

# Yreka's Forest House Ranch Subsides into Home of Early Day Vintage

By J. O. McKINNEY  
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Yreka-Forest House is a name given to a ranch five miles out of Yreka on the Ft. Jones road.

Built 100 years ago, it was in its day one of the great show places of early California. Today it has subsided into a gracious home of early day vintage. But if its glorious past was run on a screen today, it would outdraw any thriller ever to come out of Hollywood.

Not only does Forest House show many things of the long ago, it shows attractions of

today. Blooded stock is there. Too, there are evidences of 4-H clubs and Future Farmers of America. A 100 years hence Forest House will be keeping step with the times, still reproducing as in the days of long ago.

But it is inconceivable it will be producing the varieties it did in the days of gold. Things today are more readily available where they may be produced at less expense. In 1850 there were no places to get many things save by making them one's self.

Forest House once support-

ed a brick manufacturing plant, ice plant, lime kiln, fruit drying plant, packing house, and distillery. The latter was not the fly-by-night bootleg variety. It was at Forest House a bona fide licensed distillery where brandies were manufactured, and sold under license number supplied by the U.S.

The usual run of sawmill, box factory, and such articles that are made here today were also manufactured then. But old time folk did not have sources from which to secure other things. They made them at

home. And Forest House supplied all orders.

This enterprising firm owned by Messrs. Knight and Short built a toll road over the mountain that loomed between Yreka and Scott Valley. They showed true enterprise and public spirit when paying to drive over the roadway became noxious to travelers, they donated \$1,600 to a fund to buy out their own enterprise.

Didn't Miss the Change  
But they didn't miss the change. There was the attraction for all dances, and big-time entertainment. A log pen with a box-type trandoor was erected on their property in Moffett Creek Canyon for trapping bear.

Grizzlies were plentiful. A bad bear was captured, taken

to Forest House and put in a pen with a rampaging range bull. The spectators flocked to see the duel. It must have been an epic. Neither battler wanted to sell out. When it was over, each lay dead on the field of battle.

But Forest House contributed more than entertainment. The first car lot of produce shipped from Yreka over the Yreka-Western Railway was apples from Forest House. For years these were shipped fresh, dried, and canned. Many trees that were among the thousands once bearing fruit are still standing, still producing, but now showing ravages of years and neglect.

It is no longer thought of as a fruit center, but 100 years ago smudge fires burn-

ed at Forest House as they do today in Rogue valley. They were then crude affairs helped by shovels of dirt to regulate the fires.

But times changed. The senior member of the firm, Horace Knight, sold his interest to Brown. Brown's wife, a Presbyterian, disliked the distillery, and bar business. That went out. Traces of the old still remain, and the old bar is now a resting place for a grand collection of Indian baskets, other artifacts of the people who once called that region home.

Baskets Collected  
These baskets were collected by Mrs. Burton, wife of Fred C. Burton, who now owns the ranch. When Brown and Short could no longer handle the stage business, and

other activities of the ranch, Burton stepped in and has kept step with the times to where he has it under control.

There is room for the old businesses only in memory. He raises cattle, hogs, grain, and lets the other activities follow the woodbine.

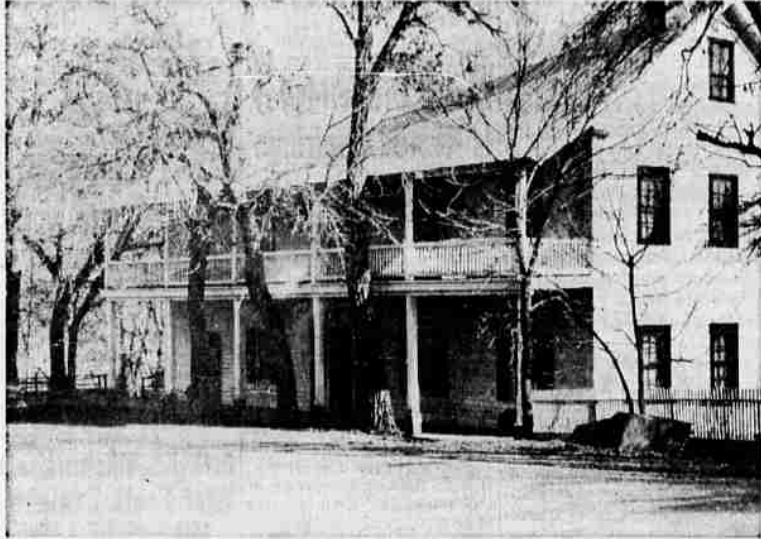
So Forest House during its span of more than 100 years has seen many industrial changes, but few changes of ownership. From Knight and Short, to Short and Brown, to Burton, appears all that may come soon. When the present owner, Fred Burton, steps down, still another Fred Burton is ready to take over. And the Burtons love the old ranch that has endured so long and made so much history.

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FOREST HOUSE—This is the main building from Yreka on the Ft. Jones rd. It was ing on Forest House, a ranch five miles once a stage station and hotel.

## Redden Says House People Nit-Picking

Representative James A. Redden (D-Medford) accused members of the House of Representatives of "nit-picking" in finding excuses to vote against Senate Bill 10, providing for life imprisonment in cases of first degree murder rather than death.

The bill passed the house and was sent to the Senate for concurrence to the amendments.

Redden pointed out that those opposed to the abolishment of capital punishment need not find excuses, but should admit that they were opposed to the concept and not the bill.

The bill passed the House 36-24.

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