Glenna understandably held concerned the size

of Clyde and Lou's house: she had assumed it was a large structure since they had money (this is why she mentioned their remains being in the "bedroom" of the house). However, she speculated in her May 24, 1982, letter that it might have been constructed of logs (this was mentioned in conjunction with the heavy wood that was supposed to have been smoldering when the man came upon the site).

Finally, before my correspondence with Aunt Glenna ever began, my grandmother, Helen Adkisson-Bunch, had told me that robbery was the alleged motive<sup>108</sup> for this "double murder"<sup>109</sup> of her aunt and uncle. Moreover, Aunt Glenna summarized the case's "conclusion" in her September 11, 1981, letter: "It was thought that they were murdered, then the house burned to destroy evidence." However, seeking to avoid any overstatements beyond what she actually knew, Aunt Glenna later wrote in her (first) February 1, 1982, letter: "We only knew the house burned with them in it."

According to the newspaper articles, Clyde and Lou's burnt cabin ("a square ten by twelve feet"<sup>110</sup> [see page 37]) and remains "found in the middle of the room"<sup>111</sup> weren't discovered until Sunday, April 16, four days after the fire. Three women, one of whom was named Mrs. A. Rhoda, had come to the premises that day on a personal visit and discovered the charred ruins of the former home. The April 17, 1922, *Los Angeles Times* issue indicated that the women "notified Henry

Elilott [Elliott], of . . . Los Angeles, who [had] a bee ranch below Dayton's place, and who [came] only on Sundays. Elliott looked at the ruins and at once notified Constable William Gates of Calabasas, who called the Sheriff's office." (Elliott was undoubtedly the man to whom Aunt Glenna referred in her letters.)

Clyde and Lou were last seen alive during the *morning* of Wednesday, April 12, by Arch Cravens, a resident of Dayton Canyon, who saw Clyde pushing his wheelbarrow stocked with "household goods"<sup>112</sup> on one of the small trails that led to the cabin. (Clyde had evidently been to Owensmouth that morning, so this detail might account for Maude Hembree's recollection that "they" had been to town and back near the time of the fire.)

However, by six o'clock that late afternoon, Lon Gates, son of Constable William Gates, "saw a frail wisp of smoke rise above the hills separating the canyon in which he [lived] from Dayton canyon";<sup>113</sup> and a Mr. and Mrs. Eller, residents of the Orcutt Ranch, corroborated Gates's testimony by stating that "they saw the cabin burn about 6 p.m. Wednesday."<sup>114</sup> I assume this statement means that they saw smoke like Gates; otherwise, they would have immediately contacted the authorities if they had seen the cabin actually burn. Needless to say, it wasn't dark when the fire occurred. (Incidentally, the wheelbarrow's "twisted remains"<sup>115</sup> were discovered in front of what had been the cabin's porch.)

Further proofs that the fire had occurred on Wednesday, April 12, were the presence of three-day-old mail in Clyde and Lou's mailbox "on the road below the shack"<sup>116</sup> (the cabin was situated on a hill<sup>117</sup>) and the starving condition of livestock<sup>118</sup> that were locked in their stalls when the officers first arrived at the premises. The fact that the animals were locked in their stalls led the officers to conclude that the fire had occurred *after* 5 p.m. that particular day.

Clyde and Lou's remains were released to his uncle Elijah W. Woolsey's undertaking establishment in Watts (at 136 Rosella Avenue) on Monday, April 17,<sup>119</sup> at which time he and Clyde's sister, Clara, finalized the funeral arrangements.<sup>120</sup> Their remains were interred in the same grave<sup>121</sup> in the Evergreen Cemetery (beside Katie's grave) four days later on April 21.<sup>122</sup>

The day before the burial, the investigation officially closed upon inconclusive grounds. The April 20, 1922, *Los Angeles Times* article concluded with the following statement: "Coroner Nance will sign a death certificate, giving the cause of death as unknown, it was said." On both death records, Frank A. Nance's cause of death reads, "Burning whether accidental or with criminal intent unable to determine house burning down."

The premise of the investigation had begun with a probable double homicide actuated by robbery but concluded with a probable scenario of murder and suicide



(based largely on the discovery [via interviewees] of frequent arguments between Clyde and Lou and “threats” against her by him). The April 19, 1922, *Los Angeles Examiner* article, however, included the loophole against the murder-suicide theory: “The only point against the murder and suicide theory, said the investigators, came in the fact that the remains of the charred weapons [a rifle and two guns] found in the ruins of the Dayton shack were some distance from the bodies. . . . and . . . can be explained, said those in charge of the probe, by the theory that the aged man had brushed the weapon he used out of the way in his death struggle.”<sup>123</sup>

Despite interviewees who were proponents of the murder-suicide theory, others, including Clyde’s uncle Elijah W. Woolsey,<sup>124</sup> maintained that the case was one of a double homicide. One man in particular Otto F. “Dutch” Gschwind Jr. (1901-1985)<sup>125</sup> believed that the murderer had been the aforementioned Lon Gates and was the source of this information that was included in Catherine Mulholland’s *The Owensmouth Baby*. Referring to Gates under the alias of “Jud Caines,” Ms. Mulholland disclosed the following: “Meanwhile, in Calabasas lived a man who shall be called Jud Caines—not his real name. Now, Jud attracted trouble all his life—a bad hombre, many said, but mighty attractive all the same, as certain Valley ladies back then might have told you. . . . The darkest shadow on

Jud's character was an unproven charge of murder for gain. When the Red Ripe Honey Man and his wife were found murdered back in the canyon that bore their name, their cabin ransacked, looted, and burned, certain people in Owensmouth whispered their suspicions about who had done it. The crime remained unsolved, but there were those, even sixty years later, who claimed that Jud Caines was the one who did the dirty on old Mr. and Mrs. Dayton. True or not, he was the kind of man about which such things were thinkable" (pages 161 and 163).

For me, the key piece of evidence that lends credibility to the murder-suicide theory is the letter that Lou sent to a female friend that was disclosed in the April 19, 1922, *Los Angeles Evening Herald*: "Important evidence supporting the murder and suicide theory was received from Mrs. Ellen Thompson, . . . a friend of the deceased woman, who gave the deputies a letter, received from Mrs. Dayton, in which Mrs. Dayton expressed fears for her life and asked that her relatives in eastern states be notified if anything happened to her."

Nevertheless, whichever theory one chooses to accept, no one will ever know the complete specifics of that April 12 day between the last sighting of Clyde during the morning and the brief appearance of smoke in Dayton Canyon during the late afternoon. Indeed, the conditions of their demise will forever remain a mystery.

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All information about Clyde and Lou's deaths that was passed down orally to us (as well as other collateral relatives) originated with a single source: my great-grandfather Walker and Lou's lifelong bachelor brother Thomas "Tommy" Adkisson (1860-1946), a resident of Harriman, Tennessee.

According to Aunt Glenna's letters, Tommy was the only family member who was notified (via letter) about the fire and their passing (I wonder if Ellen Thompson's letter from Lou was the means by which the California authorities were able to contact him). Consequently, he visited his siblings' homes<sup>126</sup> to relay the tragic news prior to leaving on the train in Harriman for southern California. Aunt Glenna remembered that he left within a very short space of time after receiving the letter (i.e., "a day or two"), and she told me that he was the only sibling who was able to make the trip (one reason being his marital status).

While Tommy was in California, he met a man who was a "representative of Clyde's family." And, although Aunt Glenna didn't know if this individual was an actual relative, it's possible (in view of my research) that he could have been Clyde's uncle, Elijah Woolsey, or brother-in-law, William Blinn. Nevertheless, when Tommy finally returned to Tennessee (Aunt Glenna didn't remember the length of his stay in California), he revisited his siblings' homes so he could relate

what he had learned about the case and how the estate would be settled.<sup>127</sup>

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Aunt Glenna recollected that Clyde and Lou's estate was settled in the spring of 1924 (i.e., April or May). She was living in the girls' dormitory of a college called Wheat High School<sup>128</sup> and remembered that her father, Walker, gave her the money from his share of Lou's estate to buy white shoes for her graduation that spring. She further recalled that Lou's part of the estate had been sent to her uncle Tommy Adkisson and was divided equally among the surviving siblings.<sup>129</sup> However, it wasn't until I received the probate records that I learned that Clyde and Lou had had separate estates.<sup>130</sup> According to the records, it took almost two years for Lou's estate to be settled and slightly over two years for Clyde's.

Lou's estate<sup>131</sup> was ready for distribution in January 1924 and had begun with a sole cash balance of \$3,000.00. After deductions of \$315.75, the remaining balance of \$2,684.25 was to be divided among the following named heirs:

**brothers** (I've listed them in birth order<sup>132</sup>): James Adkisson (Jellico, Tennessee); Jacob Adkisson<sup>133</sup> (Petros, Tennessee); Thomas B. Adkisson (Harriman, Tennessee); Elijah Adkisson ("residence unknown"); and Walker Adkisson (Coalfield, Tennessee); **sister** (born before Jacob): Margaret McCampbell (Crossville, Tennessee); **nieces**: Ida Adkisson<sup>134</sup> (Harriman, Tennessee) and Willie

Adkisson<sup>135</sup> (“residence unknown”); **great-nephews/-niece** (“children of Willie Adkisson, deceased, nephew of decedent”): Homer Adkisson; (-niece) Lenice [Lennis] Adkisson; Arnold Adkisson; and Kenneth Adkisson<sup>136</sup> (all residents of Harriman, Tennessee).

Each of Lou’s siblings was to receive a one-eighth part, as well as niece Willie Adkisson. Niece Ida Adkisson was to receive a one-sixteenth part; and great-niece, Lennis, and great-nephews, Homer, Arnold, and Kenneth, were to split a one-sixteenth part.

Clyde’s estate<sup>137</sup> that went to his sister and sole heir, Clara Blinn, was ready for distribution in July 1924 and had begun with a balance of \$11,966.56. After deductions totaling \$1,858.41, the net balance of \$10,108.15 consisted of \$4,108.15 in cash (“Deposited in Bank of Italy, Ontario Branch”) and the \$6,000.00 appraisal value of the entire property according to the following separate assessments (I’ve listed them in acquisitional order): the 18.82 acres in Dayton Canyon (\$1,500.00); the 40 acres in Dayton Canyon (\$800.00); the 80 acres north of Dayton Canyon (\$1,200.00); and Filetta Dayton’s former Los Angeles Lots 51 and 52 (\$2,500.00).<sup>138</sup>

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Clara and husband, William Blinn, were residents of Ontario, California, at the

time Lou and Clyde's estates were settled and remained in this locale until their deaths. Before moving to Ontario in 1922, the Blinns had lived in Inglewood for over twelve years.<sup>139</sup> William passed away at the age of eighty-three in an Upland hospital on May 4, 1944, with Clara's death at the age of seventy-nine following just over a year later on June 4, 1945, at (I assume) the Ontario residence of her daughter Bernice's. Both William and Clara were interred in the mausoleum at Bellevue Memorial Park in Ontario<sup>140</sup> (where their daughter and son-in-law, Alvis Richenberger, are also interred).

According to his death record, Elijah W. Woolsey had resided in the state of California for thirty years at the time of his December 18, 1935, death and twelve years at his residential address of 2727 Piedmont Avenue in Verdugo City (where he died), a rural district of Glendale. He would have moved to this locale from Watts (where his undertaking establishment was located) sometime after Clyde and Lou died. His passing at the age of eighty-seven<sup>141</sup> was attributed to prostate cancer,<sup>142</sup> and he was buried in the Inglewood Park Cemetery (in Inglewood) on December 20. His death record further indicates that he had been a retired mortician.<sup>143</sup>

## NOTES

1. Walter Knapp's handwritten account can be found on p. 133. (Catherine Mulholland [1923-2011] was the one who told me about his father. She and Frank Knapp Sr. [1875-1952] are buried in the same cemetery: Oakwood Memorial Park in Chatsworth, California.)
2. This date comes from Clyde's death record. Since Clyde's maternal uncle Elijah Washington\* or "E. W." Woolsey was the informant (as well as undertaker), I accept this date as correct. Too, this date corroborates Clyde's age at the time of his and Lou's marriage in October 1909. That is, he listed his age as forty-seven when they married and would have turned forty-eight the following month. (\*His first name comes from his death record and also appears in the 1907 *Graphic* notice on p. 33. His middle name comes from his death record.)
3. Ralph's middle name comes from Clyde and Lou's marriage record.
4. Filetta's middle name comes from Ralph's *Los Angeles Times* obituary (see p. 105). However, it was misspelled as *Antoniette*.
5. Death records. Filetta's parents were John Woolsey (born in New York) and Clarissa Sherwood (born in Connecticut); Ralph's parents (who weren't named) were listed as natives of Connecticut. (In addition to Clyde and Lou's marriage record and Clyde's death record, Clara Dayton-Blinn's death record corroborates Ralph's and Filetta's native state, and the death record of Filetta's younger brother, Elijah W. Woolsey [who was fourteen years her junior], corroborates the parental information on her death record. Furthermore, Elijah's death record lists *Beaver Dams*, New York, as his birthplace; however, it isn't known if Filetta was born at the same locale.)
6. Death record.
7. Ibid. (Clyde's specific New York birthplace isn't known. Perhaps he and Clara shared the same locale.)

8. According to his death record, Clyde had resided in California for *forty* years at the time of his 1922 death. His death record likewise indicates that he had lived in Dayton Canyon for *twenty-five* years at the time of his death. However, this specific duration in Dayton Canyon is incorrect since his affidavit in his land-entry file reveals that he had actually lived in Dayton Canyon between nineteen and twenty years. Therefore, the forty-year duration is inconclusive. Nevertheless, his residence in California for “four decades” might explain why there was a misconception about the number of years he had lived in Dayton Canyon (see the newspaper articles).

9. His 1903 death record indicates that he had lived in Los Angeles County for *nine* years at the time of his death, and her 1913 death record indicates that she had lived in California for *twenty* years at the time of her death.

10. “Retired” was listed as his occupation on his death record.

11. Her middle name comes from her denominational obituary (see p. 105).

12. According to her death record and denominational obituary, she was born on May 11, 1877.\* Her death record further identifies her as the daughter of Gillis McNeil (born in New York) and Kate\*\* Platt (born in New York). (\*Her headstone lists her year of birth as 1876.) (\*\*According to Mark McNeil, her formal name was Catherine Ann.)

13. The specific locale in Iowa comes from her denominational obituary; her marriage and death record only lists the state of Iowa.

14. Her denominational obituary indicates that she became a Seventh-day Adventist at the age of fourteen (i.e., in 1891).

15. *Elder* is a common referent or title for Seventh-day Adventist ministers (as opposed to *Reverend*). The marriage record lists a Mrs. L. E. Howe of Los Angeles as one of the two witnesses (evidently Elder Howe’s wife).

16. Back in January 1983, I received a copy from the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder of a November 22, 1897, deed for Clyde and Katie (Book 1201 of Deeds, p. 157) in which they had paid one hundred dollars in gold coins to an



Amos F. Nadeau for a half acre of land (a portion of Lot B in Book 53 of Miscellaneous Records, p. 61).

17. The 1900 Census indicates that she was their only child.

18. This information comes from her obituary (see p. 107).

19. His death record indicates that he had been born on August 2, 1860, at this location, but his obituary (see p. 106) reveals that he had moved to Los Angeles from Bradford. His death record further identifies his parents as William Blinn (born in Iowa) and Nancy Pettit (born in New York).

20. His 1944 death record and Clara's 1945 death record indicate that they had lived in California for a total of *forty-six* and *forty-seven* years (i.e., since 1898).

21. This title comes from his obituary. His death record lists his occupation as "retired creamery man," and the 1900 Census lists it as "butter maker."

22. This same census indicates that the Blinns had been married for eight years. However, the particulars of how they initially met aren't known.

23. His land-entry file for Homestead Certificate No. 4583 (58.82 acres).

24. His specific age (i.e., eighty-four years and five months [no days]), as well as his date of death, comes from his death record.\* His headstone only includes the years of birth (1819) and death; however, the 1900 Census, which lists the same year of birth, indicates that he was born in *April* (this corroborates his specific age on the death record; that is, his date of birth would have been April 18, 1819). (\*His date of death is also listed on his cemetery record.)

25. Death record and obituary (see p. 105).

26. Death record.

27. Obituary.

28. The interment date comes from his death and cemetery record.

29. Her middle name comes from the 1880 Morgan County, Tennessee, Census (William *Adkison* household in the tenth district: dwelling number 203).

30. Ibid. Her middle name is also listed in the 1860 Morgan County, Tennessee, Census (James *Adkinson* household in the first district: dwelling number 111).

31. I used the 1900 Morgan County, Tennessee, Census (William *Adkisson* household in the first district: dwelling number 124) that included Lou's month of birth (i.e., July) and her age of *forty* on her and Clyde's October 1909 marriage record to determine her partial date of birth: July 1869 (this is the date that I had inscribed on her headstone). If the date of birth on her 1922 death record (i.e., March 12, 1870) is the correct one, the year of 1870 would at least be wrong since she was listed as "two" when the 1870 Morgan County, Tennessee, Census (James *Adkinson* household in the first district: dwelling number 26) was taken on June 2. (See note 102.)

32. Lou's father, William, indicated in the 1880 Census that both parents were natives of Virginia.\* Moreover, Bryon and Barbara Sistler's 1984 compilation *Tennessee Mortality Schedules*\*\* lists Virginia as Catharine's place of birth (p. 2). (\*Lou's grandfather James listed Virginia as his birthplace in the 1850, 1860, and 1870 Censuses.) (\*\*Jerrold "Jerry" Adkisson was the source for this index.)

33. Only three graves in the Adkisson Cemetery are marked with inscribed headstones (others are marked with rocks\*), so the exact location of Lou's parents' graves, as well as her grandfather James's grave, is unknown.\*\* Lou's grandmother, Catharine (May 19, 1791-October 19, 1846, and identified as the wife of James), her uncle who died in childhood, Jesey (October 7, 1828-April 4, 1837), and her oldest sister who was the firstborn, Catharine (June 30, 1848-May 27, 1849, and identified as the daughter of William), are the only family members who have headstones. Moreover, the family's surname is spelled as *Adkison* on all three headstones; however, Lou and her siblings spelled the surname as *Adkisson*. Incidentally, the broader locale of Lou's Morgan County birthplace is known as "Harriman" for delivery purposes. This fact might explain why she listed her father's birthplace as "Harriman" on her marriage record (as opposed to the *city* of Harriman that is actually located in Roane County). (\*Susie and Carla Kries's 1996 compilation *Morgan County Cemeteries II* mentions the presence of *twenty-three* unmarked graves [i.e., those without inscribed headstones] and that the last

interment occurred “around 1910” [p. 6]. Lou’s brother John died in August 1910, so it’s possible that he was the last family member to be buried in this cemetery.) (\*\*The family evidently never applied for a military headstone to commemorate James’s service in the War of 1812.)

34. Again, this date of death comes from her headstone. However, the 1850 Tennessee mortality schedule (see note 32) lists her month and year of death as *May 1850* and her age as *fifty*; her cause of death was “unknown.” The only explanation I can offer for this overt contradiction in the mortality schedule is that the 1850 source who compiled the original information was possibly confused about which “Catharine” the family was discussing. Lou’s sister died in *May 1849*,\* a year before the census, but her grandmother—if the inscribed date of death is correct—had been dead nearly four years when the 1850 Morgan County, Tennessee, Census was taken for Lou’s grandfather and parents (James *Adkison* household: dwelling number 44) on August 19. (\*Perhaps Lou’s sister died in *1850*, and the year of death on her headstone was an oversight.)

35. A page from his War of 1812 pension file\* indicates that he died on August 4, 1875. (\*Jerrold “Jerry” Adkisson was the source for this document.)

36. Lou’s uncle, Obediah Butler, was living with her and her family when the 1880 Census was taken.

37. Annie was a *first cousin* to Lou (Annie’s father, William Preston Butler, was a brother to Lou’s mother) and a *second cousin once removed* to her (Lou’s grandfather, Elias Butler, was a first cousin to Annie’s mother, Emily Jane Butler-Butler). (Incidentally, Annie had a duplicate picture of Lou that appears on p. 95.)

38. Maude related this core account to me in 1981, but she clarified a few details in 1982: 1) Lou’s father’s marital status;\* 2) her mother Annie’s marital status and age;\*\* and 3) a general description of the Adkisson home and the location of the organ. (\*I had particularly asked Maude if she could remember her mother’s age so I could have a general time frame for Louisa Adkisson’s death.) (\*\*Maude further told me that my great-grandparents, Walker Adkisson and the former Artelia Davis [Lou’s brother and sister-in-law], were already married when this event transpired; they had married on September 28, 1890, in Morgan County.)

39. Aunt Glenna told me in her August 25, 1981, letter that this organ had been purchased for Lou.

40. The pictures in the appendix attributed to Patricia Davis-Nation originally belonged to her paternal grandmother, Mary Butler-Davis.

41. Milton T. Reiber's *Graysville Battle Creek of the South 1888-1988* indicates that Lou's oldest brother, James P. Adkisson, and his wife, Julia, became members of the Graysville Church on July 5, 1890; their daughter, Cora, was first listed as a member on January 6, 1895 (p. 95\*). (\*His disclaimer: "Listed below are the names of those who have been or still are members of the Graysville Church. The first date is when they joined the church, by letter, by baptism, or by profession of faith. The second date is when they left the church, by death, by letter, or otherwise. These names are taken from the Church Clerk's record book, and are as accurate as the Clerk's records.")

42. Milton T. Reiber's *Graysville Battle Creek of the South 1888-1988*, p. 92.

43. Ibid., p. 91.

44. Ibid., p. 111. Lou's sister Mary Jane Adkisson-Cozart (1863-1916) wrote a personal eulogy\* (in February 1916) in which she stated that she had become a Seventh-day Adventist on July 4, 1896, and requested that a "Brother Sturdevant" (this would have been Charles E. Sturdevant) be the primary person to preach her funeral (Mary Jane passed away in October 1916). According to Reiber's church history, Mary Jane first joined the Graysville Church on September 29, 1912 (p. 98). (\*Onie Wyatt-McCampbell [1902-1994], who was the daughter-in-law of Lou's sister, Margaret Adkisson-McCampbell [1856-1935], gave me this eulogy in September 1980. Onie and Margaret were Seventh-day Adventists.)

45. Milton T. Reiber's *Graysville Battle Creek of the South 1888-1988*, p. 95 (her name was spelled as *Lula*). While my great-grandmother Artelia Davis-Adkisson (1876-1959) accepted the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist faith during the evangelistic efforts of the early 1890s, she didn't become a baptized member until 1919. Reiber's church history shows that she, too, belonged to the Graysville Church (via letter only) from August 2, 1919, until January 2, 1920 (p. 95). She was a charter member of the Coalfield Seventh-day Adventist Church that was

organized in 1937. Although my great-grandfather Walker Adkisson (1865-1947) believed in the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, he never joined either by baptism or profession of faith.

46. Charlie Butler was a brother to Annie Butler-Estes (see note 37).

47. The 1900 Census lists his month and year of birth as June 1827. According to this date, William would have been older than his brother Jesse (see note 33). Furthermore, the same census, which lists William's age as seventy-two, was taken on June 13. Therefore, if the month and year of William's birth were correct, he would have turned seventy-three between June 14 and June 30.

48. June 1982 note.

49. Aunt Glenna's May 24, 1982, letter. Aunt Glenna speculated that part of Lou's financial means to attend college might have come from the sale of her interest in the Adkisson homeplace after her father's death.

50. Aunt Glenna was consistent in her letters that Lou had graduated from the School of Nursing and was a R.N. According to the "Nursing Education" chart on p. 226 in the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia (M-Z)*, Lou's degree was undoubtedly an Associate's with a R.N. license. The function of this degree and license that can be earned in 18-24 months is described as follows: "Under supervision to give nursing care to a patient or group of patients at a beginning staff level in a hospital."

51. Aunt Glenna told me in her September 11, 1981, and (first) February 1, 1982, letter that Lou never returned to Tennessee after moving to Michigan and California.

52. Whether Clyde returned to Battle Creek when Katie was discharged isn't known.

53. The day of death comes from her death and interment record. Her denominational obituary and funeral notice (see p. 105) list December 17 as her day of death.

54. The fact that Filetta was staying at the same residence is another reason why I believe she had been in Michigan with Katie.

55. Her death record indicates that the doctor attended her from December 5 through December 16 and that he last saw her alive on December 13.

56. Death record.

57. Funeral notice.

58. Her date of burial comes from her death and interment record.

59. Clyde's epitaph also reflects the Seventh-day Adventist Church's belief about a person's state in death: "soul sleep." Soul sleep teaches that the dead, instead of "ascending into Heaven" or "descending into a fiery hell" at death, remain in the grave in an unconscious state until one of two literal resurrections: the first and foremost one that includes eternal life (when immortality is ultimately granted and followed by an ascension to Heaven) and the second one that includes condemnation and fiery punishment.

60. These dates, as well as the article, come from the "Affidavit of Publication" in his first land-entry file.

61. From a February 5, 1908, "Department of the Interior, United States Land Office, Los Angeles, Cal.," paper in his first land-entry file: "Clyde W. Dayton, being first duly sworn, deposes and says . . . that the reason that his proof was not offered on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1908, as advertised [in the *Graphic*] is that one of his best witnesses could [not] reach the office in time to give testimony on that date."

62. Question 3 (without Clyde's responses) reads as follows: "Are you the identical person who made homestead entry No. \_\_\_\_\_, at the \_\_\_\_\_ land office on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_, and what is the true description of the land now claimed by you?"

63. See the patent certificate on p. 139. (I assume the reason Clyde's residence of Florence was listed [instead of Chatsworth] in his father's 1903 and Katie's 1905 obituary was due to this interval of seven years that preceded his acquisition of the

Dayton Canyon homestead.)

64. All information pertaining to this 80-acre tract comes from his second land-entry file for Timber or Stone Certificate No. 01023. (See George Fogelson's illustration on p. 147 that shows the proximity of the Dayton Canyon tract of 58.82 acres to this secondary tract of 80 acres.)

65. These dates, as well as the article, come from his "Affidavit of Publication" in his second land-entry file.

66. Incidentally, Arthur Nash was living in "Rivera" when he provided the November affidavit for Clyde. Moreover, I don't know if Charles Woolsey was related to Clyde.

67. The year 1909 was mistakenly written on August Schweikhard's affidavit.

68. Clyde turned forty-seven eighteen days after the taking of this affidavit.

69. See the patent certificate on p. 140.

70. According to Lou's death record (Clyde's uncle, E. W. Woolsey, was also the informant), she had resided in California for *thirteen* years and Dayton Canyon for *twelve* years at the time of her death. However, since she initially moved to Los Angeles in December 1905, she would have lived in California for a total of *sixteen* years; E. W. Woolsey's recollection of thirteen years was probably based on the year of her and Clyde's marriage.\* On the other hand, Lou had lived in Dayton Canyon for twelve years at the time of her death. (\*E. W. Woolsey incorrectly listed her brother, Jacob H. Adkisson, as her father on her death record, and he was inaccurate about Clyde's length of residence in Dayton Canyon on Clyde's death record [see note 8].)

71. The date of death comes from her death and interment record (her headstone only lists the year of birth and death). (Her year of death was mistakenly typed as "1914" on p. 6 of her probate record [No. 25008 in the Superior Court of Los Angeles County].)

72. According to her death record (her son-in-law, William Blinn, was the

informant), she was born on February 27, 1834 (the 1900 Los Angeles County Census lists her month and year of birth as *January* 1834). (The *Los Angeles Times* account of her death [see p. 106] mistakenly listed her age as eighty.)

73. The cause of death on her death record: “Fracture of the skull, railroad accident.”

74. Death record. (She was still living [alone] at her home on East 57<sup>th</sup> Street in Los Angeles when the 1910 Census was taken [in April], so her relocation to Florence would have occurred sometime between April and the end of 1910.)

75. The time of death on her death record was “6:30 p.m.”

76. “Closson and Woolsey of Watts” was listed as the undertaker on her death record. (Her probate record indicates that her funeral expense of \$170.00 was paid to C. L. Closson on December 4, 1913.)

77. Death and interment record.

78. The statement reads, “The hearing of the within ACCOUNT AND PETITION FOR DISTRIBUTION is hereby set for the 7 day of Dec[.], 1914 at 9 o’clock A.M., in Department 2 of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County, California.”

79. When the total credits\* on pp. 1 and 2 of the record are deducted from the total charges on p. 1 (i.e., \$9,837.64), the distributive balance equals \$8,432.96. (\*The credits total \$1,404.68 instead of \$1,403.43 as listed on the document; the February 10, 1914, credit of \$1.25 was inadvertently omitted in the original calculation.)

80. I didn’t keep this letter but did record verbatim what I had been told about Owensmouth. (Aunt Glenna told me in June 1982 that she remembered her parents [my great-grandparents] mentioning Owensmouth.)

81. August 8, 1981, letter.

82. (First) February 1, 1982, letter.



83. My grandmother, Helen Adkisson-Bunch, told me in July 1980 that they “raised mostly vegetables and some other culture he did [a reference to his beekeeping].”

84. Aunt Glenna consistently maintained in more than one letter that they also sold vegetables as part of their livelihood.

85. May 24, 1982, letter. (Aunt Glenna commented during her June 1982 interview that Clyde “wrote for years.”)

86. September 11, 1981, letter. Aunt Glenna indicated in her (first) February 1, 1982, letter that my great-grandmother wrote to Lou “perhaps once a year” and was the only individual in my great-grandfather’s family (i.e., my great-grandparents and their children) who corresponded with Lou.

87. June 1982.

88. Ibid.

89. The April 20, 1922, *Van Nuys News* article (see p. 130) mentions such advertisements.

90. John is among those in the July 1946 group picture on p. 102 (Great-Uncle Ralph’s wife, Martha Sekulich-Adkisson [1913-2001], was the one who took this picture). Incidentally, Aunt Glenna told me in June 1982 that my great-grandfather, Walker, made the comment about not liking to ride in automobiles and would therefore refuse to accompany the family if such vehicles were the mode of transportation.\* However, since he wanted to see his people in Crossville when the July 1946 trip was taken, he decided to ride along on this singular occasion (Great-Uncle Ralph’s California car was the one driven).\*\* (\*My great-grandfather would catch rides on the mail truck from Coalfield to Harriman so he could visit his brother Tommy.) (\*\*My mother told me that she remained behind in Coalfield with a friend that day.)

91. Aunt Glenna first told me in her November 9, 1981, letter that a McCampbell first cousin had gone to California to see Lou. In her (first) February 1, 1982, letter, she mistakenly identified this cousin as “Jesse” (who was a brother of

John's) but correctly recalled that he was from Crossville, single, and had taken this trip to see Lou since "[h]e just liked to wander & see different states, cities & people." (It would have been between February and June 1982 when Onie correctly identified her brother-in-law as John.)

92. Since John wasn't living in Clyde and Lou's household when the January 1920 Los Angeles County Census was taken, he had undoubtedly left the Owensmouth area during 1919 and gone elsewhere. (Onie told me on February 22, 1986, that John first left home [or Crossville] when he took the trip to Lou's and didn't return until shortly before his mother Margaret's death in December 1935.)

93. Onie Wyatt-McCampbell to me, February 22, 1986. She also told me on this date that her parents-in-law, Oliver and Margaret, had planned to buy property in Colorado but that Margaret (whom Onie called "Ma") didn't want to settle there, so they moved to Crossville (via train). According to Onie, Oliver and Margaret had sold all their possessions except what was contained in "four large trunks" at the time of their move to Colorado from Tennessee.

94. Clyde evidently kept some money buried for practical purposes since trips to town would have been intermittent due to purpose and distance,\* but that his apiary served as a cache for his and Lou's money in total is doubtful since his November 10, 1908, affidavit mentions bank accounts.\*\* (\*From his February 5, 1908, affidavit: "My wife [Katie], while living, or myself would come to town once or twice a year to sell honey.") (\*\*Some of the 1922 newspaper articles mention bank accounts.)

95. When Gene Bowhay and I visited the "alleged cabin site" in Dayton Canyon on June 16, 2003, I noticed some cactus plants in the vicinity. (See the April 19, 1922, *Los Angeles Evening Herald* article.)

96. In her February 5, 1908, affidavit, Filetta Dayton made the following statement: "He always had about \$500 to \$1000 worth of honey in barrel."

97. June 1982.

98. This note came from Great-Aunt Martha Sekulich-Adkisson's handwritten history of the Adkissons and the Davises that was attributed to the following

source: "June 1972 - trip to Florida." So, these initial notes about Clyde and Lou probably came from Pearl McCampbell-Meggs (1891-1975).\* (\*She was John McCampbell's sister. Aunt Glenna told me in her [first] February 1, 1982, letter that Pearl was the one who said that Lou's canyon was located near *Salinas*, California.)

99. May 24, 1982, letter.

100. When I first read this account at the Canoga-Owensmouth Historical Museum on June 10, 2003, I was more than surprised about this singular detail concerning Clyde and the wine since the teaching of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has always been total abstinence.

101. I found it unfortunate to learn that Walter Knapp had passed away just two years before my 2003 trip (he is buried in the Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, California). During the early 1980s, I submitted an inquiry about Clyde and Lou to the *Los Angeles Times* in the hope that I might hear from someone who actually remembered them (I never received any responses).\* (\*I submitted this inquiry after the correspondent at the Los Angeles Public Library told me that she couldn't find any newspaper articles about the 1922 fire.)

102. Margaret's daughter-in-law, Onie, related this account to me in September 1980.\* Onie further related to me how it grieved her mother-in-law when she learned about their deaths. (Onie and Margaret's son, Oscar [1893-1978], had married in Cumberland County, Tennessee, on November 11, 1921, five months before the fire.) The reason Onie recalled this incident about the bar pins was because her mother-in-law was wearing the one that she kept in the picture on p. 101. Elaborating on February 22, 1986, Onie told me that Margaret had made this particular dress that was light grey and black satin, and she said that it seemed as if this dress had been Margaret's burial attire. Onie also recalled that Margaret had had this picture made during an occasion when she had gone to see her brother Tommy in Harriman and my great-grandparents (her brother and sister-in-law) in Coalfield, etc. Margaret didn't know anything about flash cameras, and when the bulb blew, she thought the camera had exploded. Onie remembered her mother-in-law saying she was "scared to death" when the bulb flashed. (\*Lou's month and day of birth on her death record is *March 12*. If this was her true date of birth [see note 31], then Margaret may have sent this bar pin as a birthday gift.)

103. 1981 interview at her Coalfield, Tennessee, home.

104. Misspelled words have been correctly spelled in brackets.

105. She only mentioned the “hunting scenario” once (in her [second] February 1, 1982, letter).

106. When Aunt Glenna told me that their bodies were completely burned up and their bones just found, I assumed she meant that their skeletons were still intact (this assumption was reinforced by my grandmother Helen Adkisson-Bunch’s recollection about holes being found in their skulls\*). However, it wasn’t until I received the newspaper articles back in 2002 that I learned about their bodies being practically cremated. \*My grandmother told me in July 1980 (when I was vacationing at her home in Piney Flats, Tennessee) that “suspicious holes” had been found in their skulls (insinuating that they were likely murdered). The newspaper articles, however, only mentioned the discovery of “pieces of their skulls,” so I assume that my grandmother, who turned seven just seventeen days after the fire, possibly heard adult family members discussing the detail of surviving “skull fragments” and therefore concluded that Clyde and Lou had suffered head trauma prior to the fire.

107. Onie McCampbell heard that gas cans were found near the former home and therefore assumed that gas had been used to set the fire.

108. She related this detail to me on November 19, 1980, when she was hospitalized in Johnson City, Tennessee. Specifically, she said that it was assumed whoever killed them knew they had money and where it was hidden and probably got some.

109. She told me in July 1980 that it was thought someone came in and killed them and then set the house on fire.

110. *Los Angeles Times*, April 17, 1922.

111. *Los Angeles Record*, April 17, 1922.

112. *Los Angeles Express*, April 17, 1922.

113. *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, April 17, 1922.

114. *Ibid.*, April 19, 1922.

115. *Los Angeles Times*, April 17, 1922.

116. *Ibid.*

117. *Ibid.*

118. The April 17, 1922, *Los Angeles Evening Herald* article says “cattle,” and the April 17, 1922, *Los Angeles Times* article says “goats.”

119. *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, April 17, 1922, and *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 18, 1922. The *Los Angeles Evening Herald* listed E. W. Woolsey’s business as “Harrold and Woolsey”; however, it was listed as “Woolsey and Hill” on Clyde and Lou’s death records.

120. *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 18, 1922. One of the expenses charged to Clyde’s estate was from H. G. Hill for “Funeral services, etc.,” in the amount of \$328.75. (Aunt Glenna told me in her November 9, 1981, letter that a funeral was held for them [i.e., they weren’t just buried].) (A final expense charged to Clyde’s estate was the “Note of E. W. Woolsey, non-collectible by Statute of Limitations [Limitations], appraised at [\$]296.20.”)

121. Interment records. When I first contacted the Evergreen Cemetery office, the correspondent explained that both caskets are placed on top of each other in a joint grave; therefore, I assumed that their remains were buried in separate caskets (hence the reason Cecilia Rasmussen mentioned this in her October 6, 2002, *Los Angeles Times* article). However, since both bodies were practically cremated, their remains might have been placed together in a single casket (or even in separate urns). (See note 106.)

122. Death and interment records. (Aunt Glenna told me in her November 9, 1981, letter that Clyde and Lou were buried before Lou’s brother Tommy Adkisson made the trip to California after being notified about the fire.)

123. If the case was actually one of murder and suicide, then it's possible that Clyde might have taken poison instead of shooting himself.

124. *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 18, 1922.

125. He is buried in Oakwood Memorial Park in Chatsworth, California (see note 1).

126. Aunt Glenna told me that he came to her parents' home in Coalfield before leaving for California and that at the conclusion of his visit, her father, Walker, went outside in one corner of the backyard and began chopping stove wood with an ax\* when one of her siblings (who would have been none other than my almost seven-year-old grandmother, Helen) asked him, "Papa [pronounced as "Poppy"], aren't you sorry over Aunt Lou?" to which he replied, "Yes, of course." (\*I assume this was his way of handling his initial grief.)

127. I have wondered if he visited the former site of Clyde and Lou's canyon home and the Evergreen Cemetery when he was in California.

128. Wheat, now extinct, was a former farming community in the Roane County section of Oak Ridge, Tennessee. (Aunt Glenna turned twenty-one on May 8, 1924.)

129. Aunt Glenna never knew the amount her father received but said that it was small. She also mentioned that Tommy deducted the expenses of his California trip from the total share before dividing the money among his siblings.\* (\*Since Lou's probate record named the heirs and specified the amounts each was to receive, separate checks may have been mailed to the beneficiaries instead of Tommy receiving one check for the total amount as Aunt Glenna implied.)

130. Aunt Glenna didn't know anything about the specifics of Clyde's part of the estate (e.g., who the beneficiary was).

131. Her probate record (No. 60362 in the Superior Court of Los Angeles County) incorrectly listed her (typed) date of death as April 13, 1923.

132. Her siblings in order of birth (those deceased at the time of her settled estate

are in bold type): **Catharine**, James, **John**, **Sarah Elizabeth**, **William**, Margaret, Jacob, Thomas, Elijah, **Mary Jane**, and Walker.

133. “Jake” died at his Petros home in February 1924.

134. Ida, who never married, was the daughter of Lou’s brother John and died in Harriman in August 1948.

135. Willie was the daughter of Lou’s brother William.

136. The siblings’ father, William “Willie” Adkisson, was the son of Lou’s brother John and died in Harriman in January 1923. Homer, the oldest, died in Harriman in 1925; and the other three, Lennis Fenton (1911-1972), Arnold (1913-1982), and Kenneth (1915-1979), eventually moved to California\* where they died: Lennis in Monterey County, Arnold in Sonoma County, and Kenneth in Alameda County. These three siblings met with a Monterey County notary public in October 1947 to sign over their part of Tommy Adkisson’s Harriman estate to Dewey and Ethel Woody\*\* in a quit claim deed (source: Roane County Register’s Office Deed Book O-6, p. 128\*\*\*). (\*Aunt Glenna told me in June 1982 that a Mrs. Woody [undoubtedly Ethel Woody, Tommy’s caregiver] came with three siblings [one girl and two boys] to Aunt Glenna’s parents’ Coalfield home one Sunday during the winter season and that the siblings went to Salinas, California [located in Monterey County]. She also recalled that one of the boys favored her brother Ralph. I’m certain that Aunt Glenna was referring to Lennis, Arnold, and Kenneth, who would have been her first cousins once removed.) (\*\*Ethel Woody was Tommy’s caregiver during his final years; source: Roane County Clerk’s Office Wills and Estate Settlements Book O, p. 398.\*\*\*) (\*\*\*)I was informed about these records via Jerrold “Jerry” Adkisson.)

137. His probate record (No. 56199 in the Superior Court of Los Angeles County) incorrectly listed his (typed) *day* of death as April 13 (but the correct year of 1922\*). (\*See note 131.)

138. The fact that Clara Blinn received practically everything and never purchased a headstone for Clyde and Lou’s grave has always put her in an unfavorable light with me. (Since Clara was the administratrix of Clyde’s estate, she was also entitled to the legal allowance of \$489.00, one of the estate’s expenses. Therefore,

she actually received \$4,597.15 in cash.)

139. William's obituary mentions his living in Inglewood over twelve years. At the time of Ralph Dayton's September 1903 death, Clara, according to his obituary, was a resident of Compton. When Clyde first applied for the patent of the 80 acres north of Dayton Canyon in 1908, the Blinns' address (listed on an August 28, 1908, affidavit in the file) was 352 W. 41<sup>st</sup> Street in Los Angeles. At the time of Filetta Dayton's October 1913 death, the Blinns were living in Inglewood. William and Clara's death records indicate that they had lived in Ontario since 1922. His death record lists their residential address at 229 East J Street, and her death record lists the residential address of 625 Magnolia Avenue. Again, I assume that Clara's address was that of her daughter Bernice's (who was the informant and then living in Ontario).

140. The immediate cause on his death record was "Cerebral Thrombosis," and hers was "Auricular Fibrillatic and Pulmonary embolus (left)." He was entombed on May 8, 1944, and she on June 7, 1945.

141. His death record lists his date of birth as July 24, 1848. (See note 5.)

142. The principal cause on his death record was "Carcinoma of Prostate" for which he had had an operation on August 21, 1935.

143. His death record indicates that he had been a mortician for ten years and had last worked in this capacity in 1921. However, the last year of such employment would have been 1922, the year of Clyde and Lou's deaths.



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# Appendix





Clyde Dayton. Since he wrote (in pencil) the location of "Chatsworth, California," on the original's back instead of "Owensmouth," this picture would have been made between 1901 and 1912. The photographer's location of Greeley, Colorado, was imprinted on the front. (Source: Onie Wyatt-McCampbell)



Katie McNeil-Dayton. (Source: Mark McNeil)



Katie McNeil-Dayton. (Source: Mark McNeil)



Lulu Adkisson-Dayton. (Source: Patricia Davis-Nation)





Lulu Adkisson-Dayton. (Source: Onie Wyatt-McCampbell)



Lulu Adkisson-Dayton. (Source: Patricia Davis-Nation)



Lulu Adkisson-Dayton in (probably) Battle Creek, Michigan. My great-grandmother Artelia Davis-Adkisson wrote 1905 on the back of her original postcard picture. (Source: Onie Wyatt-McCampbell)



Restored picture of William Adkisson, Lulu Dayton's father. The original tintype belonged to Onie Wyatt-McCampbell. (Source: Grant's Photographic Restoration, Tempe, Arizona)



Restored picture of Louisa Butler-Adkisson, Lulu Dayton's mother. The original tintype belonged to Onie Wyatt-McCampbell. (Source: Grant's Photographic Restoration, Tempe, Arizona)



Thomas Adkisson, Lulu Dayton's brother. (Source: Onie Wyatt-McCampbell)

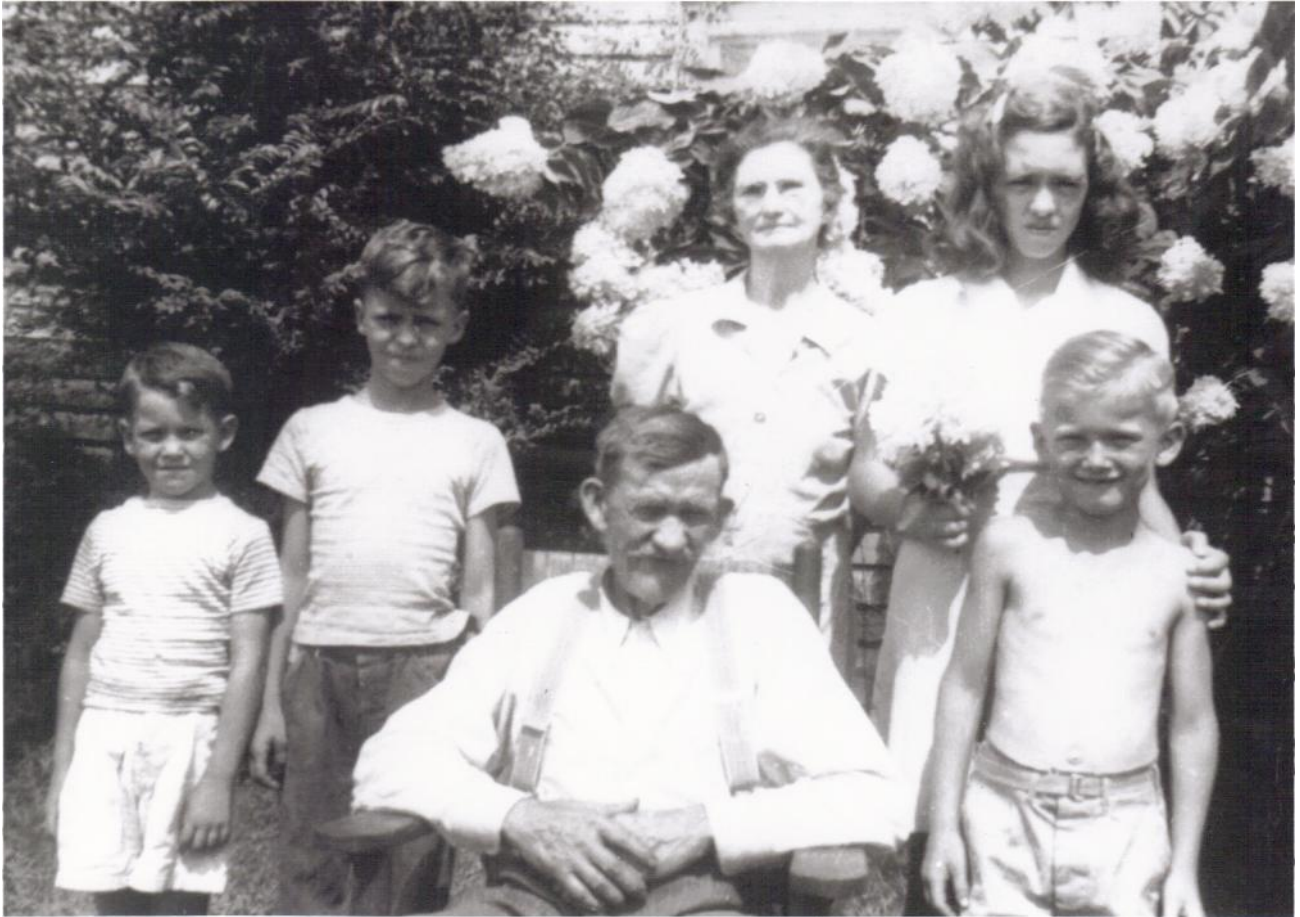


Margaret Adkisson-McCampbell, Lulu Dayton's sister. My great-grandmother Artelia Davis-Adkisson wrote 1926 on the back of her original postcard picture (from which this reprint was made). (Source: Helen Adkisson-Bunch)



Made at the Crossville, Tennessee, home of Oscar and Onie Wyatt-McCampbell in July 1946. Middle row (l to r): Oscar McCampbell (Lulu Dayton's nephew), Walker Adkisson (Lulu's brother & my great-grandfather), and John McCampbell (Lulu's nephew). Back row (l to r): Onie, Alena McCampbell-Tabor with infant son, Larry (Oscar & Onie's daughter & grandson), Glenna Adkisson-Haynes/King (Lulu's niece & my great-aunt), Artelia Davis-Adkisson (Lulu's sister-in-law & my great-grandmother), Ralph Adkisson (Lulu's nephew & my great-uncle), Helen Adkisson-Bunch (Lulu's niece & my grandmother), and Kathleen McCampbell-Woody (Oscar & Onie's daughter). Front row (l to r): Larry Bunch (my uncle), Charles Adkisson (Great-Uncle Ralph's son), and Ralph Haynes (Great-Aunt Glenna's son). (Source: Glenna Adkisson-King)





My great-grandparents, Walker and Artelia Davis-Adkisson (Lulu Dayton's brother & sister-in-law), with four of their five grandchildren (l to r): Larry Bunch (my uncle), Ralph Haynes, Carol Bunch-Wilson/Jackson (my mother), and Charles Adkisson. This picture was made in the front yard of my great-grandparents' Coalfield, Tennessee, home in July 1946 and was taken by their daughter-in-law, Martha Sekulich-Adkisson (Charles's mother). (Source: Carol Bunch-Jackson)



## NEWSPAPER ARTICLES (SUPPLEMENT A)

1. *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 20, 1903, p. 12:

### DEATH RECORD.

DAYTON—At his late residence, No. 980 East Fifty-seventh street, September 18, 1903, Ralph E. Dayton, husband of F. Antoniette [Antoinette] Dayton; father of Clyde W. Dayton of Florence, Cal., and Clara D. Blinn of Compton. Funeral at the residence Sunday at 2 p.m. Friends invited.

2. *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 19, 1905, p. 18:

DAYTON. Mrs. Katie Dayton, wife of C. W. Dayton of Florence, Cal., native of Iowa, died December 17, 1905; aged 28 years. Funeral Tuesday at 2 o'clock p.m., at 970½ East Tenth street.

3. *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*,\* Feb. 8, 1906, p. 23:

DAYTON.—Died in Los Angeles, Cal., Dec. 17, 1905, of tuberculosis, Mrs. Katie May Dayton. Sister Dayton was born in Nashua, Iowa, May 11, 1877. She was converted at the age of thirteen years, and one year later accepted present truth.\*\* She desired to rest from her suffering, and in harmony with this thought selected the text used at her funeral, Rev. 14:13. Her relatives have the assurance that she sleeps in Jesus. G. W. REASER.

\*The *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (now the *Adventist Review*) is a Seventh-day Adventist publication. \*\*“Present truth” refers to Seventh-day Adventist beliefs.

4. *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 19, 1913, p. 10:

#### KILLED BY FLYER.

Mrs. F. A. Dayton, aged 80, of Florence, alighted from a Watts local car last night at Florence and while crossing the tracks was struck by a Long Beach flyer. She died almost instantly. The body was removed to the Pierce mortuary in this city. Mrs. Dayton was a native of New York, but lived in Southern California for twenty years. She leaves a brother, E. W. Woolsey, an undertaker of Watts, and a daughter, Mrs. W. A. Blinn of Inglewood.\* The interment will be in Evergreen Cemetery on a date not yet decided upon.

\*Why her son Clyde wasn't listed as a survivor isn't known.

5. *Daily Report* (Ontario, Calif.), May 5, 1944:

#### ONTARIO CITIZEN TAKEN BY DEATH

William A. Blinn, 83, 229 East J street, retired creamery operator, succumbed to a heart attack last night four hours after arrival at San Antonio hospital.

A native of Bradford, Ia., Mr. Blinn came to Los Angeles from that city 46 years ago and moved to Ontario 22 years ago, after a residence of more than 12 years in Inglewood.

Surviving Mr. Blinn are his widow, a daughter, Mrs. Bernice M. Richenberger, Corona; a granddaughter, Mrs. Edith G. Benner, Downey, and one great-grandchild.

Funeral services for the octogenarian will be conducted Monday, 2 p.m., at the J. B. Draper company chapel, 127 West C street, with the Rev. Robert F. Dennis of Temple Baptist church officiating. The remains will be entombed at Bellevue cemetery.

6. *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin* (Ontario, Calif.), June 6, 1945:

CLARA D. BLINN

Funeral services for Clara D. Blinn, 79, 6255 [625] Magnolia avenue, widow of William A. Blinn, who died Monday, will be conducted tomorrow, 2 p.m., at the J. B. Draper company chapel, 127 West C street.

The Rev. Robert F. Dennis of Temple Baptist church will officiate. Entombment will be in Bellevue mausoleum.

7. *Daily Courier* (Grants Pass, Ore.), Sept. 19, 1970, p. 2:

BERNICE M. RICHENBERGER

Bernice M. Richenberger, 77, died Friday (Sept. 18, 1970) in Southern Oregon Hospital. Born Oct. 12, 1892, in Greenfield, Iowa, she had lived here for 10 years.

She is survived by a daughter, Edy Benner of Grants Pass, and two grandsons.

Services will be Monday, 1 p.m. in Hull and Hull Chapel with the Rev. Walter G. Sloan officiating. Mausoleum entombment will be in the Ontario, Calif., Cemetery.

8. *Daily Courier*, Jan. 4, 1995:

Edith Gail Benner

Former Grants Pass resident Edith "Edy" Gail Benner, 85, of Salem died Friday, Dec. 30, 1994, in Salem.

No services will be held. Howell-Edwards-Doerksen Chapel of the Gardens in Salem was in charge of arrangements. Memorial contributions may be made to First Baptist Church of Grants Pass, 420 N.E. Seventh St., Grants Pass, OR 97526.

She was born Dec. 25, 1909, in Los Angeles and had lived in Grants Pass from 1946 until March 1991, when she moved to Salem. She was employed by Josephine General Hospital for 15 years. She worked for Dr. D. G. Mackie for six

years and was later manager of Kellenbeck Apartments for 14 years.

Benner was a member of the First Baptist Church in Grants Pass and Salem.

She enjoyed oil painting, and was involved with The Red Cross and other community activities.

Survivors include two sons, Richard Alan Benner and Rex D. Benner, both of Salem; and two grandchildren.

9. *Daily Courier*, Jan. 20, 1995:

#### EDY BENNER GETS TRIBUTE FROM SON

Edy Benner, a resident of Grants Pass from 1946 to 1991, passed away peacefully and quietly in my arms at our home. Following a three-year term with cancer, she was called by Our Lord and Savior on December 30, 1994.

Mom turned 85 on Christmas Day. This Christmas was the most emotional one and uniquely the most memorable one to our family. She was so weak that she remained in her bed, while my older brother and I brought gifts and cards to her. Her two sons opened all of her presents for her, as she had no strength to lift scissors to open her gifts. Christmas and birthday cards were read to her. She responded quietly and lovingly with peace and joy on her face; then she softly dozed off for a while. Without wishing to tire her, we slowly resumed opening packages when she awoke for another few minutes. If you knew Mom, you knew the peace and calm in her smile and the blessed joy and twinkle in her eyes.

Mom was always a giver of her time and of her energies. It was her mission and desire to help people. Besides having worked for Josephine General Hospital for fifteen years and for Dr. Mackie for six years, she managed some Kellenbeck apartments for fourteen years in Grants Pass. She was very active in PTA, Red Cross, Community Chest, Oregon State Mothers Assoc., White Cross, Insurance Women, and food share programs. She attended First Baptist Church for many years and Grace Bible Church In [in] Grants Pass.

Your countless cards, letters, flowers, and gifts reflects an immense outpouring of love for her; all four walls of her bedroom truly resemble a card and gift shop. Therefore, I am gratefully moved to thank the community of Grants Pass for your wonderful acknowledgement of our super-duper mother.

Mom has always had a heart of sacrifice and generosity. Ten days prior to her

passing, she said to me (regarding her cancer): “Honey, I’m so thankful it’s me, and not you or Rex or Stacy or Cory.” On the envelope to her living will, she printed these words: “No one ever cared for me like Jesus.”

Nothing one could say could adequately describe my love for Edy, my Mom.

In Everlasting Appreciation To You,  
Rich Benner, 4952 Liberty Rd. S. (Apt. 68) Salem, Oregon 97306

## NEWSPAPER ARTICLES (SUPPLEMENT B)

1. *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 23, 1909, p. 16:

Marriages.

DAYTON-ADKISSON. Clyde W. Dayton, aged 47, a native of New York, and a resident of Chatsworth, and Lulu Adkisson, aged 40, a native of Tennessee, and a resident of Los Angeles.

2. *Van Nuys News*, Sept. 21, 1917, front page:

VALLEY NEWS AT A GLANCE—BRIEF RESUME OF CURRENT HAPPENINGS DURING WEEK—Building Activities, Notes of Progress and General News Items—Condensed for Rapid Scanning by Busy Readers

A. L. Fairchild had the misfortune to lose his home, barn, several tons of hay, etc., on Sunday last, when a mountain fire swept his ranch. Several thousand acres of brush land [brushland] was destroyed but no other damage was done so far as learned. Monday evening the apairy [apiary] of C. W. Dayton was threatened and W. B. Hyden, Officer C. W. Stone and others went to the canyon to render assistance if necessary, but the wind carried the flames in another direction and the fire died out before reaching the Dayton property.—Owensmouth Gazette.

3. *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, April 17, 1922, p. A-7:

DEATH TRAGEDY IN MOUNTAINS IS PROBED

Ruins of the sheltered mountain cabin in Dayton canyon, in the Chatsworth mountains, in which were found the charred body of Clyde W. Dayton, 60, picturesque figure of the hills, and the ashes of his wife, Lulu McCampbell



Woolsey Dayton, victims of a mystery tragedy, were searched today by deputy sheriffs seeking to solve the possible murder puzzle.

The tragedy was revealed when three women visitors to the Dayton home found the weather beaten [weather-beaten] cabin reduced to ashes. What remained of the bodies of the couple was found on the twisted, flame-scorched cot of the place.

### HAVE THREE THEORIES

Deputy sheriffs said that they were pursuing a triple investigation along lines suggested by three theories: First, that a double murder was committed; second, that a murder and suicide furnish an explanation of the couple's death, and, third, that the case is one of a double suicide.

Evidence in support of a double murder theory was found when the deputy sheriffs, lifting the veil which shielded the details of the husband's life, ascertained that Dayton was known to have been wealthy and was believed to have had a large sum of money secreted in his cabin.

### TIME IS FIXED

The time of the tragedy was placed at some time [sometime] after 5 p.m. Wednesday, although discovery of the mountain mystery was not made until yesterday when Mrs. A. Rhoda and two women friends went to the place to see the Daytons.

Lon Gates, a resident of a canyon adjoining the Dayton canyon, reported that some time [sometime] before 6 o'clock Wednesday he saw a frail wisp of smoke rise above the hills separating the canyon in which he lives from Dayton canyon. It was also said that mail in the Dayton mail box [mailbox] was three days old. Bleating cattle [goats in another article], nearly famished, were locked in their corrals, indicating to the officers that the fire and tragedy took place after 5 p.m.

Dayton, besides keeping a large sum of money in the house, was said to have had property valued at \$60,000, as well as \$10,000 in cash in a safety deposit box in Los Angeles.

The couple had lived in the canyon, which was named after them, for 40 years. Their home was five miles from Owensmouth.

### COUPLE QUARRELED

In support of the murder and suicide theory, officers said that the couple were known to have quarreled from time to time. It was further said along this line that Mrs. Dayton wished to take a trip into the northern part of the state, to which plans her husband was said to have offered strenuous objections.

If the murder and suicide theory furnishes the true explanation, officers said that Dayton apparently killed his wife and then set fire to the dwelling, after which he lay down on the bed and took his own life.

Two guns and a rifle were found in the place.

The couple were last seen alive on Wednesday, according to Arch Cravers [Cravens], a resident of Dayton canyon, who said that he saw Dayton toiling up the canyon, pushing a wheelbarrow, on Wednesday morning.

### BONES ARE FOUND

The torso of Dayton's body was found. A few bones from the vertebrae and a few ends of ribs were all that was found of the woman's body, besides pieces of the couple's skulls.

Among those investigating the tragedy today were Undersheriff Biscailuz, Deputy Sheriffs Kym[,] Sweesy, Harrod, Allen, Patton and Detective Walter Hunter, the last named of the district attorney's office.

The woman's remains were to be taken charge of today by Harrod & Woolsey, undertakers of Watts. One of the members of the undertaking establishment is a brother-in-law of the deceased woman.

### NOTES:

–Lou's maiden name was *Adkisson*. *McCampbell* was the married name of her sister, Margaret, and *Woolsey* was the maiden name of Clyde's mother.

–Lon Gates is referred to as "Jud Caines" in Catherine Mulholland's *The Owesmouth Baby*, pp. 161-163.

–At the time their estates were settled, Lou and Clyde had almost \$9,000.00 in cash between them. The real estate value of the entire property was \$6,000.00.

–They had not lived in the canyon for “40 years.” Clyde homesteaded this region in 1902, and Lou would have moved there after their marriage in 1909.

–Elijah W. or “E. W.” Woolsey, the undertaker of Watts, was Clyde’s uncle and Lou’s uncle-in-law.

4. *Los Angeles Express*, April 17, 1922, front page/p. 8:

**PAIR MURDERED BY BANDIT GANG–Inflammable Liquid Used to Destroy Lonely Cabin and Occupants, Report**

Design, not accident, caused the death of Mr. and Mrs. W. C. [C. W.] Dayton in their lonely mountain cabin in the Chatsworth Mountains, according to Undersheriff Biscailuz and Deputies Allen and Sweezy [Sweesy], who have been assigned to investigate the case following the finding yesterday of the two charred bodies in the burned cabin.

Murder, rather than suicide also is indicated according to the deputies, who point out that Dayton was known to have boasted of having \$8000 [\$8,000], that he had property in Los Angeles, and money in the Chatsworth bank and two Los Angeles banks.

The murder theory is further borne out by evidence that both the man and woman were dead before their cabin was fired. It is clear the sheriff’s officers say, that some

(CONTINUED ON PAGE EIGHT)

**MURDER, SUICIDE CLEWS ARE FOUND–(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)**

inflammable liquid must have been poured on the bodies before the fire was set.

**ESCAPE POSSIBLE**

The reason for this belief lies in the fact that the mountain cabin was a flimsy building with corrugated iron walls, a shingle roof, and wood floor. It is clear, the

officers claim, that a fire in such a building would not almost totally destroy the two bodies in the absence of other inflammable material. It is also pointed out that in the event of fire, the couple could easily have escaped from the little cabin.

Practically none of the woman's frame was left with the exception of parts of the ribs, and portions of the skull. The rest of the skeleton was reduced to chalk. The man's body was in practically the same condition with the exception of the lower part of one leg, which extended under a couch, and on which portions of burned flesh were left.

### BANDITS SUSPECTED

The belief of the officers is that the Daytons were slain by bandits who believed that money was hidden in the cabin. A rifle and two shotguns were found in the ashes, but these lay at an angle which indicated they were standing in a corner of the cabin when it was set on fire.

The double tragedy presented one of the most baffling mysteries of recent years, with no clew as to how the fire started.

### MAY BE MURDER

As far as the first investigation revealed, Mrs. Dayton at the time of her death was only partially clothed. Her husband, it is believed, was fully clothed.

The investigation today began with an inquiry into the habits of the elderly couple who, said to be worth upward of \$60,000, lived for more than two score [twoscore] years in the ravine which bears their name—Dayton canyon.

Through this angle of the probe it is hoped that enemies, if they exist, will soon become known.

Reports from the mountain district declare that the frame of the shack in which the couple were burned indicates that it was a roaring inferno—a huge incinerator—at the time of its death-dealing work. Every particle of furniture within the structure was reduced to a pile of ashes.

The condition of the bodies was such that it could not be determined whether or not death had been caused by means other than the fire itself. Officers say, however, that it would have been possible for either to have fled from the flames had they been able to do so.

Fuel for the fire was believed to have been a huge quantity of magazines, collected during the 20-year stay of the couple in the same place of residence.

## SEEN ON WEDNESDAY

Dayton, reports to the sheriff's office declare, was last seen alive Wednesday morning by Arch Cravers [Cravens], a resident of the canyon. Cravers, it is said, observed the old man wheeling a load of household goods on a wheelbarrow in the direction of his cabin.

5. *Los Angeles Record*, April 17, 1922, front page:

## FIND LONELY COUPLE DEAD IN CABIN ASHES

A more complete investigation of the puzzling tragedy of W. C. [C. W.] Dayton and his wife, Lulu Dayton, found burned to death in their home in Dayton canyon near Owensmouth, was begun Monday by Deputy Sheriff's [Sheriffs] Sweezy [Sweesy] and Allen.

The deputy sheriffs say the heat necessary to burn the bodies to a chalk, as they were burnt, could be induced only by much oil and a strong breeze.

The cabin was of corrugated iron and did not burn. The bodies of the aged pair were found in the middle of the room. Mrs. Dayton's body was burnt to ashes.

All theories of suicide were abandoned by the officers and a complete investigation of Dayton's past life and habits was ordered.

An inquest will be held at 2 p.m. at the undertaking parlors in San Fernando.

## Where Is His Money?

Robbery is believed to have been the motive for the double murder. Dayton was believed to keep a large sum of money in the cabin. He was reputed to be worth \$50,000.

The couple lived like recluses. They operated a bee farm. The old man marketed its products by wheeling them six miles to Owensmouth on a wheelbarrow. He was eccentric and would never employ a wagon.

The last person who saw either of the Daytons alive was Arch Cravers [Cravens], who lives in the canyon. He noticed the old man with his wheelbarrow, passing along a trail Wednesday morning.

## Was It Suicide?

Mrs. A. Rhoda and two women friends visited the bee farm Sunday and found the cabin burned. Lon gates [Gates], rancher in the next canyon, remembered he had seen smoke from the direction of the Dayton place late Wednesday afternoon.

There are some of the mountain dwellers who believe the tragedy at the cabin was a murder and a suicide. They recall Mrs. Dayton's complaints about not being "treated right." Dayton, they think, may have killed his wife, set fire to the house, then lain down beside her and shot himself.

The canyon where the tragedy occurred in early California days was the haunt of the bandit Vasquez.

6. *Los Angeles Times*, April 17, 1922, front page/p. 2:

**REVEALS TRAGEDY—Charred Bodies of Two Found—See Double Murder or Murder and Suicide in Grim Cabin Ruins—Visitors to Secluded Spot Stumble on Remains of Man and Wife\***

A grim tragedy that claimed two lives in the mute fastnesses of the Chatsworth Mountains, thirty miles northeast of Los Angeles, was disclosed yesterday when the ashes and a few bones of two bodies were found in the ruins of a cabin in which W. C. [C. W.] Dayton and his wife had lived for nearly forty years.

A double murder, or a murder and a suicide, is hidden in the little pile of ashes and a mass of twisted metal—all that remains of the little shack and its furnishings, according to Undersheriff Biscailuz and his deputies, who investigated the case.

Dayton, known for more than a quarter of a century as the "bee wizard," and as one of the most unique characters in the vicinity, and his wife, Lula [Lulu] McCampbell Woolsey Dayton, were the victims of the tragedy enacted sometime Wednesday afternoon and not disclosed until three women visitors yesterday to the secluded spot in the Chatsworth Mountains discovered that the Dayton shack had been leveled to the ground.

Dayton, who was known as a miser and an eccentric, is believed to have had a large sum of money in his possession. He was reputed worth more than \$50,000.

The position of the few bones that had once been skulls of human beings, together with the facts that every inflammable object in and near the shack had

been reduced to ashes and practically nothing remains of the two bodies, lead the investigation officers to believe that the house was set on fire, after careful preparation, with the purpose of either destroying evidence of a double murder or as a part of a suicidal plan of one or both of the inhabitants.

Reports of the wealth and miserly existence of the aged couple, and of frequent quarrels between the bee man and his wife, gave the officers substantiation for both theories of the tragedy.

Dayton was 65 years old [he was 60], and his wife well over 50 [she was 52\*\*].

The scene of the mute drama was laid up the Dayton Canyon, in the heart of Chatsworth Mountains, once the retreat of the much-feared Vasquez, one of California's most noted bandits.

### LAST SEEN ALIVE

Dayton and his wife were last seen alive Wednesday morning by Arch Cravers [Cravens], a resident of Dayton Canyon. It was in the morning when Cravers saw Dayton trudging along one of the narrow trails that lead to his homestead, pushing a wheelbarrow. It was the old man's most noted peculiarity [peculiarity] that he never used automobiles or wagons and transported his supplies and his products of his bee ranch to and from Owensmouth, about five miles away, on the wheelbarrow.

The twisted remains of it were found in the front of the place where the porch of the little shack rested.

The original reports made to the Sheriff's office, that there may have been an explosion in the little shack were discredited last night after a personal investigation was made by Undersheriff Biscailuz, and Deputies Kym, Sweesey [Sweesy], Harrod, Allen, Patton, and Detective Walter Hunter, of the District-Attorney's office. A close inspection of the hill skirting the little clearing where the corrugated metal shack stood, showed no debris on the banks. The metal walls were pushed outward, but not thrown around with any degree of violence, such as would have been produced by an explosion.

Last Wednesday afternoon, sometime before 6 o'clock, Lon Gates, a rancher in the next canyon, saw a thin whisp [wisp] of smoke behind the hill that separates his property from the Dayton homestead. He paid no further attention to it then. Mail in Dayton's mail box [mailbox] on the road below the shack was three days old. The goats in the enclosure built for them by Dayton were nearly famished when the officers arrived on the scene. The fact that they were locked in their

(Continued on Second Page.)

## FIND CHARRED BONES OF TWO—(Continued from First Page.)

corals [corrals] leads the officers to believe that the fire and the tragedy took place sometime after 5 o'clock Wednesday.

Mrs. A. Rhoda, and two women friends were the ones who discovered the tragedy. They notified Henry Eliott [Elliott], of 618 Stephens Place, Los Angeles, who has a bee ranch below Dayton's place, and who comes only on Sundays. Elliott looked at the ruins and at once notified Constable William Gates\*\*\* of Calabasas, who called the Sheriff's office.

A thick blanket of white ashes, probably five or six inches deep, over a square ten by twelve feet, with the twisted frame of a sanitary couch, used by the old couple for a bed, and a few twisted bits of metal from kitchen utensils, is the only thing remaining from the interior of the shack.

The bodies evidently remained on the bed while the house was burning. Bones identified by Dr. W. H. Gunder [Gundrum], a resident in the vicinity, as part of the skull, lay side by side in the pile of ashes at one end of the twisted bed springs [bedsprings]. No piece of what must have been the skull remains large enough to show whether there were any signs of violence before death.

## TO SEARCH RUINS

A thorough search of the ruins will be made by daylight by the sheriff's office today.

Only a few bones from the vertebrae [vertebrae] and a few ends of ribs remain from what must have been the body of the woman. A part of the torso, less than two feet long, with some of the clothing still clinging to it, was next to it, and just below what must have been the second skull. The officers believe that this was the body of Dayton. They expressed the belief last night that if there was a suicide and a murder, Dayton probably murdered his wife, placed her body on the bed, surround [surrounded] it with inflammable material, and then set the pile on fire and committed suicide.

No ordinary heat, such as could be generated from a fire in a metal-walled structure, could have reduced the bodies to ashes, the officers say.

## HAD PRINTING PRESS



Persons who visited the shack in the lifetime of the Daytons say that the place was full of magazines and literature printed by the old hermit on a printing press operated by him in another building near by [nearby]. This was literature for the sale of his honey. The paper would make excellent material for a strong fire, is the belief of those who cling to the theory that the death of the two was accidental. The officers feel that one of the two victims would have had time to reach the door or at least get off the bed had there been any life in their bodies when the flames broke out.

A thorough investigation of the habits and details of the aged couple's lives will be started by the Sheriff's office today, Undersheriff Biscailuz announced last night. With his deputies and with Drivers Calahan, Liewellen and Stambler, Mr. Biscailuz made several trips to the Dayton Canyon last night and interviewed such witnesses as could be found.

That Dayton and his wife had quarreled over a trip to the north, and that the woman had complained that she was "treated mean" was the information obtained by deputies and Detective Hunter from near-by [nearby] residents.

\*My commemorative front-page edition of the *Los Angeles Times* for April 17, 1922, lists the Dayton tragedy as its headline "MYSTERY SHROUDS MOUNTAIN TRAGEDY" and the subtitle as "'Bee Wizard' and Wife Are Found Dead; May be Double Murder or Suicide, Murder." The articles, however, are identical. Too, my edition includes the label "LATEST MORNING EDITION" while this microfilmed article does not.

\*\*This was her age if the July 1869 date of birth is correct.

\*\*\*William Gates was the father of Lon Gates.

7. *San Pedro Daily Pilot*, April 17, 1922, p. 2:

Baffling Murder Mystery Baffling Sheriff Office

LOS ANGELES, April 17.—Deputy sheriffs were at work today on a baffling

double murder mystery, following discovery of the charred bodies of Clyde W. Dayton, 60 and his wife, Lulu M. W. Dayton, 50 [she was 52].

The bodies were found in the ruins of a cabin on the Dayton homestead in a lonely canyon five miles from the town of Owensmouth.

Dayton was reported to be a wealthy man. He kept a large sum of money in his cabin, neighbors today told investigators, and in addition had \$10,000 in a Los Angeles bank. His property is worth approximately \$60,000, it was said.

Two [Two] guns and a rifle, so badly burned that it was impossible to tell whether or not they had been discharged, were found in the ruins of the cabin.

Both bodies were burned to such a degree that investigators were uncertain as to how Dayton and his wife had met their deaths. It was considered probably, according to Undersheriff Eugene Biscailuz [Biscailuz], that they were murdered before the cabin was fired.

Biscailuz was inclined to discard a murder-and-suicide theory as the investigation progressed today.

8. *Los Angeles Evening Express*, April 18, 1922, p. 9:

#### Proof Believed Adequate of Murder Of Couple in Cabin

Intent on following out their clues in the mysterious murder and conflagration in the Chatsworth mountains, where W. C. [C. W.] Dayton and his wife lost their lives, Deputy Sheriffs Sweezy [Sweesy] and Chester Allen again return today to the scene of the crime in the lonely canyon.

All day yesterday they worked upon the case, eliminating the various theories, until they arrived at adequate proof that a murder had been committed. The fact that Dayton, an eccentric old man, had boasted of his wealth and was generally [generally] supposed to be a miser by the countryside, tends to the theory of murder for gain.

Despite several accounts of quarrels between the old man and his wife, close friends denied that there was enough trouble to cause such a grewsome tragedy as was unfolded Sunday.

9. *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, April 18, 1922, p. A-11:

#### PROBE DEATHS OF RICH HILL DWELLERS

Deputy sheriffs today continued their investigation of circumstances surrounding the mystery deaths of Mr. and Mrs. Clyde W. Dayton, in Dayton canyon, near Chatsworth park. Their charred bones were found in the ruins of a burned mountain cabin. That the couple were murdered for money and that their home was fired to destroy evidence of the crime, is the belief of Deputy Sheriffs Allen and Sweesy.

A new theory that the couple were murdered for revenge was surrounded with much secrecy today. A clew which was declared to indicate a revenge murder was said to have been supplied investigators by a lieutenant of police.

10. *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 18, 1922, front page:

#### REVENGE CLEW IN HILL DEATHS—New Information Gives Rise to Theory That Dayton Couple Were Slain for Spite—CATTLE DEAL INVOLVED—Tragedy of Owensmouth Hills Now Believed Double Murder; Cabin Fired to Aid Crime

A new and startling clew which may lead to the solution of the Dayton canyon murder mystery was furnished the investigators late last night by a lieutenant of police whose name was not divulged.

The information supplied, however, was considered the most direct and convincing yet obtained on the mystery, which continued to baffle the probers yesterday during a search which extended far into the night.

A blood-bespattered trail, an additional shack far back in the canyon, an empty five-gallon oil can and the remains of several pieces of firearms, and failure to find all valuables known to be in the possession of the dead couple were yesterday's developments.

#### MURDER THEORY STRENGTHENED

Each successive development in the day's search bore out the steadily growing belief that the aged couple, whose charred bones were found in the ruins of their

cabin home in the mountains five miles north of Owensmouth late Saturday [Sunday], were murdered.

Clyde Dayton, 65 [he was 60], and his wife, known to be more than 50 [she was 52], are the dead persons.

A summing up of the day's evidence, said the men in charge, made it almost certain that the aged couple were murdered either for the large sum of money which they were supposed to have hidden in their home or in a spirit of revenge.

### BEARS OUT REVENGE THEORY

The police lieutenant's story would bear out the latter theory.

He stated that he knew the aged couple well and that he had kept some bee hives [beehives] on a ranch near the Dayton property. Dayton and he were both bee fanciers.

The police officer gave the details of a cattle deal between persons in the region.

A calf was sold or traded. The purchaser, it was stated, trying to trick the other man, gave him a false story that the calf had been killed in a barbed wire fence.

These facts, the police officer stated, were known to Mrs. Dayton and he believes she informed the man who had sold the calf. For this, it is thought, she drew the enmity of the other man in the deal and it is probable, say the investigators, that his testimony will supply the answer to the mystery.

### COULD NOT GIVE NAMES

The police officer who supplied the facts could not give the names of those concerned in the deal.

That the couple were, in all probability, murdered before 5 p.m. last Wednesday and that their murderers returned later, drenched their bodies and their small shack with oil and set fire to the premises, is the belief of the officials.

E. W. [Elijah Washington] Woolsey of 202 East Tajauta street, Watts, an uncle of the dead couple, took charge of their remains yesterday. He is an undertaker and with Dayton's sister, Mrs. Clara Blinn of Inglewood, he completed the funeral arrangements.

Woolsey gave it as his belief that the couple were the victims of murderers who were after their money.

11. *Los Angeles Times*, April 18, 1922, p. 12:

**MURDERED FOR THEIR MONEY?—Officers Scout Report That Dayton's [Daytons] Had Quarreled—Think Two Were Slain, and Bodies Burned—Footsteps Found Near Scene of Strange Tragedy**

Mr. and Mrs. Clyde W. Dayton of Dayton Canyon were murdered for their money and their mountain home was later fired to destroy their bodies, is the belief of Dep. Sheriffs Allen and Sweesy, who spent yesterday investigating angles of the strange tragedy revealed Sunday by the finding of the remains of the mountain recluse and his wife.

Persons residing in Chatsworth Mountains told the officers yesterday that there had been a large pile of firewood near the Dayton home before the tragedy and that it mysteriously [mysteriously] disappeared. This is believed to add color to the theory that the bodies were burned to hide traces of the crime. Yesterday the officers sifted the ashes of the ruins and removed the bones of the aged victims.

Considerable significance is attached to the presence of footprints leading to and from the scene of the fire. These, it is said, appeared to have been made at about the time the fire occurred. Measurements of them were made for the Sheriff's office.

**WAS WEALTHY**

The officers are said to be working on the theory that the Daytons were murdered for their money. Mr. Dayton, a beekeeper, who has been in the business forty years, was reported to have been worth \$60,000, much of which, neighbors say, he is supposed to have kept somewhere about the premises.

The theory that the aged couple quarreled lacks foundation, as acquaintances of theirs say that Mrs. Dayton had been in bad health for months and that her husband had been badly worried over her condition. She was a sufferer from heart trouble and was not expected to live many weeks, according to Dr. E. C. Pilliker, a local dentist, who resides on a ranch near the canyon, and was well acquainted with the couple.

Dr. Pilliker last night gave an interesting account of the aged bee man. He and others who know him were questioned by the officers yesterday in the hope that they may know something that can shed some light on what occurred.

## EXHIBITED HERE

“Clyde Dayton was rather an eccentric old fellow,” Dr. Pilliker said. “He and his wife homesteaded their place in the canyon thirty-five years ago. They kept hundreds of stands of bees, and a quarter of a century ago, when we used to have home talent entertainments in the old Hazard Pavilion, he was known as the ‘bee wizard.’ He would pour bees over his head and otherwise perform with them.

“One peculiarity concerning him was that he kept a printing press for many years and on this printed numerous booklets concerning diet and bee culture. The last time I was in his house I noticed most of the space in the place was devoted to the storage of such literature.”

Dr. Pilliker said he believes when the fire started and caused the death of Dayton and his wife, the booklets and papers smouldered and kept up the heat that eventually destroyed the bodies.

Dayton is said to have come here from Illinois. Mrs. Dayton told several canyon residents that she was from Tennessee, and belonged to the well-known McCampbell family there. She was the sister of a Mr. Woolsey of Watts, the officers were told. Dayton is said to have owned considerable property in Florence, near Compton.

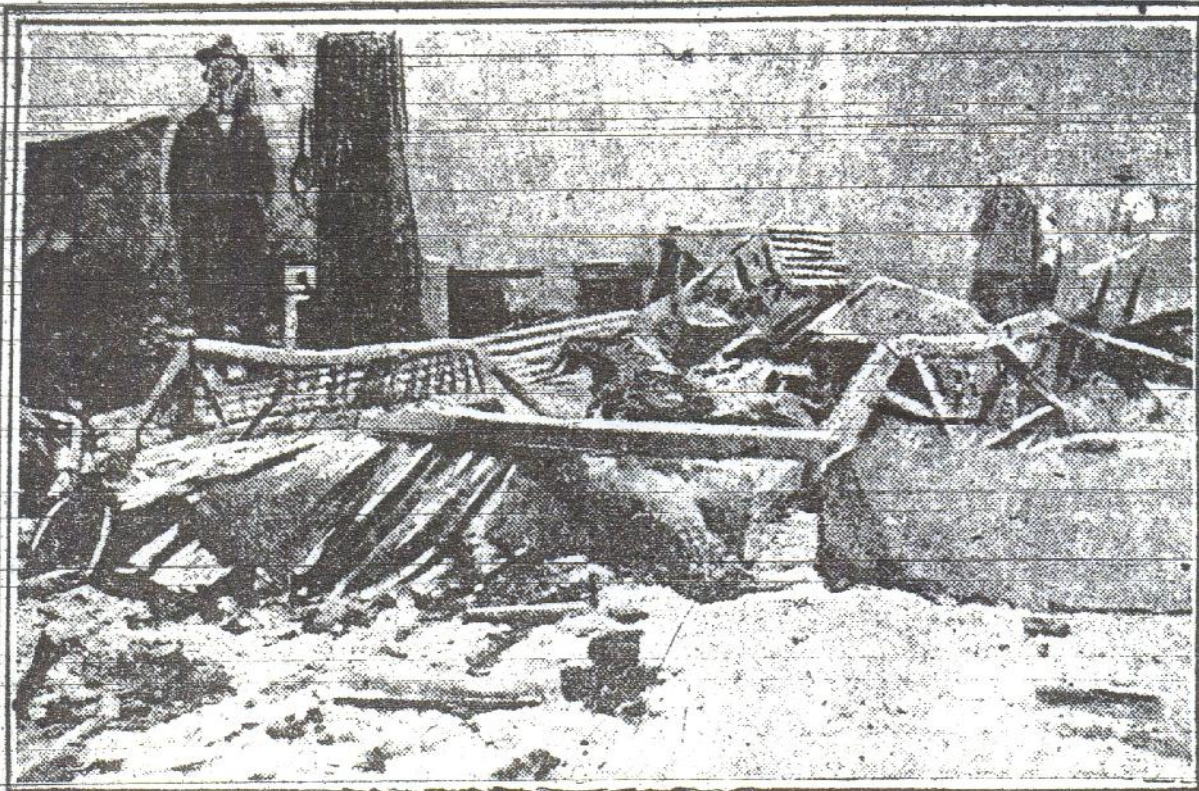
## NOTES:

–Lou’s sister, Mary Jane Adkisson-Cozart, died at the age of 53 of endocarditis; it’s possible that she had this same condition.

–Clyde was a native of New York.

–If Clyde owned “considerable property” in Florence, he sold it prior to 1922, because no such property was included in his probate record.

*Scene of Blood Deed That Mystifies Investigators*



Ruins of the Dayton "Murder" Cabin,

Showing how the fire that is believed to have been set by those who killed the aged couple demolished the mountain home of the "bee wizard" and his wife.

This photo of the burned cabin was included with the April 18 *Los Angeles Times* article.

12. *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, April 19, 1922, p. A-11:

#### CLOSE PROBE OF CNYON [CANYON] CABIN TRAGEDY

After collecting much evidence declared to corroborate a theory that Clyde W. Dayton, mountain recluse, killed his wife and then committed suicide in their mountain cabin in Dayton canyon, four miles north of Owensmouth, in which the charred remains of their bodies were found, Deputy Sheriffs Allen and Sweesy today closed their investigation of the case.

Important evidence supporting the murder and suicide theory was received from Mrs. Ellen Thompson, 1181 East Fifty-fifth street, a friend of the deceased woman, who gave the deputies a letter, received from Mrs. Dayton, in which Mrs. Dayton expressed fears for her life and asked that her relatives in eastern states be notified if anything happened to her.

#### COUPLE QUARRELED

Statements made by numerous persons living in the vicinity of the Dayton home revealed that the couple frequently quarreled, that the woman had surprised her husband laughing and talking to himself and that Mrs. Dayton had at *one time heard her husband\** threaten to kill her.

Carl Hurst of Owensmouth related that Mrs. Dayton had informed him that her husband was acting strangely. At one time, she found him talking to himself, declaring: "I don't know what I am going to do with that woman unless I kill her."

#### PROPERTY ROW N N N\*\*

The disagreement said to have existed between the man and his wife was believed to have been the outgrowth largely of a difference of opinion as to the diision [division] of property and the need for a new and more comfortable home.

It was learned that Mrs. Dayton had taken steps without her husband's knowledge to prevent Dayton from disposing of their property without her consent. She said that if he ever learned of her ac- [action/actions] he would kill her.

#### EVIDENTLY [“]INSANE”



Deputy Sheriffs Allen and Sweesy said that Dayton evidently was insane. It was reported that his actions recently were unusual. He was reported to have lived mainly on red honey, cactus and green vegetables.

That there was no evidence in support of the theory that the couple were [were] murdered by robbers, was announced. The time of the tragedy was fixed at Wednesday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Eller [Eller], living [living] on the Olcutt [Orcutt] ranch said they saw the cabin burn about 6 p.m. Wednesday.

\*This italicized portion was repeated twice in the original.

\*\*This typo was present in the original.

13. *Los Angeles Examiner*, April 19, 1922, p. 5:

#### CLEW FOUND IN CANYON DEATHS

That the Dayton Canyon mystery was a case of murder and suicide was the opinion announced by the investigators late last night. A boiling down of all the evidence at hand makes this theory the logical one, they said.

They believe that Clyde W. Dayton recluse of the Canyon which bears his name, murdered his wife sometime early last week and then, after covering her body with oil, took his own life, at the same time applying a torch to the bodies and premises.

While other clues are still in the process [process] of development this was the opinion expressed yesterday by Deputy Sheriffs A. D. Allen, and N. M. Sweesey [Sweesy] and Walter J. Hunter, special investigator for the District Attorney's office. These men have worked on the case for three days and nights and the murder and suicide theory was the gist of the detailed report that they turned in yesterday to Under Sheriff [Undersheriff] Eugene Biscailuz.

The only point against the murder and suicide theory, said the investigators, came in the fact that the remains of the charred weapons found in the ruins of the Dayton shack were some distance from the bodies. No shells of any kind were

found and the distance between the remains of the aged couple and the guns can be explained, said those in charge of the probe, by the theory that the aged man had brushed the weapon he used out of the way in his death struggle.

Ranchers and residents of the Dayton Canyon region and people in the little town of Owensmouth gave the investigators substantial information to the effect that the aged couple had often quarreled. One man stated that Dayton's actions, always queer, had been exceptionally so during the past few months and that he had been heard to mumble:

“Well, I guess I will have to kill the old woman.”

14. *Los Angeles Record*, April 19, 1922, p. 2:

#### DECIDE CANYON SUICIDE-SLAYING

Deputy sheriffs had practically abandoned the theory Wednesday that Clyde W. Dayton, 65 [he was 60], and his wife, 50 [she was 52], found dead in their cabin in Dayton canyon, near Owensmouth, were murdered and their bodies burned for revenge.

In the opinion of Deputy Sheriffs Sweezy [Sweesy] and Allen, investigating the case, Dayton killed his wife and himself.

A five-gallon can which had contained coal oil, and a gun warped by the fire in the cabin, explained the intense heat necessary to cremate a body, the investigators said.

15. *Los Angeles Times*, April 19, 1922, p. 3:

#### NEW THEORY IN CABIN TRAGEDY—Deputies Say Deaths and Fire Not Accidental—Blood Marks Leading from Scene Lost on Road—Murder and Robbery Idea Practically Abandoned

Convinced that Clyde Dayton, aged 65 years [he was 60], and his wife, aged 50 [she was 52], came to their death by other than accidental causes, Sheriff Traeger's deputies yesterday started the investigation of a new theory of the tragedy enacted

recently at the cabin of the couple in Dayton Canyon, four miles north of Owensmouth.

After Deputies Sweesy and Allen spent two days interviewing neighbors of the couple they reported yesterday to Undersheriff Biscailuz that the conclusions of their inquiries pointed to possible murder and suicide. One settler in the neighborhood reported to the deputies that Dayton had once remarked, after a discussion of quarrels between the couple, that “the only thing I can do is kill the old woman.” By other neighbors this was taken merely as a joke, and that the aged book-keeper [bookkeeper/beekeeper?] meant it that way.

#### RELATIVES IN TENNESSEE

Practically all the relatives of Dayton [Lou’s–not Clyde’s] live in Tennessee, it was reported.

Little stock was taken by the deputies, who were aided by Walter Hunter, District Attorney’s investigator, in the idea that Dayton and his wife were first slain and then burned in a spirit of revenge because their supposed assailants failed to find money they had expected. The deputies found a book, showing that Dayton has an account in a Chatsworth bank, and had drawn small checks for small amounts for his regular expenses. The deputies will seek to learn the amount which is now being held in his name. Little information was obtained from settlers regarding the report that Dayton habitually kept a large sum of money in his cabin, and it was thought because he did bank his money, that he probably kept most of it in such an institution.

The investigators sifted the ashes and found parts of firearms which were warped by the intense heat of the flames that destroyed the cabin and charred the couple’s bodies. A five-gallon can of coal oil was found near the house, partly filled, but it might have been used for lighting purposes.

#### FUEL USED IS OPINION

Evidence obtained indicates conclusively that gasoline or coal oil must have been spread about the cabin because of the intense heat of the blaze. A pile of magazines was burned through to white ashes, it was reported.

Blood marks on the trail near the cabin led to a road, but were lost. It was impossible to obtain footprints because of the number of persons who visited the place.

The deputies have also practically abandoned the theory that the couple were murdered for purposes of robbery. They continued their investigations yesterday.

16. *Los Angeles Times*, April 20, 1922, p. 5:

#### DEATHS REMAIN MYSTERY—Authorities Unable to Prove Aged Beekeeper and Wife Were Murdered

Just how Clyde W. Dayton, 61-year-old [60-year-old] beekeeper in Dayton Canyon, near Owensmouth, and his wife, Mrs. Lulu Dayton, came to their deaths may remain a mystery, it was indicated yesterday by a report made to Sheriff Traeger by Deputies Sweesy and Allen. The deputies are of the belief that it was a case of murder and suicide, but state that they were unable to obtain evidence pointing definitely toward any particular theory.

They have information, though, which indicates that it was not a case of murder for purposes of robbery or revenge.

The fact that the Dayton cabin was burned down was learned Sunday when the charred bodies of the two were found. The officers believe the fire occurred on the Wednesday before. Although they found the remains of three shotguns, no exploded shells were found.

It was learned by the deputies that Dayton lived mostly on red honey, cactus and vegetables and tried to get his wife to live the same way, saying he thought it hard to get her to be economical. Information was given them that the two often quarreled. Coroner Nance will sign a death certificate, giving the cause of death as unknown, it was said.

17. *Van Nuys News*, April 20, 1922, p. 7:

#### COUPLE BURNED TO DEATH IN CABIN NEAR CHATSWORTH

Considerable mystery surrounds the death of Mr. and Mrs. Clyde W. Dayton, who were found burned to a crisp and their cabin destroyed near Chatsworth last Sunday.

They were last seen alive Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, and the theories advanced are

that Dayton, who was rather eccentric, killed his wife and then set the house on fire, or that they were both murdered by bandits for money supposed to be kept in the cabin by Dayton.

Mr. Dayton was a honey producer and was well known in the valley for his unique advertisements relating the molecular value of Red Ripe Honey as a health builder.

A coroner's jury rendered a verdict Wednesday stating the cause of death unknown. A thorough investigation is being conducted by the sheriff and his deputies.

18. *Ventura Daily Post and Daily Democrat*, April 20, 1922, front page:

**MURDER, SUICIDE CONCLUSION IN DAYTON MYSTERY—Slaying Of Two South Of Ventura County Line Will See No Further Investigation.**

There will be no further investigation in the case of Clyde Denton [Dayton] and his wife, whose charred bodies were found in the ruins of their destroyed cabin about five miles south of the Ventura line in Los Angeles county some days ago.

The officers who have been investigating the case have come to the conclusion that Dayton killed his wife and then committed suicide, a comfortable theory always for the investigators in as much as it does away with the necessity for looking for the slayer.

In any event, the mystery of Dayton canyon will never be solved and it will be closed on the theory that Dayton, insane, and having made threats in the past to kill his wife, carried out that threat and then killed himself.

19. *Owensmouth Gazette*, April 1922 (quoted in Catherine Mulholland's *The Owensmouth Baby*, p. 147):

**Couple Burnt To Death In Cabin Near Chatsworth**

Mr. and Mrs. Clyde B. [W.] Dayton were found "burned to a crisp," and there are theories that Dayton, the eccentric honey producer who held theories about the

molecular value of Red Ripe Honey as a health builder, killed his wife and set the house on fire—or that both were murdered by bandits for money supposed to be kept in the house. Investigation is underway.

# The Valley

1918 We didn't have much crime in the Valley at that time, maybe a beef would be stolen out in a while, but nothing much would be done about it, at least no one was ever caught, if you got caught that was a different matter.

The most terrible crime happened to Mr. & Mrs. Dayton, for which Dayton Canyon was named. He raised bees and sold honey, he settled in the canyon in about 1870. He would haul his honey to the R.R. Depot in Overmouth in a old wooden wheel-barrow. He would always stop on his way home for a glass of wine and visit with my dad for a little. if he had an extra jar of honey he'd give it to us kids. Well anyway one morning some ranchers saw a cloud of

Smoke in Dayton Canyon when they got there they found his small home burned to the ground, they met what was left of it. When the Sheriff got there he found that both bodies had been wired to their beds with baling wire, they had been robbed, tied to their beds and the house set on fire. The Murder was never found. There were some suspicions but that is about all.

1918 The only other serious crime was the time a man shot and killed a man in L.A. in a robbery, he got a horse and escaped. The Sheriff posse tracked him for days. finally to Van Nuys, then they picked up his trail in ~~the~~ Marion (Now Reseda) as they got closer to him he hid in an old barn on Sherman way and Deering in Overmountain.





Catherine Mulholland

10001 Nita Avenue  
Chatsworth, California 91311

Robbie Wilson  
P.O. Box 434  
Coalfield, TENN 37719

June 18, 2002

Dear Mr. Wilson:

First, let me thank you for your most interesting letter plus the two sets of enclosures dealing with the sad demise of your great-great aunt and her husband, C.W. Dayton, the "red ripe honey man."

I applaud your diligence in tracking down the "lost" past and wish I could be of help, but alas! I fear I don't know much more than you. As you know from my Owensmouth book, the old small town paper was destroyed in the mad rush of development after WWII, so that door is irrevocably closed. I am sending you here the only trace I have of Dayton's writings from a copy of the Owensmouth Gazette, which a friend of my mother had saved because it contained an obituary of a family member. Whether Dayton wrote other columns or whether this was in the nature of an advertisement, I don't know, but I do think it will give you some flavor of the man's style.

As for someone local who could possibly have helpful memories, I can't think of anyone. The Daytons' contemporaries are by now all dead as are many of their offspring. Moreover, as ranchers and their families moved on at the end of WWII and sought land elsewhere, the bulk of the current population in Owensmouth/Canoga Park has come from elsewhere. There is, however, a lively historical society in the community to whose meetings old timers often come, and so, if you have no objection, I would like to share your material with its members and then, perhaps, someone will come up with something

I am going to be out of town until early July, but if you wish to drop a line and tell me it's OK to share this material with the historical society, then I shall proceed. Of course, if I come across anything of interest, I'll certainly see that it comes your way.

Thanks again for writing and all good wishes to you.

Sincerely,

Mulholland – Page 2

P.S.

Here are a few corrections and comments about the newspaper reports you sent.

“Arch Cravers” was Cravens

“Dr. W.H. Gunder” was Gundrum (see Owensmouth Baby , p.172)

“Lon Gates,” aka Jud, op.cit. , pp.161-163.

Lon Gates was rumored to have done the Daytons in, and old-timers whom I interviewed in the 1980s repeated the story pretty much as I relate it. (All of them are now gone, I regret to say.) Lon’s father, William Gates, by the way, was the sheriff mentioned in the articles and was a respected old-timer from the Calabasas area

## ARTICLE BY CLYDE W. DAYTON

SOURCE: *Owensmouth Gazette*, March 30, 1917:

### HOW HONEY HEALS

STIGMA from killing innocent people for earthly gain is worse than war itself. It's [Its] ugly scar never heals and is ready to suppurate whenever justice awakes. The only remedy for stigma is more killing.

When the cells of the blood lack for moisture they become sharp and pointed. A person having thirsty cells will fight until the flesh is all used, then sacrifice the skin, and then the hair will put on spines to inflict wounds.

After the sun rises toward 11 o'clock every forenoon and warms the sap in the leaves of such vegetables as lettuce, spinach, cabbage, beets, onions, etc., it produces acid, or electrical juice and which is the beginning of digestion. And there is no other substance that starts digestion.

Sun digestion rounds out the cells and prevents spines. Reason works round and round while sight, hearing, feeling, and other outward senses work in parallel straight lines. Outward sensations are produced by reflected light, such as moonlight. Persons who have the sunlight cells are never "in want" because the supplying of their needs affords them the opportunity to exercise and increase their reasoning.

If you will eat the leaves of vegetables at the start of every meal it will not be long before the taste nerves will become developed so that you can detect and enjoy this acid of the leaves. You may have to begin by doubts but it becomes a stern reality; since it is the only true road to health.

This leaf acid is delicate but it is the substance that starts the regular form of digestion by the arrangement of the seven colors. Cooking food, or cold-storage disorganizes these colors, or, mixes the colors, and produces white, and white is dead. There is not any kind of food that is nutritious if it is white, unless it is combined by its molecules with red or green. White is not used until it has been exposed to the cold of winter and afterward the colors collected by plants and stored in their fruits.

White honey is a conglomerate mass of colors until it has been ripened by cold weather so that its red is more intensified and the white eliminated. White is the

color that disease germs thrive in.

This acid of leaves develops on vegetable sugars, and where the plants don't have much sugar there will not be much of acid. Water is the soil the acid develops in and honey is the fertilizer. In the fertilization of land we cause fungoid plants to grow. Then when the fungi ripen and die they leave their sugar, which the roots of the larger plants take up and transport upward into the leaves. It is when there is an excess of this sugar that fruit is produced.

The lack of this sugar to produce acid is the cause of disease in plants and if we eat of the diseased fruit of the plants our bodies will soon become diseased. So it is, when the digestive germs start, honey fertilizes them into healthy growth. You can allay pain by local remedies but to remove the disease you must go clear down to the foundation and build up by the cells.

As soon as you fail to have the vegetable plant germs you will wish for cooked foods, and fat foods, and drinks which take the living elements out of food. The germs which are produced by red honey and red fruits, (red in their pulp) use the most water and also use the most sunshine which causes their cells to be the most active and thrifty; just the same as water and sunshine make plants strong and thrifty. If you understand the nature of plants you can understand health.

C. W. DAYTON, The Red Ripe Honey Man.

4-405a-tyr.

# The United States of America,

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

Homestead Certificate No. 4583.  
Application<sup>s</sup> 9610 & 11516.

WHEREAS, There has been deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at Los Angeles, California, whereby it appears that, pursuant to the Act of Congress approved 20th May, 1862, "To secure Homesteads to Actual Settlers on the Public Domain," and the acts supplemental thereto, the claim of **CLYDE W. DAYTON**

has been established and duly consummated, in conformity to law, for the northwest quarter of the northwest quarter and the Lot One of Section thirty-four in Township two north of Range seventeen west of the San Bernardino Meridian, California, containing fifty-eight and eighty-two-hundredths acres,

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said Land, returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the Surveyor General:

NOW KNOW YE, That there is, therefore, granted by the UNITED STATES unto the said **Clyde W. Dayton**

the tract of Land above described; TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said tract of Land, with the appurtenances thereof, unto the said **Clyde W. Dayton**

and to <sup>his</sup> heirs and assigns forever; subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights, as may be recognized and acknowledged by the local customs, laws, and decisions of courts, and also subject to the right of the proprietor of a vein or lode to extract and remove his ore therefrom, should the same be found to penetrate or intersect the premises hereby granted, as provided by law. And there is reserved from the lands hereby granted, a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, **Theodore Roosevelt**, President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed.



(SEAL)

GIVEN under my hand, at the City of Washington, the twenty-seventh day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eight, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and thirty-third.

By the President: *Theodore Roosevelt*

By *M. W. Young*, Secretary.

*John O'Connell*  
Acting Recorder of the General Land Office.

# The United States of America,

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

Los Angeles 01023.

WHEREAS, **CLYDE W. DAYTON**

has deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at **Los Angeles, California,** whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said **Clyde W. Dayton**

according to the provisions of the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820, entitled "An Act making further provision for the sale of the Public Lands," and the acts supplemental thereto, for the east half of the northeast quarter of Section twenty-eight in Township two north of Range seventeen west of the San Bernardino Meridian, California, containing eighty acres,

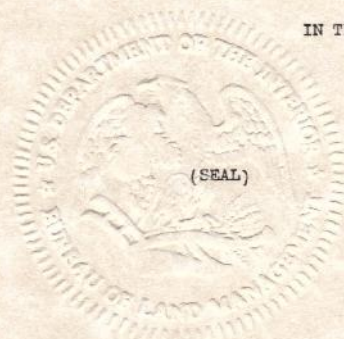
according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said lands, returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the Surveyor General, which said Tract has been purchased by the said **Clyde W. Dayton:**

NOW KNOW YE, That the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in consideration of the premises, and in conformity with the several Acts of Congress in such case made and provided, HAVE GIVEN AND GRANTED, and by these presents DO GIVE AND GRANT, unto the said **Clyde W. Dayton**

and to his heirs, the said Tract above described; TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same, together with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and appurtenances, of whatsoever nature, thereunto belonging, unto the said **Clyde W. Dayton**

and to his heirs and assigns forever; subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights, as may be recognized and acknowledged by the local customs, laws, and decisions of courts, and also subject to the right of the proprietor of a vein or lode to extract and remove his ore therefrom, should the same be found to penetrate or intersect the premises hereby granted, as provided by law; and there is reserved from the lands hereby granted, a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, **William H. Taft**, President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed.



GIVEN under my hand, at the City of Washington, the TWENTY-FOURTH day of SEPTEMBER, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and NINE and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and THIRTY-FOURTH.

By the President:

By *Wm. H. Taft*, Secretary,

*John O. Connel*  
Acting Recorder of the General Land Office.

April 18, 1988

Mr. Robbie Wilson  
P. O. Box 31  
Coalfield, TN 37719

Dear Mr. Wilson,


In response to your letter of April 4, 1988, I am enclosing some maps which may or may not be of assistance to you. I am not certain exactly what sort of information you require, but from a quick search I am able to supply you with the tax assessor's maps of the property as you have described it. I do not know if there are any surveys of record which would indicate the location of the improvements on the 138.82 acres. You may or may not realize that these are not contiguous properties. They are located in the Westerly portion of Los Angeles County almost to the Ventura County line. That area has recently been re-named West Hills. It is a pretty area with hills and canyons and is one that is still being developed. I have indicated on the larger County map the approximate location of these parcels. According to the assessor's rolls the acreage is as yet unimproved and apparently does not abut on a dedicated street.

Regarding the two lots in the Harwood Tract, one, Lot 52, according to the assessor's rolls, is improved with a duplex built or remodeled in approximately 1947. Lot 51, according to the assessor's rolls is a parking lot. These lots are located near the central part of Los Angeles City which is a mixed residential and commercial area.

If you could be more specific as to your needs I would be glad to assist you. Our fee for searching and supplying documents is \$20.00 an hour.

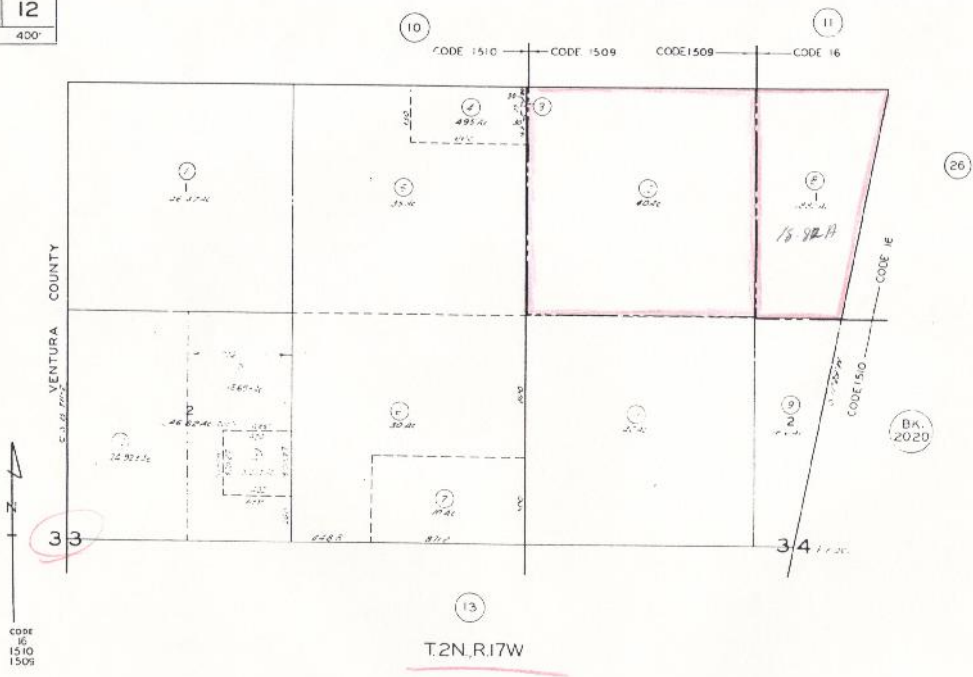
Thank you for your interest in our Company.

Very truly yours,

  
Winnifred P. Glimm  
Title Operations Manager

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SCALE 1" = 400'

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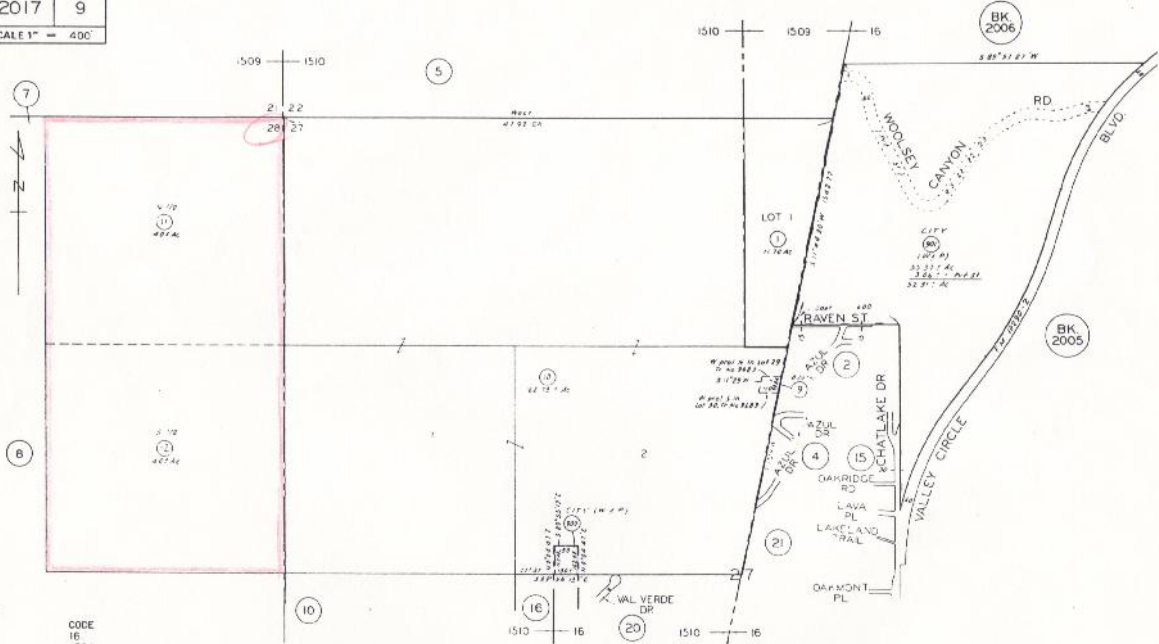


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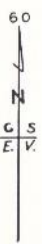
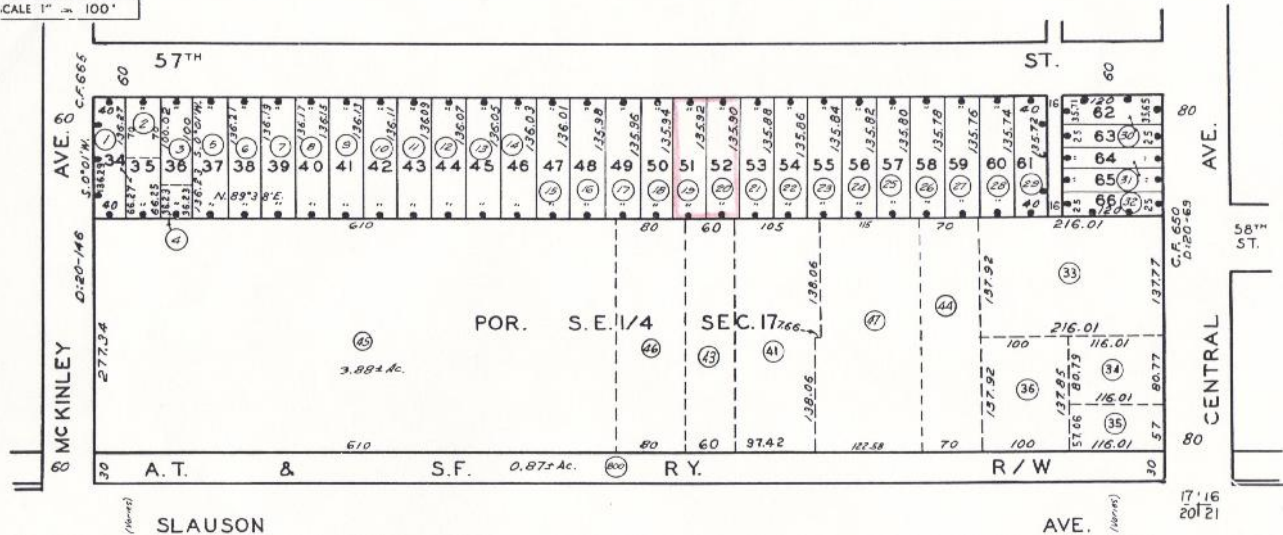
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FOR PREV. ASSMT. SEE:  
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ASSESSOR'S MAP  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

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SCALE 1" = 100'

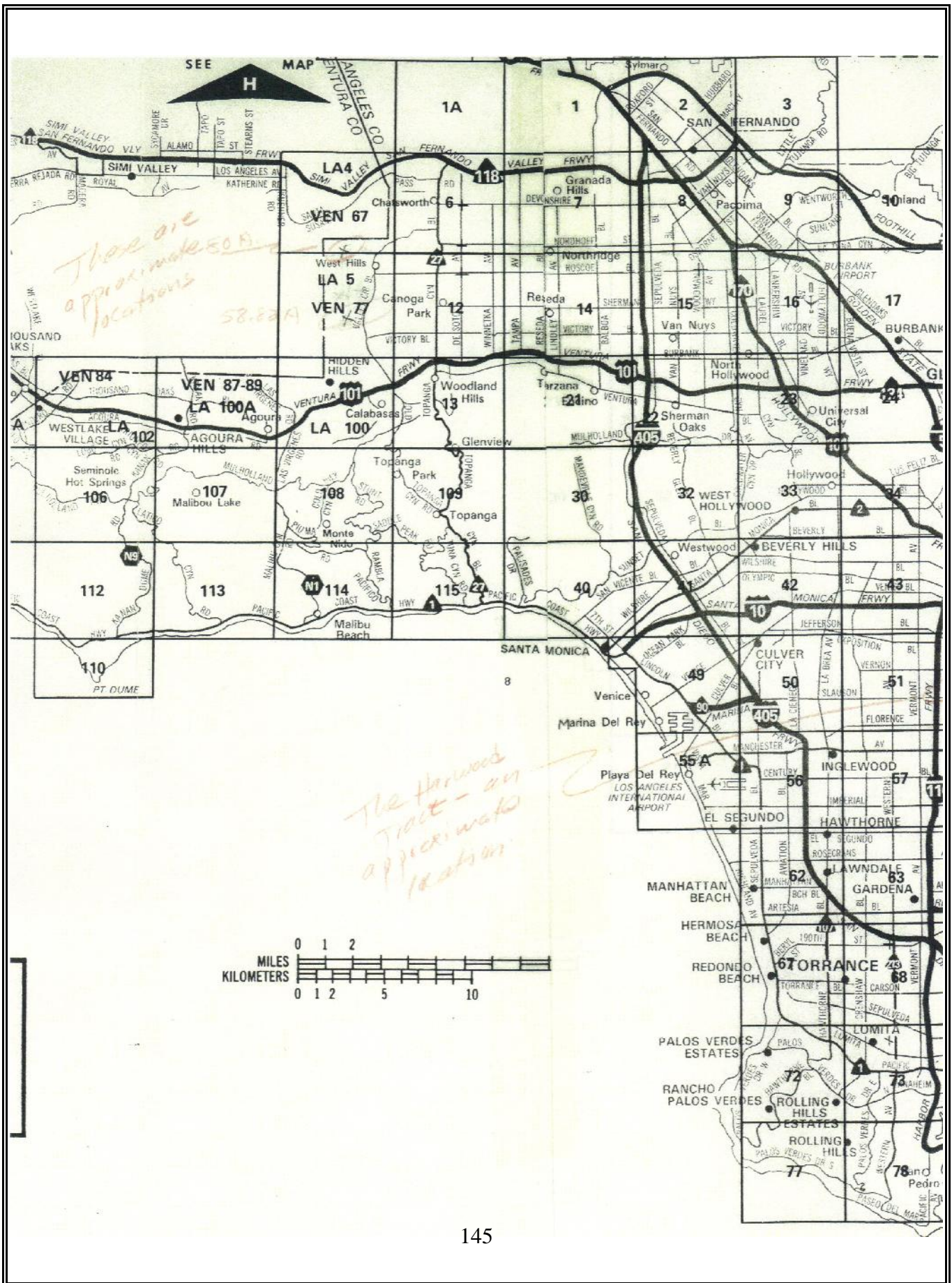


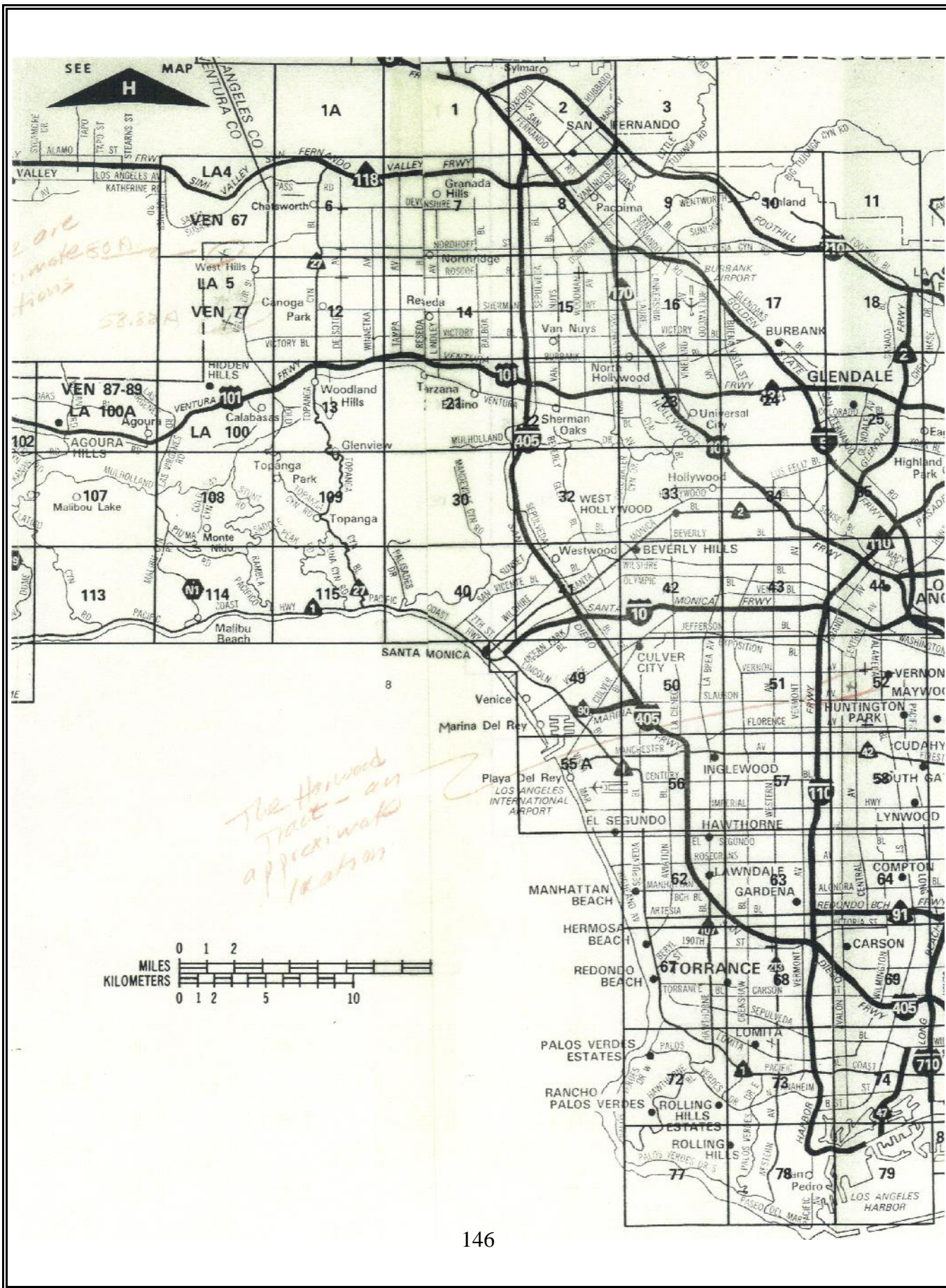
HARWOOD TRACT T. 2 S., R. 13 W.  
MR. 60-7

CODE 7

FOR PREV. ASSMT. SEE: 1041-15

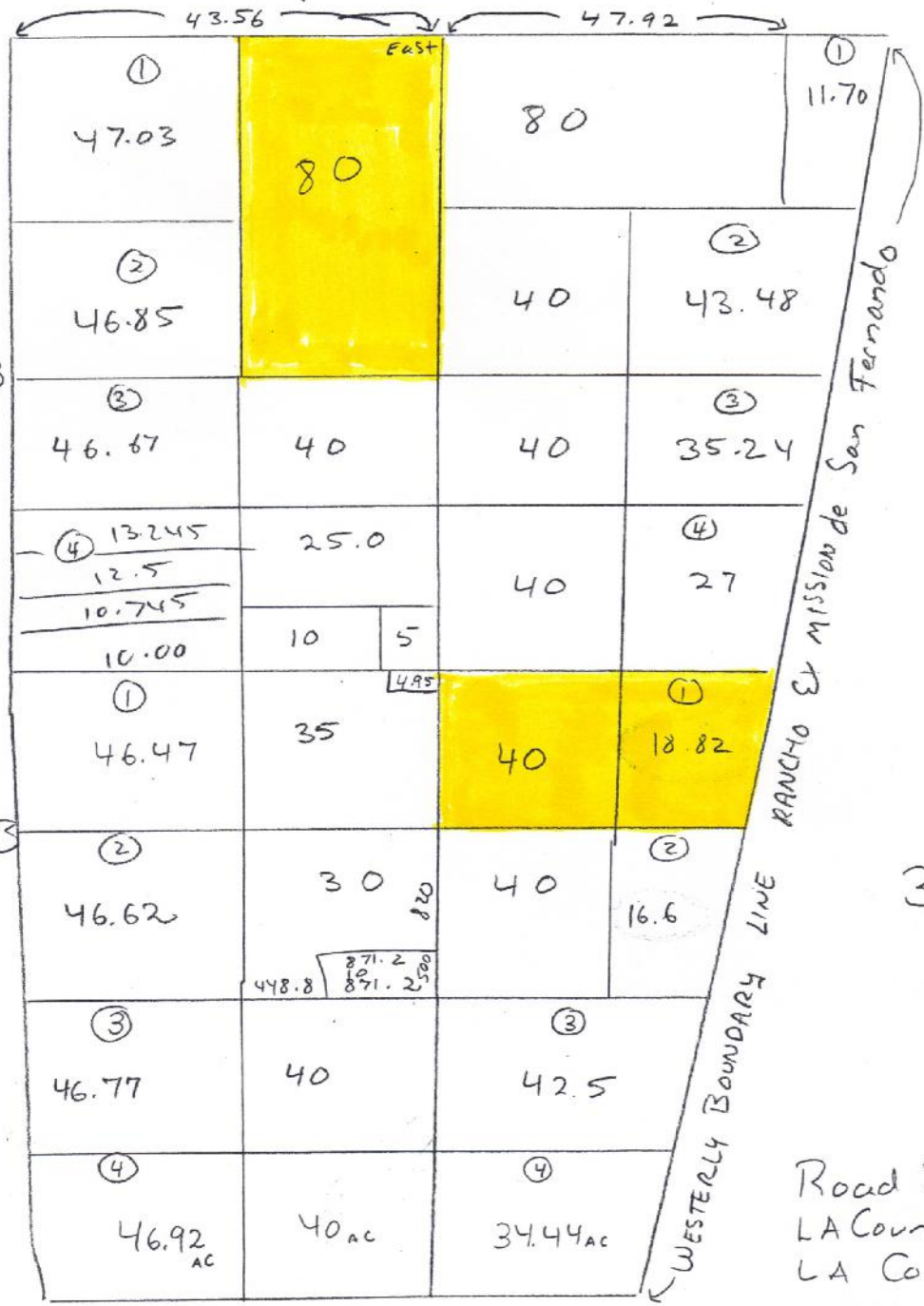
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T. 2N, R. 17W



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Ventura County

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T 2 N  
R 17 W

34

Road Dist. No. 5  
LA County Road Dis  
LA County City  
School  
LA County Flood  
Control Dist

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

OFFICE OF  
THE STATE REGISTRAR  
OF VITAL STATISTICS

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BEVERLY A. MYERS, DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
AND STATE REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS

BY *Frank L. Shultz*

Mark L. Smith, Chief  
VITAL STATISTICS BRANCH  
MAR 18 1982

Form 4. PLACE OF MARRIAGE CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH  
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS 257 329  
County of *Los Angeles* CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE State Index No.  
Town of *Los Angeles* 9 008572 Local Registered No. 3961  
City of *Los Angeles* PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

FULL NAME <i>Clyde W. Dayton</i>	GROOM	FULL NAME <i>Lulu Adkisson</i>	BRIDE
RESIDENCE <i>Chatsworth Calif</i>		RESIDENCE <i>Los Angeles Calif</i>	
AGE AT LAST BIRTHDAY <i>47</i> years		AGE AT LAST BIRTHDAY <i>40</i> years	
COLOR OR RACE <i>White</i>		COLOR OR RACE <i>White</i>	
SINGLE, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED <i>widowed</i>		SINGLE, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED <i>Single</i>	
NUMBER OF MARRIAGE		NUMBER OF MARRIAGE	
BIRTHPLACE <i>Tennessee New York</i>		BIRTHPLACE <i>Tennessee</i>	
OCCUPATION <i>Farmer</i>		OCCUPATION <i>Seamstress</i>	
NAME OF FATHER <i>Erastus Dayton</i>		NAME OF FATHER <i>William Adkisson</i>	
BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER <i>New York</i>		BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER <i>Harrison Tennessee</i>	
MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <i>Woolsey</i>		MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <i>Louise Butler</i>	
BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER <i>New York</i>		BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER <i>Olive Springs Tennessee</i>	

MAIDEN NAME OF THE BRIDE, IF SHE WAS PREVIOUSLY MARRIED

WE, the groom and bride named in this certificate, hereby certify that the information given therein is correct, to the best of our knowledge and belief.

*Clyde W. Dayton* Groom, *Lulu Adkisson* Bride.

CERTIFICATE OF PERSON PERFORMING CEREMONY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that *Clyde W. Dayton* and *Lulu Adkisson* were joined in Marriage by me in accordance with the laws of the State of California, at *Los Angeles Cal.* this *22<sup>nd</sup>* day of *October* 190*9*.

Signature of Witness to the Marriage: *J. H. Folks* Residence *Los Angeles*

Signature of person performing the Ceremony: *J. N. Liscomb* Official Station *Minister* Residence *Los Angeles Cal.*

OCT 26 1909 *C. L. LOGAN* Registrar (County Recorder)

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
OFFICE OF  
THE STATE REGISTRAR  
OF VITAL STATISTICS

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BEVERLY A. MYERS, DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
AND STATE REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS  
BY *Phyllis L. Shalke*  
Mick L. Shalke, Clerk  
VITAL STATISTICS BRANCH

DEC 3 1981

PLACE OF DEATH, DIST. NO. (To be inserted by Registrar)		California State Board of Health BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS		22-017454	1202
County of _____		City or Town of _____		State Index No. _____	Local Registered No. 3485
or Rural Registration District _____		(No. _____ St. _____ Ward _____)		[If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number and fill out Nos. 18a and 18b.]	
FULL NAME <i>Lydia W. Hayton</i>					
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS			CORONER'S CERTIFICATE OF DEATH		
SEX <i>Female</i>	COLOR OR RACE <i>White</i>	SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED <i>Married</i>	DATE OF DEATH <i>April 12 1982</i>		
HUSBAND of <i>Yule Hayton</i>			I HEREBY CERTIFY, as to the person above named and herein described, That on _____ 19____ I held an inquest and the jury rendered a verdict on the death. Or, that I have investigated the death officially on account of _____		
DATE OF BIRTH <i>March 28 1921</i>			The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows:		
AGE <i>60 years 6 months 16 days</i>			<i>Burning, whether accidental or with criminal intent, unable to determine, as a result of burning down.</i>		
OCCUPATION <i>Dr. Hesper</i>			State whether attributed to dangerous or insanitary conditions of employment _____		
BIRTHPLACE <i>N. Y.</i>			(Signed) _____		
NAME OF FATHER <i>R. L. Hayton</i>			Approved: (Signed) <i>J. Frank U. Hance</i>		
BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (city or town) <i>N. Y.</i>			<i>April 17, 1982</i> (Address _____)		
MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <i>A. L. Woodruff</i>			*State the DISEASE CAUSING DEATH or, in deaths from TRAUMA, state (1) MEANS OF INJURY, and (2) whether (a) ACCIDENTAL, SELF-INDUCED, or HOOMICIDAL. (See reverse side for additional space.)		
BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (city or town) <i>N. Y.</i>			SPECIAL INFORMATION for Hospitals, Institutions, Transients or Recent Residents		
LENGTH OF RESIDENCE			Where was disease contracted, if not at place of death? _____		
At Place of Death <i>25</i> years _____ months _____ days			Former or usual residence _____		
(If nonresident, give city or town and state) _____			PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL _____ DATE OF BURIAL _____		
In California <i>40</i> years _____ months _____ days			UNDERLYING <i>Woodruff, A. H. W.</i>		
How long in U.S., if of foreign birth? _____ years _____ months _____ days			ADDRESS <i>126 Bayshore Ave.</i>		
THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE (Informant) <i>E. W. Woodruff</i>					
(Address) <i>126 Bayshore Ave. San Mateo</i>					
Filed APR 20 1982 L. H. POWERS, M. D., REGISTRAR					
Filed _____ 19____ _____ Notary Public					

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

OFFICE OF  
THE STATE REGISTRAR  
OF VITAL STATISTICS

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this office, if validated  
on the reverse.

BEVERLY A. MYERS, DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
AND STATE REGISTRAR OF VITAL STATISTICS

BY *Frank L. Shelds*

Mark L. Shelds, Chief  
VITAL STATISTICS BRANCH

DEC 3 1981

PLACE OF DEATH, DIST. No. _____ (To be inserted by Registrar)		California State Board of Health BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS		22-017455	1982
County of _____		STANDARD CERTIFICATE OF DEATH		State Index No. _____	Local Registered No. 3486
City or Town of _____		(No. <i>Pasadena City</i> , St. _____, Ward _____)		[If death occurred in a hospital or institution, give its NAME instead of street and number and fill out Nos. 18a and 18b.]	
or Rural Registration District _____		FULL NAME <i>Gula Clayton</i>			
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS			CORONER'S CERTIFICATE OF DEATH		
SEX <i>♀</i>	COLOR OR RACE <i>White</i>	SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED, OR DIVORCED (Write the word) <i>Married</i>		DATE OF DEATH <i>April 12</i> 19 <i>82</i>	
If married, widowed, or divorced HUSBAND of (or) WIFE of <i>Alyde W Clayton</i>			I HEREBY CERTIFY, as to the person above named and herein described, that on _____ 19____ I held an inquest and the jury rendered a verdict on the death. Or, that I have investigated the death officially on account of _____		
DATE OF BIRTH <i>Aug 12 1920</i>			The CAUSE OF DEATH* was as follows: <i>Person, whether accidental or with criminal intent, unable to determine, &amp; not being down</i>		
AGE <i>62</i> years <i>1</i> month <i>1</i> day or min			State whether attributed to dangerous or insanitary conditions of employment _____		
OCCUPATION (a) Trade, profession, or particular kind of work <i>Homemaker</i> (b) General nature of industry, business, or establishment to which employed (or employer) _____			(Signed) _____ Approved: (Signed) <i>Frank L. Shelds</i> <i>April 17-1982</i>		
(c) Name of employer _____			*State the DISEASE CAUSING DEATH, or, in deaths from VIOLENCE, CAUSE, state (1) MEANS OF INJURY; and (2) whether (probably) ACCIDENTAL, SUICIDAL, or HOMICIDAL. (See reverse side for additional space.)		
BIRTHPLACE (State or country, city or town) <i>Iran</i>			SPECIAL INFORMATION for Hospitals, Institutions, Transients & Record Offices Where was disease contracted? _____ If not at place of death? _____		
NAME OF FATHER <i>Jacob M. Adhison</i>			PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL _____ DATE OF BURIAL _____		
BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (city or town) (State or country) <i>Iran</i>			UNDERTAKER <i>Evergreen Co. 4/21/82</i> <i>Shelby &amp; Hill</i> ADDRESS <i>136 Pasadena Ave. 7664</i>		
MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER <i>?</i>			REGISTRAR <i>L. M. POWERS, M. D.</i> FILED <i>PR 20 1982</i>		
BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (city or town) (State or country) <i>Iran</i>			REGISTRAR (Signature) _____		
LENGTH OF RESIDENCE			REGISTRAR (Signature) _____		
At Place of Death (Primary registration district) (If nonresident, give city or town and state) <i>12</i> years _____ months _____ days			REGISTRAR (Signature) _____		
In California <i>13</i> years _____ months _____ days			REGISTRAR (Signature) _____		
How long in U.S., if of foreign birth? _____ years _____ months _____ days			REGISTRAR (Signature) _____		
THE ABOVE IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE (Informant) <i>W. W. O'Leary</i> (Address) <i>136 Pasadena Ave. 7664</i>			REGISTRAR (Signature) _____		
Filed _____ 19____			REGISTRAR (Signature) _____		
FILED <i>PR 20 1982</i>			REGISTRAR (Signature) _____		



## MEMORABLE DATES

1. *October 6, 1982*: While driving through Los Angeles, my mother, Carol, ex-step-dad, Dale Jackson, and Aunt Glenna visited the Evergreen Cemetery for me so they could take pictures of the Dayton graves (I learned that Lou and Clyde's grave was unmarked). (Mom, Dale, and Aunt Glenna had departed from Great-Uncle Ralph and -Aunt Martha Adkisson's Brisbane, California, home earlier that morning.)

2. *May 21, 2002*: I received a May 16 letter from the Evergreen Cemetery office today stating that the new headstone I purchased for Lou and Clyde's grave was finished and had been placed. I had initially asked if a picture of the headstone could be sent to me upon its completion, and the correspondent enclosed three pictures with this letter.

3. *October 6, 2002*: Cecilia Rasmussen's article about Lou and Clyde's deaths appeared today in the *Los Angeles Times*. Ironically, it was on this date twenty years earlier that Mom, Dale, and Aunt Glenna first visited Evergreen Cemetery.

(I flew to California on June 9, 2003, and stayed until June 18 so I could primarily visit sites pertaining to the Dayton history. While there, I stayed at the Thousand Oaks home of longtime church friends [and our former Tennessee general practitioner], Dr. Paul and Mrs. Ruth Risetter-Watson and their daughter, Cindy—a very hospitable and gracious family.)

4. *June 10, 2003*: I visited the Canoga-Owensmouth Historical Museum in Canoga Park this morning where I met Jean Jauck and her husband, Jim, and Howard and Beth Shirley. Mrs. Jauck was the president of the historical society, her husband was the director of the museum, and Mrs. Shirley, the historiographer, had mentioned the Dayton tragedy and me in the September 2002 newsletter.\* Mrs. Shirley gave me a copy of Walter Knapp's handwritten account about Clyde Dayton and the 1922 fire, and Mrs. Jauck's husband gave me a framed portrait of the San Fernando Valley (in November 1961) that showed Dayton Canyon in the bottom left corner. After leaving the museum, I drove (in Dr. Watson's car) to the Evergreen Cemetery in downtown Los Angeles so I could see the Dayton graves.

Before I left, I went to the cemetery office to inquire why the headstone I had purchased for Lou and Clyde's grave wasn't parallel with Katie Dayton's headstone. The man who was working told me that the Dayton lot wasn't a perfectly square lot—that it curved in the corner on the side of Lou and Clyde's grave, so that was the reason the new headstone had been centered below Katie's headstone.

**\*From the September 2002 newsletter: “Note: Thanks to Catherine Mulholland and Robbie Wilson of Coalville [Coalfield], Tennessee[,] we now have copies of newspaper articles from the area regarding this event in the Museum. Mr. Wilson, who is a great-great[-]nephew of Mrs. Dayton and had been researching the incident, came across Catherine's book, The Owensmouth Baby. Here he found reference to the Dayton tragedy and began a correspondence with her. With his permission, the newspaper articles and his research articles have been added to our archives. An interesting bit of early history, now well[-]documented.”**

5. *June 11, 2003*: I visited Inglewood Park Cemetery in Inglewood this morning and then Bellevue Memorial Park in Ontario afterwards. Elijah W. Woolsey (Clyde Dayton's maternal uncle) is buried in Inglewood Park Cemetery, and Clara and William Blinn (Clyde's sister and brother-in-law) and Bernice and Alvis Richenberger (Clara and William's daughter and son-in-law) are buried in Bellevue Memorial Park's mausoleum.

6. *June 12, 2003*: I met George Fogelson at his place of employment this morning, the Department of Water and Power in downtown Los Angeles. We took the “tour” bus around the downtown area and visited (and ate lunch at) the Los Angeles Public Library (where he had located the Dayton newspaper articles). The last place we visited before returning to his place of employment was the Los Angeles County Assessor's Office.

7. *June 16, 2003*: I met Gene Bowhay\* at the Orcutt Ranch Horticulture Center parking lot (on Roscoe Boulevard) after ten o'clock this morning so we could hike into Dayton Canyon, the key highlight of my trip. We parked our vehicles on the right of Valley Circle Boulevard near the Deer Lick Drive road sign and began our three-hour excursion above the canyon (parallel with Deer Lick Drive). We eventually ended up on Dayton Canyon Road (a dirt road) that is parallel with

Dayton Creek (which was completely dry that day and is officially listed on area maps) and scouted an area that could have been part of the original cabin site and bee yard. We then continued walking up Dayton Canyon Road until we came to Marge Weems's\* trailer but found her gone (I called her later that afternoon and told her that I would meet her the next day). Afterwards, we returned to the alleged home site and examined the area in more detail before leaving for our vehicles. (\*First Marge and then Gene contacted me via phone and e-mail after Cecilia Rasmussen's article appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*. Marge owned property in the Dayton Canyon area, and Gene, a resident of Woodland Hills, had scouted the Dayton Canyon area prior to my June trip, so he was definitely welcomed as an "official" guide.)

8. *June 17, 2003*: I left Thousand Oaks around 12:45 for Chatsworth to visit Catherine Mulholland (we had decided to meet at two o'clock). She had a beautiful home and an impressive upstairs library. She made a copy for me (on her personal copier) of a typewritten transcript of the man she had interviewed for the Dayton information in her "Owensmouth" book Otto F. "Dutch" Gschwind Jr. (although this transcript didn't mention the Daytons) and an article about Walter Knapp's brother and father (see my June 10 entry). She told me that the old railroad depot in Owensmouth was located on the northeast corner of Canoga Avenue and Sherman Way and that Bell Canyon had been named for Charlie Bell's\* father, Horace Bell. One comment she made that I thought was humorous was that an old person is sometimes like a "burning library"—that is, one better retrieve what information he/she wants before the building goes down! After I left her home, I drove to Dayton Canyon to see Marge Weems and her husband, Pat. Marge had given me the access code so I could open the Dayton Canyon Road gate, and I drove from there to their trailer. I told them about the alleged home site, so they followed me in their car so I could show them the area (we got out and walked around the location). Marge gave me an "original" map of the Dayton Canyon area before I left, and I took their picture (she said they had been married for thirty-five years). (\*In an undated letter from Jean Jauck [see my June 10 entry] that I received on November 25, 2002, she informed me that Judge Charles A. "Charlie" Bell was Clyde Dayton's "neighbor" and had committed suicide in 1917 by taking poison. According to Mrs. Jauck, he was the justice of the peace for Owensmouth and was about the same age as Clyde.)

DAYTON CANYON  
(I took these on June 16, 2003)





## CECILIA RASMUSSEN'S ARTICLE

SOURCE: *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 6, 2002, p. B4:

### L.A. THEN AND NOW

**A MURDER MYSTERY PROMPTS MAN'S QUEST**—A relative believes he's solved the puzzle of Clyde and Lulu Dayton's deaths, but their stash of money is still missing.

What really happened to Clyde and Lulu Dayton? The health food pioneer known as the "Red-Ripe-Honey-Man" and his wife were shot and burned to death in their isolated cabin more than 80 years ago, their deaths officially unsolved.

Now, a distant relative thinks he has the answer. But even he doesn't know what happened to their buried treasure.

Clyde Dayton was something of a demented, miserly eccentric. When he wasn't pushing a wheelbarrow full of honey five miles east to Owensmouth, he could be found performing as the "bee-wizard" (bees swarming around his head) at Los Angeles' cultural center, Hazard's Pavilion. He reputedly made a fortune, but he never owned a car, or even a horse and buggy.

The Daytons' 138-acre ranch stretched from Roscoe and Valley Circle boulevards in the San Fernando Valley community of West Hills to the Ventura County line. It included a canyon and creek named for the Daytons.

Now it's being transformed into Dayton Canyon Estates, where developers are building 150 luxury homes. Project archeologists have unearthed bone fragments in 32 individual American Indian graves. But there's been no sign of Dayton's fortune—reputed to be thousands of dollars buried in Mason jars.

Since 1922, members of the family have believed that Clyde, 60, and Lulu, 52, were victims of a double murder because there was talk of "suspicious holes in their skulls," a "blood-bespattered trail" and buried treasure.

As a child, Robbie Wilson of Coalfield, Tenn., had been told that his great-great-aunt and uncle had been murdered for their money. But after watching "Roots," the 1977 television miniseries based on Alex Haley's novel, 12-year-old Robbie wanted to know what really happened.

He spent more than two decades digging through archives, poring over family

letters and microfilm stories from eight newspapers, and interviewing family members across the nation.

After sorting through a maze of contradictory information, including death certificates that listed the cause of death as unknown, Wilson believes he has the answer.

---

New York-born Clyde Dayton arrived in Los Angeles in the 1890s and squatted on land tucked into a canyon of sagebrush, a creek and twisting ravines. In 1896, he married Katie McNeill, an Iowa native. She moved to his ranch in the farming community of Chatsworth. (The community's present name, West Hills, was adopted in 1987.)

Dayton suffered from chronic indigestion, which sparked his interest in healthy eating. He proselytized about nutrition and became a professional beekeeper, believing that honey held the key to health.

He built himself a shack with corrugated metal and made hundreds of wooden beehives.

Local fruit growers depended on Dayton's bees to pollinate their crops. But the bulk of his income came from his honey, which he never sold without peddling his philosophy via his free health food pamphlets.

Despite all her presumably healthful eating, Katie contracted tuberculosis. In 1903, she left Dayton Canyon for treatment at a renowned Seventh-day Adventist sanitarium in Michigan. Two years later, as she was about to die, she returned to Los Angeles with a student nurse, Lou "Lulu" Adkisson. After Katie's death, the nurse stayed in California, working as a seamstress and living downtown with Dayton's mother.

Four years later, Dayton and Lulu were married. Both were strict vegetarians and devout Seventh-day Adventists.

Lulu moved into the shack where Clyde still wrote and printed pamphlets about the nutritional benefits of raw vegetables and honey.

Dayton believed that cleaning up the nutritional clutter in a person's body required eating uncooked green vegetables, red honey and fruits with red pulp. In an era when most of America was strictly meat and potatoes, he strongly suggested avoiding fats for good digestion.

An article he wrote for the March 30, 1917, issue of the Owensmouth Gazette, headlined "How Honey Heals," declared:

"There is not any kind of food that is nutritious if it is white, unless it is

combined by its molecules with red or green. White honey is a conglomerate mass of colors until it has been ripened by cold weather so that its red is more intensified and the white eliminated. White is the color disease germs thrive in.”

### A Fortune From Honey

Over more than a quarter-century, Dayton made a fortune selling large barrels of his “Red Ripe Honey”—some of which he buried for seven years to “enhance” its medicinal value. He shipped it by railroad car, along with boxes of his health food pamphlets.

He evidently didn’t trust banks any more than he trusted red meat. He gloated over his cache of silver and gold coins, which he supposedly buried somewhere on his vast property.

Over time, life in the cabin grew difficult and cramped with piles of magazines and pamphlets competing for space. Lulu complained to a friend that her husband rarely bathed, talked to himself and argued with her constantly. She begged him to build her a larger cabin and take a vacation, but he refused. Instead, he threatened to kill her if she didn’t shut up.

On April 12, 1922, Dayton was last seen returning from Owensmouth with an empty wheelbarrow and a pocketful of profits. Hours later, his life and 12-year marriage ended tragically with the crack of a gun and the flick of a match.

When the ashes cooled, sheriff’s deputies found the Daytons’ remains side by side on twisted steel bedsprings. Lulu’s body had been doused with coal oil. (A half-empty jug was found outside.) There weren’t enough skull fragments left to determine if there had been violence before the fire. But a trail of blood led from the cabin to the road, then disappeared. Or was it from the road to the cabin? At first, authorities reported that it was a double murder with robbery as the motive. Half the community speculated that Dayton’s neighbor, rancher Lon Gates, might have killed the couple for money or even revenge. Gates, the son of Calabasas Constable William Gates, was known throughout the area as a “bad hombre.” He had been arrested on three different occasions for cruelty to animals, including beating horses unmercifully with an iron chain.

One of the police investigators, a part-time rancher who kept some of his own beehives on Dayton’s ranch, said he believed Gates got even with the Daytons. Apparently, Lulu had soured a cattle deal after overhearing Gates lie about the condition of a prize calf.

But other evidence surfaced to support a murder-suicide theory. Neighbors



reported that the couple had quarreled frequently. And Lulu's friend gave police a letter in which Lulu said she feared for her life and asked the friend to notify relatives if anything happened to her.

Still, police were perplexed. At the end of the six-day investigation, all they could come up with was a "possible murder-suicide." Although evidence pointed to Clyde's killing Lulu, setting her body afire, then shooting himself, police questioned the location of his three guns: in the corner. None was near his body. (Of course, the cabin was tiny—just 12 by 12 feet.)

Compounding the mystery, it was impossible to tell if any of the guns had been fired. And if there were any shell casings, they melted in the conflagration.

It seemed that everyone in town, including sheriff's deputies, had an opinion about the Daytons' cause of death.

### Search Ends in Theory

Now, after decades of research, Wilson has one of this [his] own: He believes that Clyde soured on life amid the sweet smell of health-food honey and killed Lulu, then himself.

Dayton was "probably insane," Wilson says. He thinks that a jerking reaction as he died most likely caused the gun to fly a few feet away from his body.

"The fire was so intense because of the cabin's corrugated metal frame and the amount of paper inside, making it impossible for a brass bullet casing to survive the fire," he says.

"My grandmother's recollection of 'suspicious holes in their skulls' can probably be explained by the fact that she, a 7-year-old in 1922, probably heard the family mention 'pieces of their skulls' and, from that, assumed that they had been struck on their heads prior to the fire."

But the clincher for Wilson was a two-paragraph story in the Los Angeles Evening Herald that mentioned Lulu's letter about fearing for her life.

Clyde and Lulu's remains were buried in separate caskets in the same grave at Evergreen Cemetery in East Los Angeles. Clyde's eternal legacy was penurious: There was no headstone.

On the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their deaths last April 12, Wilson visited Los Angeles\* and purchased a headstone to mark their grave.

---

One mystery solved, at least to Wilson's satisfaction. But what happened to the

money?

“I’ve always wondered about the possibility of buried money still being in existence, since I learned from a Glendale title company back in 1988 that their property was still undeveloped,” he said.

“The newspaper articles state that it was an assumption that Clyde kept a large sum of money hidden inside his and Lou’s cabin. However, my grandmother’s first cousin, who worked and stayed on the ranch in 1919, knew it was buried somewhere in the bee yard. Every time Clyde paid him, he would go outside into the bee yard and return with gold and silver coins.”

Dayton Canyon—or, rather, Dayton Canyon Estates—is about to get a multitude of new homeowners.

Some of them will be armed with metal detectors, and they’ll be heading for whatever remains of the bee yard.\*\*

#### NOTES:

\*I didn’t visit Los Angeles until June 2003; the headstone transaction was handled over the phone.

\*\*Ms. Rasmussen included Clyde and Lou’s pictures found on pp. 91 and 95. She listed me as the source for both pictures and included the following caption: “Deputies said Clyde Dayton might have murdered his wife, Lulu, and killed himself, but other theories abounded. As far as is known, no one ever found the stash of money supposedly buried on their land.”

(Ms. Rasmussen’s initial article that George Fogelson sent me appeared on two pages [B1 and B6] in the Sunday Preview’s Region section of the *Los Angeles Times* for October 6. However, the heading was different: “Relative’s Quest Unearths an Answer to Murder Mystery—He believes he’s solved the puzzle of Clyde and Lulu Dayton’s deaths, but their stash of silver and gold is still missing.” The caption for the same two pictures [for which I was given credit] was also different: “Lulu Dayton’s severely burned remains were found in 1922 in her San Fernando Valley home. Deputies said Clyde Dayton might have killed his wife and himself; other theories abounded.” After I received the two-page article from George, I ordered a few extras from the *Los Angeles Times*, but they had been

printed on a single page [B4]. Again, while the heading and caption were different, the content was identical.)



