

## RECENTLY FOUND DATA RELATES FACTS IN SAN DIMAS PIONEER DAYS

Many of the early residents of San Dimas can recall hearing of the Clancy House, which stood in a grove of sycamore trees on the back of the old Dave Teague ranch. Little was known about the place except it was supposedly a stage station and that the chimney was still standing. When the Teague Bros. came in 1878, as to when it was built or by whom, no one seemed to know.

Recently Mrs. Harry Walker and Miss Helen Rees, the local history fans, became interested in learning more about the Clancy House and its occupants. Through the County Library, Miss Rees obtained the address of a Miss Mary Clancy, who proved to be a daughter of the Denis S. Clancy, of the early days and had spent a part of her early childhood here.

Denis S. Clancy was born in Limerick, Ireland, coming to America in his early youth, living in Memphis, Tennessee. In 1854 he came to San Francisco, but not liking the northern city, he with his wife, Margaret, came to Los Angeles the following year. He was employed as bookkeeper by Matthew Keller, one of the large vineyardists of this section. His health not of the best, induced him to change to some outdoor occupation, so he bought in good faith some 160 acres in 1862 from the F. L. A. Pioche estate, the Pioche family lived in San Francisco.

Mr. Clancy proceeded to improve his holdings and built what was then considered a very large house of seven rooms with a large living room and a large dining-room. The house was built among the sycamore trees on the bank of the stream coming from the ciene-gas at Mud Springs, along the present P. E. right-of-way just east of Walnut street. The lumber for the house hauled from Los Angeles by team or ox cart, some even packed out.

Through some friends in the U. S. army, one of whom was Major McCormick, afterward governor of Arizona, Mr. Clancy secured a contract with the government to supply hay, grain, horses, etc., to the troops passing through on their way to Arizona and in this way the ranch developed into a way station for them and the stage coaches. The stage line passing here was spoken of by the Clancys as the Banning stage, presumed by them to have been owned by Phineas Banning.

Time went on and when the Clancy's had been living here seven or eight years, Henry Dalton came to Mr. Clancy claiming he owned the land under a Spanish grant, which Mr. Clancy had presumably purchased in good faith and supposed he had a perfectly good title to the property. Having already suffered losses in the dry years and also through the failure in business of a friend in Los Angeles to whom he had entrusted

some ten thousand dollars, almost his entire fortune, he found himself in no position to carry on an expensive law suit as his attorneys in Los Angeles advised him that a contest meant a long and expensive litigation as the matter would have to be taken up with the land office in Washington, and it was a long way to Washington in those days. So the family left the ranch in 1870, moving to some property they had previously bought in Los Angeles.

The family moved here with two children, John H. and Mary E. Clancy and while living here a daughter Catherine was born in 1864, and a son Robert, in 1866. These were, according to Miss Clancy, the first white children born here as her parents were the first white settlers in San Dimas, which at that time was known as Mud Springs.

Two other daughters, Elizabeth and Anna were born after the family moved to Los Angeles. Miss Mary, though a young child when they left the ranch, can recall the fence her father built around the house, of which some of the sycamore posts took root, the outdoor oven, and that her parents were friends of the Carlyles, who lived where the California Republic now stands at Chino, and of the Rowlands of Puente and Walnut, neighboring and trading mostly in Puente.

Through Mr. Clancy's friendship with Mr. William R. Rowland, then sheriff of Los Angeles county, Mr. Clancy, on leaving here, was given a deputyship, but his health gradually failed and he passed away in 1878, just eight years after leaving here. His wife surviving him until 1905 when she passed away in Los Angeles.

The son, John H. Clancy, being older than Miss Mary, knew more about the pioneer days of the valley and kept in touch for many years with the pioneers of the valley, but unfortunately he passed away in 1926 before anyone here was sufficiently interested to trace the early history of the valley. He had in his possession a diary kept by his father, which included the years spent here but which he loaned and it was never returned to the family. If this diary could be located, much of interest concerning this valley could be learned.

The letter Miss Clancy sent in reply to Miss Rees' inquiry will be kept in the local history file. In addition to the letter much of interest was gained on Friday when Mrs. Harry Walker and Miss Helen Rees called at the Clancy home, meeting two of the three surviving members of this pioneer family.

Miss Mary Walker was able to return to her position at the Clark hotel in Los Angeles Sunday after several weeks illness at the Walker home.