

Down Memory Lane
Mary Etta Broadwell

Samuel Fesler

Almost 20 years before Civil war was declared a small boy gallantly helped his father build a log cabin in a tiny cleared space in an Indiana woods. With his parents he had recently arrived in a covered wagon from his birth place in Virginia.

From that time until his death, nearly 90 years later, Samuel Fesler was aware of the satisfaction to be derived from hard work and accomplishment. His remarkable physique and unusually fine health enabled him to do work comparable to a man many years his junior

When he was past 90 he recovered from such a severe attack of double pneumonia that even the attending physician was amazed at his recuperative powers. That same year he fell from the top of a 16-foot ladder and only a month later resumed his duties as briskly as ever.

As a young man he married an Indiana girl and they were the parents of three children, the late Martin Fesler, Mrs. Sarah Larcher, who passed away last year and Mrs. Roy Rector (Mary Fesler) of Covina.

In 1882 after his children were grown and following the death of his wife, Mr. Fesler, who had realized marked success as a farmer, joined his brother, George, in Longmont, Colorado where they became partners in an implement and feed store.

Living in the same town was Miss Louise Charman, who had been a public school teacher in Indiana and had taught the Fesler children. She and Mr. Fesler renewed their acquaintance and sometime later she became the second Mrs. Fesler.

After being married for only a few years she passed away leaving two small children, Charles Fesler, who now resides on Covina Boulevard and the late Mrs. John Huff (Nellie Fesler).

Living in the George Fesler home was a charming young lady, Jeannette Brubaker, daughter of Henry J. Brubaker, who later became a well-known

Covina pioneer. In 1888 Miss Brubaker and Samuel Fesler were married and three years later moved from Colorado to Covina. Accompanying them was Charles and Nellie Fesler and their own small son, Dean.

Mr. Fesler bought a 10-acre ranch on West Badillo Street, property which is still held by members of his family. It was planted to citrus trees so small that they were dwarfed by the surrounding sunflowers. At the time the road from the little village of Covina to the ranch had been surveyed but not built.

The first building constructed on the property was the barn in which the family lived until their pretentious two-story home was built. It was here in the family homestead that the two youngest Fesler children were born, Belle (Mrs. Leroy Eikenberry) and Alta, now Mrs. Wilbur Speer.

Mr. Fesler, in company with all other pioneer ranchers, suffered the hardships typical of that period. Securing sufficient water was a major problem. The citrus trees were still too small for productive returns, and due to the fact that they were unorganized, the ranchers received small profits for their labors.

To augment his income and provide adequately for his family, Mr. Fesler found it necessary to accept any kind of employment. For sometime he worked for a tile manufacture and is credited with making most of the tile in the laterals now in use by the Covina Irrigating Company.

During those early, hard years, Mrs. Fesler helped in every way possible, and was always a most encouraging helpmate.

Mr. Fesler was known for his sound business judgment. He was one of the original stockholders of the Covina National Bank and served on the board of directors, as well as on the board of the Covina Orange Growers Association and the Covina Valley Growers, now the location of the Mutual Orange Distributors.

Both he and Mrs. Fesler were active in the Brethern Church where he served as Deacon and acted on several official boards.

Mr. Fesler passed away in 1931 just one month before his 97th birthday. He was active and in robust health until about 18 months before his death. His physical condition was so remarkable that he wore eyeglasses only for reading purposes during the last few years of this life. Mrs. Fesler survives him.

On Covina's roll of honor are the names of four of his grandsons, Lt. James Eikenberry, Cpl. Robert Fesler, Dean Fesler, Jr., Pharmacist's mate with the U. S. Navy and William Mathias, serving with the Army in England.

His other grandchildren were Lois Eikenberry, Edythe Fesler, Mrs. Neal Farquar (Janice Speer), Howard Speer, Ralph Fesler, Cecil Huff, Louise Cook and Mrs. Raymond Cowgill of New Hampshire, Conn., daughter-in-law of a former minister of the Covina Methodist Church, whose husband is on the Yale faculty.