

# Clyburn Family News

Yreka, CA 2/26/2000

by Nancy Fay McBain\*

Dear Lynda:

You wanted me to tell you all about Lime Gulch! I spent many years roaming around that homestead. I guess it was a homestead or it may have been a mining claim. It was purchased by my parents Stephen Franklin and Nancy Clyburn in 1917. Woodrow was a baby when they moved from Beaver Creek to Lime Gulch. The move was made using pack animals and walking on the Government Trail. There was no highway at the time. The highway (CA Hwy. 96) was built in the early 1920's.



Lynda Mae Clyburn Thompson

I remember the old house and as I remember it, it wasn't much. There was a kitchen with a wood stove and a table. I don't remember if we had benches or chairs. At the time there was Lee, Bud, Jim, Joe, Frances, me, Woodrow, and me.



Narcie Fay Clyburn McBain - Christmas 2007

Attached to the kitchen there was a small, uncovered, back porch. Outside on the hillside a few feet from the porch there was a really neat cellar. The cellar was made with logs and a board door. An upside down "V" shaped roof that was open and you could walk inside of the upside down "V." The living room was a long room reached from one side of the building to the other. In one end of the living room there was a wood heater. Pop had a rocking chair and I can remember sitting on his lap and being rocked to sleep. They had lived there for two years before I was born.

The front of the cabin had a porch with a bed room on one end. That was where some of the boys slept. I really don't know how they arranged to find room for beds for all of us. There must have been beds in each room, including the kitchen. Water was from the spring down in front of the house. Later water was piped from the field about a fourth of a mile up the creek. The pine line was put in before the new house was built in '1926.

The miner's shack (the first cabin) was built on a slant of the hillside. There were two big Oak Trees on one side and a tall Pine Tree on the uphill side. There was a Cedar Tree by the Blacksmith

Shop and a large Pine Tree behind the garage.

The field was not cleared in 1917. Pop and the boys had a stump puller and they pulled trees and bushes and cleared a rather large field up the creek and above

don't remember what kind of wood it's made of. Ernie knew, but I can't remember.

The kitchen of the new house that my dad built was large with lots of cupboards, a sink, running water and a wood stove with a

There were nice windows in each bedroom, two in the back room, one off the back porch, and one on the creek side of the room. The bathroom had a small window on the creek side of the house. The middle bedroom had one window and the front bedroom had two windows, one on the creek side and one that looked out onto the front porch.

The dining room had two windows, one on each side of the fireplace. The living room had two large windows and a window in the front door. Both porches reached all the way across the house. The front porch had a banister all the way around except for the steps. This made a nice place to sit on top. The top had at least an eight or ten inch top on it and it was kept painted. The steps had a tall banister on each side with the same top. That kept the top level with the porch banister.

Inside the house each room, not bedrooms, had wainscoting about four feet high from the floor up. It was painted white in the kitchen. It was also in the Dining and living rooms, there is was a dark mahogany color with the walls above it, and ceiling, painted white. Floors were varnished wood with linoleum in the kitchen. Later a linoleum rug size piece was put in the dining room. In the dining room we had a large oak table. With all the leaves it would seat 16-18 people. Nancy McMaster, Frances's daughter, now has that table and loves it.

In the living room we had the Edison Phonograph. Which I have now and have had for many years. It was shuffled from Woodrow to Jim and back to Woodrow and then he gave it back to me in the 1950's sometime. The Edison record player was purchased in 1922 or 1923 by Bud and Lee\*\*. Tom had some beautiful mounted deer heads



*Fay with a Christmas quilt - Christmas 2007*

the place where the spring was. You could tell that someone had done some mining around the creek bed at the spring area. They had built some rock walls in that area.

In 1926 the new house was built and we had a bath room with a nice big white bath tub with feet. The bathroom also a wash basin and toilet in it. The bathroom also had room for a big storage desk that Pop bought at an auction. I have it now in my daughter Narcie's bedroom at my house. We rescued is just before the house was burned down. My husband Ernie refinished it and it is a useful piece of furniture. It had about six coats of varnish and paint on it before he redid it. Now it is varnished and has a door on the front that drops down for use as a writing desk. The top is a solid piece of wood 20 inches by 48 inches. It's a clear light color but I

water heater in the corner with pipes into the stove to heat the water. The kitchen had two nice windows and a door with windows in it. There was room in the kitchen for a large table that would seat eight or nine very nicely. We had a bench by the wall and chairs on the ends and open side of the table. The kitchen had a counter top with a window through into the dining room. That was nice for many things.

The kitchen, dining room and living room were lined up on one side of the house (next to the road). The other side of the house had the back bedroom, off of the kitchen, the stair well up to the upstairs, the bath room, Frances and Fay's bedroom and the last bedroom was Mom and Pops at the end off of the living room.

hanging in the living room for a long time. Also in there was a large picture of Grandpa Clyburn (Miles Lemuel Clyburn). Nancy has this picture also. It had been given to her mother.

We also had in the living room near the arch way to the dining room a table where the Radio always sat. I think we always had a radio after we moved into the new house in 1926. One important thing I will add, right now, Mom told Pop when they moved from Beaver Creek to Lime Gulch that she was never going to move again and she didn't except for a few times to Tule Lake and Merrill, Oregon, when they were farming there. But they didn't sell the Lime Gulch home to go live there. She wouldn't let him.

Now, back to the house. Up stairs there was a wonderful room from one end of the house to the other. The house was long so that gave us a wonderful extra room for beds and storage. There were four windows upstairs, two dormers on the sides (one on each side) and a small window in each end of the big room. I used to go up there on a rainy day and read just to listen to the rain on the roof. Grandpa Miles slept up there and so did tom and Joe. Also any extra people that were staying with us. At on time there was a Tom McDonald that stayed with us. Another time a Mr. Holeman stayed with us for a long time. Other people off and on also stayed. Every Sunday, Mom would cook extra food for dinner at noon and most of the time someone or a family would arrive for dinner with us. People, from down river, or from Hilt, or Hornbrook, would show up. During the time that the convict camp was at Gottville some of the inmates would come and visit us. Some of them kept in touch after they got out and went home. I think that is all I can say about the house other than it was cold inside in the

winter and hot inside in the summer.



*Fay as a young girl with friends Cubby and Bingo at Lime Gulch Ranch*

The front yard sloped in front and on the creek side. Mom planted various things each year. A rose bush grew up on one side of the right side of the steps. A Trumpet vine grew on the left side of the steps. We had both English and Black Walnut trees and Iris's along side the driveway and various other rose bushes etc. As you came down the steps there was a path leading down through the yard to the main spring. We had water piped into the house but sometimes the spring in the field went dry and we had to carry water from the spring for everything. We would build a fire down by the spring and heat water to wash clothes down there. Wash and rinse them and carry them back up the hill to the

clothes line. The spring also had a place to keep our milk cold in the summer and anything else that needed to set in the cold water and keep cool. The butter milk we kept there always tasted good at the spring.

Grape vines grew over the spring on rails that Pop put up. It was a nice place to sit on a hot day. Just below the spring and the ditch there was a flat place. We had two big apple trees and a small patch of asparagus grew there. Also, we had a big English Walnut tree on that flat space. Also I was always interested in the water cress and the various small interesting plants that grew in the ditch. Also, the snails, slugs, water dogs, and a few water bugs of various kinds interested me. We had green onions that grew and multiplied on the ditch bank above the ditch between two springs. I have found out that those onions were Egyptian Onions and I still grow them in my back yard in Yreka. I got my start from the little plants that come on the top of the long blades that grow up from the roots. My start came from the Lime Gulch ones. That was 49 years ago (in 2000) that I got the onion starts from there. Mom also had a large clump of Golden Glow that grew in the middle of the front yard and down not far from the two springs.

We also had a pie cherry tree and some strawberry peaches just above the spring area and lots of blackberry bushes along the banks. It wasn't far from the house to the spring but it sure seemed a long way when carrying a bucket of water!

In the early 1960's Woodrow installed a ram in the creek below the spring and piped water from the



SF Clyburn home at Lime Gulch (this is not the original, this is the one he later built.

spring down to the ram which used water pressure to pump water uphill. This filled a tank above the house during the dry season when the spring up the creek dried up and allowed Mom and Pop to have water in the house year round.

The ditch came out of the creek just below the house but the water supply mainly came from the two springs. It took water down around the curve and about a quarter mile to Pops big garden spot. The ditch was there before the highway so it had a culvert under the highway. When we went to the garden, we always walked on the ditch bank. The highway (CA Hwy. 96) was very narrow at that spot and we were safer on the ditch bank. The highway crew cleaned rock out of the ditch from time to time. Pop had a big annual garden as well as fruit trees, grapes, and berries at the garden. I still remember having to pick those darned strawberries! I

hated to pick in the garden. I had a headache all the time I picked and everyone said that I was just lazy.

Joe Clyburn (my brother), and his wife Loucille, later bought the garden spot from Pop and built a home there. They lived there for many years. Joe later piped the water from the spring below Pops house, on Lime Gulch, to the garden and to his house. Joe, and Loucille, still lived on the Klamath river, when Mom and Pop were old and needed help and they did help them a lot. I know that Mom liked to visit with Loucille on many a lonely afternoon. Mom lived alone after Pop died and I think about five years. Lee (*Franklin L. Clyburn*) stayed with her during

that time and rode the school bus to town each school day.

We didn't have electricity so we didn't have refrigeration. At one time we obtained a kerosene refrigerator and then everything froze! So we used it for ice! Eventually after Mom and Pop were old and all the kids had moved away they had a light plant (generator). That helped a lot with their lights.

I must mention the Carbide Light Plant we had earlier. I was about nine or ten years old when it was installed. It had a big tank buried in the back yard. A hopper and water were in the tank. The hopper let carbide fall into the water and that made the gas fumes. The fumes were piped into the house and we had lights! They were really nice lights. We had one light fixture in the center of each room. To turn on the lights there was a twist switch

which involved striking a flint and the spark lit the flame. The most interesting thing was the iron. It was big and bulky but it worked really nicely. It was much the same at the lights only I think we used a match to light the flame inside the iron. It was much better than the iron that we would heat in the fireplace or on the kitchen stove.

In the late 1920's or early 1930's we had a washing machine. It had two big tubs. It was operated by a single engine which went "put, put" and a belt from the engine to the washing machine. It worked really well, but I don't remember how long we had that washing machine. We kept it in the little shed out back of the back porch. The engine was small with two large wheels and the pulley was on one side of the machine.

I must get back to the field, garage and blacksmith shop. The field, as I said before was cleared by just plain hard work by Pop and the boys. Chaparral, Manzanita, Oak, etc. were removed by hand then a ditch was dug from the creek in the upper end of the field to the lower parts of the field. Another ditch came from further up the left-hand fork of Lime Gulch to water the upper part of the alfalfa field. In the middle of the field there was a ravine. Pop built a self shooter in this gully. He liked to mine and he had a sluice box below the shooter. (Self Shooter: a dam across the ravine, a long pole with a five-gallon air tight can on one end. When the water filled up to where the five-gallon can was level with the top of the dam it would cause a gate in the dam to open and the water would go down the gulch through the sluice box.) (Sluice Box: Three pieces of lumber nailed together to make a long chute for the water to go through. A piece of a gunny sack would be in the bottom with a screen over it and as

the dirt and water went through the box any gold would settle to the bottom and stay on the sack material. There would be a series of screens in different sizes ending with a fine mesh. The fine mesh screen may have been first.) The creek would dry up and there wouldn't be any water during the hot part of the summer. In the early spring, and summer, it was fun to go up and play in the ditch. It was a nice walk from the house up to the back fence and return. Also, on up the right-hand fork of the creek, was a spring the Round Hole. Sometimes we would walk up to the Round Hole which had a flat place with big trees and wild grape vines. Later I took a Girl Scout troop up there once. We also took the girl scouts to see how the dam, self shooter and sluice box worked one time. Another time Pop had a self-shooter in the creek near the house. It was neat to hear the water rush out and down the stream. It was all automatic. The five-gallon can on the end of the pole did the work. As far as I know there wasn't much gold found in Lime Gulch though.

At one time for a few years we had two large chicken houses and one small one. We had lots of chickens and some turkeys. The turkeys were left to run wild. During the nesting season we would watch them to see the direction they would go. Eventually we would find their nest hidden under a bush or behind a log all covered with leaves. After the turkey chicks hatched, we would have to watch and see that they didn't go into the alfalfa field. If they became wet due to the dew on the plants, the baby turkeys would all die. I fell down one time hunting for a nest and I still have the scar on my chin bone! I really liked hunting for the nests though.

The small chicken house was

low enough at the back that we could climb on top of it. My girlfriend, Thelma Wells, and I would take our collection of paper dolls and play with them on top of that building. The Wells family lived at the mouth of Big Humbug Creek. Their home was the old schoolhouse that my older brothers went to school in. That was before the highway was built. They crossed the river in a cage that was pulled across with ropes and was fastened or rolled on a cable stretched across the river. I also have a picture of that cable car in the Family Album.

For a year or two we had sheep. I have a picture in one of my albums of me standing with the sheep, the field, and Cottonwood Mountain, in the background. I think I was about ten years old when the photo was taken.

When the highway was built, I remember that we would have to leave the house and go up in the field and wait for the blasts to go off. These blasts were when they were making the road around the corner bluff above the ditch. Before the highway the older kids walked to school down the river on the Government Trail. After the highway was built, we walked on the highway. It was three miles to school and we left home an hour before school time. Jake rose worked on the highway after it was finished, and one time when there was snow on the highway, he gave Woodrow and me a ride home from school on the road grader. That is something I will always remember. Jake was also a family friend.

For many years we had a family get-together to celebrate Easter and Mom and Pops' anniversary in September (September 10, 1894). They had

sixty six years together and almost made it sixty seven years. Pop died June 25, 1961 he was almost 90 years old. If he'd made it to September, it would have been a 67 year anniversary. Mom died January 29, 1967. She was 88 years old.



Above: Me.... Oct 2007

*\* Editors Note: Aunt Fae told me that her name Fae was originally spelled Fay by her parents. She was named after Fay Larkin in Zane Grey's "Riders of the Purple Sage." She, one day while in school, started using the spelling Fae because she liked it that way better and it's been that way ever since.*

*\*\* Fae gave me this story about Lime Gulch for a future newsletter. I think that this is the time to use it as of this week she is in a care home in Medford, OR. It was originally written at the request of my sister Lynda Clyburn Thompson of Kenai, AK. Fae turned 89 on January 20, 2008.*

*\*\*\* If you would like to write a family article for the Clyburn Family News, please contact me at [frank@Cliburne.Ocatch.com](mailto:frank@Cliburne.Ocatch.com) to submit the article. Only stories in good taste please.*