

In 1917 Dr. F. W. Coulter of Burbank was called to Buckingham Palace in London and presented with the Distinguished Conduct Medal. King George himself made the presentation for acts of gallantry by the Burbank physician during 1914-15 fighting in France.

Burbank has had a celebrated role in history which in a way it can barely match, let alone exceed. One can hardly improve on its fame as locale for the Battle of Providencia in 1845 which turned around rule of California from far off Mexico to self-government by the Californios. Burbank was a major center for aircraft production in 1941-1945, a very real war arsenal. It catapulted to new fame in aerospace and television, extending its earlier film work.

Kerosene and gasoline lamps lit Burbank. The Luttgés were responsible for Burbank's first street light. Every night a Luttgé would pump on a huge Coleman lamp and hang it outside the store so horse and buggy travelers who got caught out after dark would know when they had reached the thriving Burbank of 1905. This was still before the era of either gas or electricity for lighting.

Since there were no restaurants in Burbank, the Lavender Salad Club's nine members began serving lunches for businessmen at the Santa Rosa Hotel by 1909. The ladies wore white lawn aprons with lavender trimmed flowers and lavender lace beading.

A heavy rainfall of 5.78 inches in February, 1914, cut off part of the Valley even from trains. So heavily did it snow on December 30, 1915, that children could not go to school. But they could throw snowballs.

In 1913 Burbank began its municipal water works acquisition so as to remain independent of Los Angeles, which held riparian water rights. The \$70,000 in bonds approved by voters on March 26, 1913, were to provide for drilling more water wells in the city and building a plant to produce electricity. To celebrate this move on July 4, 1913, throngs packed the sides of San Fernando Road to watch "the greatest automobile race ever known." Noted racing driver Barney Oldfield and 49 others raced cars from Los Angeles to Sacramento.

By September, shows were given every night in the week. The new era of entertainment every night and on weekends had opened. "A Quiet Day in Burbank," a 1,000-foot film, was shown from Summer, 1919, on to point out interesting features of Burbank.

The film "A Quiet Day in Burbank" was shown at the Rose Theater on August 16, 1919, and in other towns. Miss Octavia Lesueuer arrived in Burbank in 1919 to join her parents and enter business and city functions. Oliver J. Stough, who had first bought huge acreage in Burbank in 1893, came up from San Diego and celebrated his 101st birthday here with friends in 1919.

A freak hail storm struck the Valley on March 26, 1920, and youngsters made ice cream with the hail stones.

By September, 1931, United Airport was a central distribution point for weather information for a vast area. On December 14, 1931, the Valley was "white-blanketed by a driving snow storm." Heavy snow also fell on January 15, 1932. McGroarty was to remark of the early 1930's that at Burbank the days were not particularly hot as humidity was low, while nights were delightfully cool, which gave Burbank an "ideally mild" climate the year round.

In 1934 Burbank bought out Edison for \$130,000, ending the company's servicing of the valley section. The city electrical system was changed from 50 cycles to 60 so as to utilize prospective Hoover (formerly Boulder) Dam power. Rewiring or replacing the city's electrical motors cost \$150,000.

A great rain came in January, 1931. In the last days of 1933 a massive storm struck and led to the historic floods of New Year's Eve, 1933-34. Four hundred homes were destroyed as the flood smashed 1,040 acres, cost 34 lives at and near Burbank and caused damage of \$5,000,000. Yet the flood of February 28-March 2, 1938, was even greater. Dams were overloaded. Channels overflowed. Dry washes became raging torrents. The flood broke over the levee of the Big Tujunga Wash and destroyed 67 of 80 spreading basins. Entire towns were cut off as the Los Angeles River became a "real" river; no one joked about it in 1938. When electrical power was cut off and telephones as well, Burbank was isolated on March 3, 1938. A number of buildings at Warners' lot were washed out as was much of the Olive Avenue Bridge and homes near the studio. Several Burbank people died. At Warners', 200 employees, marooned by washed out bridges, improvised entertainment on a big stage. Houses struck other houses, people floated away in roaring washes. Crews piled sandbags in a breach of the Tujunga Wash as the flood waters carved out a new channel. Cleaning of debris from streets took 30 days and cost \$60,000.

Marathon dancing was banned in Burbank on May 26, 1931, so were flagpole sitting and tree topping, talking, walkathon or rocking chair contests beyond eight out of 24 hours a day, except for airplane endurance contests. Barn dances at Jeffries Barn were halted after complaints in September, 1931, about boozing, rowdiness and poor clothing.

Ray Bradbury was doing experimental gardening in Burbank with exotic plants in 1936.

While digging the Beachwood Sewer line in 1937 a crew turned up an Indian grave with earthenware and stone articles in it.

The Burbank City Prosecutor in August, 1945, was leading a drive on horsemeat sellers in cafes.

Meat, butter and fats were declared ration-free on November 23, 1945. Only sugar remained on the stamp list. While no points were needed, shoppers found shelves bare. As late as June, 1946, housewives in Burbank lined up for scarce food, especially meat and bread. Many retailers limited people to one loaf per customer. In a telegram to President Harry S. Truman city officials noted that Burbank's food situation was critical. One councilman said in June, 1946: "There are people in Burbank tonight who didn't have a square meal, although they had the money to pay for it." Two years after the war's end on October 7, 1947, meatless Tuesday was observed in Burbank to comply with an order of President Truman to conserve food.

The old cast-iron sign of Dr. David Burbank was displayed in a three-day celebration in 1948. The sign bore the words: "Dr. Burbank DENTIST, UP STAIRS." The 50-pound sign was 26 by 13 inches, with letters of solid bronze fastened with rivets. It was found at the home of Mrs. Charles Emory Wright by Ray Kahl, Burbank pioneer, in May, 1948. Cast in San Francisco, the sign was being used as a footscrapers in the backyard. Kahl recalled the sign when he was 12 years of age when it was used as a part of a path to a house.

Fifteen acres of land along 1,400 feet of Riverside Drive between Mariposa and Main Streets were bought for \$250,000 by Desco Corporation in 1953. Part of the Battle of Providencia had occurred there.

Burbank in 1959 used birdseed soaked in a sleeping compound which in 10 or 15 minutes had unwanted pigeons wobbling drunkenly and then destroyed them.

Burbank city elders in July, 1956, approved "rock" for teenagers, specifically the recording group, The Platters, to sing at a dance but to do it quietly as City Manager Harmon Bennett suggested. "Tell 'The Platters' not to rock it too hard," he said. It was feared that too much rock 'n' roll might start a riot. David Friedlander, 15, sought to prove with a record player that the music was not that frantic.

In 1954

three of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders of the Spanish American War of 1898 were living in Burbank, out of 75 nationally. They were James G. Yost, 81, James E. McQuire, 79, and William C. Schnepple, 75. Burbank City Hall was "stormed" in a mock war by the National Guard in February, 1956, and Mayor H. B. Bank came out waving a white flag.

The first snow in years fell on March 23, 1964. Hailstorms bombarded people in May, 1964. Snow rimmed the Valley on November 17, 1964, and flatlands of Burbank.

During World War Two when there were local fears of a Japanese bombing, Warner had a sign painted on his studios: "LOCKHEED--THAT-A-WAY." Warner's provided protective coloring for the Lockheed plant and also removed the sign.

"Laugh-In" TV program, which spread the slogan of "Beautiful Downtown Burbank," everywhere had its own ceremony in which Lord Mayor George Haven crowned Dan Rowan as King of Beautiful Downtown Burbank in September, 1969. His partner Dick Martin was named new "first lady."

A Burbank woman who had met Abraham Lincoln, Mrs. Vesta Ransom Fay, died at 105 in 1965. She said of her meeting with Lincoln: "Of course, I was just a little girl but I sat on the platform right next to Lincoln when he and Stephen A. Douglas debated in Chicago. Abraham Lincoln was about the homeliest man I ever saw."

Possibly the greatest single advertisement in Burbank history was the use on the Burbank-based "Laugh-In" television show of the slogan "Beautiful Downtown Burbank" for six years. The slogan barely outlived the show, which passed into history in February, 1973; telephone operators of the city no longer used the phrase. Still "Laugh-In" and the slogan had made Burbank noted throughout the world as "a national entertainment center," City Manager Baker remarked. Mayors of Burbank would appear on the program for moments and be recognized widely.

Nathan Acel, Burbank attorney since 1943, was appointed a Los Angeles Municipal Court Judge on July 23, 1970. Actor-war hero Audie Murphy, once he was cleared of charges of assault with intent to commit murder, said that his immediate plans were "to stay out of Burbank," in October, 1970. Murphy, who had ridden along with Burbank police on night patrols, was the most decorated soldier of World War Two.

Neighbors, as well as the City of Burbank, objected to the more than 400 "noisy" birds kept by Laure Haile, bird woman of Burbank, in 1973.