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THE OWENS VALLEY DISPUTE

The Story of Owens Valley, Its Dealings With the City of Los Angeles and the Dynamiting Attacks Upon the City's Aqueduct

By DON J. KINSEY

(Editor's Note—This is the ninth of a series of short articles revealing the facts in connection with the Los Angeles-Owens Valley water controversy.)

AQUEDUCT DYNAMITINGS

Charges that the City of Los Angeles was devastating Owens Valley, a group of valley ranchers and townsmen, headed by W. W. and M. Q. Watterson, financial barons of the region, had launched a violent attack upon officials of the City's Department of Water and Power in 1923.

In newspaper articles, prepared by writers working for the Watterson group it was asserted that the valley was being ruined and its citizens despoiled because of the water land purchases in that county.



E. F. Leasley, Owens Valley Superintendent for the Department of Water and Power, examining dynamite and fuses found hidden near the Aqueduct, in preparation, apparently, for another attack upon the water carrier.

try by the Los Angeles water officials. Los Angeles was pictured as a powerful ogre stalking up and down the valley and laying waste the homes and ranches of that region.

"The Los Angeles water officials are forcing the valley people to sell their lands. Our people do not want to dispose of their homes; they want to be left alone." This, in substance, was the burden of the first charges that rose from the Watterson group. But when the city offered to purchase all of the less fertile water land and leave 30,000 acres of the best holdings permanently under private ownership with a guarantee of a 100 per cent irrigation supply, the same group rejected the offer and demanded that the city buy all of the valley land.

When the city, in response to these demands, resumed its land purchases, attempts were made to organize the valley land owners into pools and to demand for these holdings prices amounting, in some instances, to ten times the assessed valuation of the property. On the city's refusal to pay such prices, charges of unfair dealing and ruinous tactics were hurled against the Los Angeles officials and spread broadcast throughout the state and nation.

The city's land purchases, the Watterson group next declared, were wrecking the valley towns and undermining commercial activity. To recompense the merchants and townsmen for these asserted losses, the city was called upon to pay damages or "reparations."

Early in 1924, it occurred to the hostile valley group to emphasize their demands and their charges by various acts of violence. It was at this point that there arose within the valley a reign of terror that held the region in its grip for more than three years. Those responsible for the campaign of violence and terrorism first revealed their methods on the night of May 21, 1924, when a band of men, under cover of darkness, dynamited a section of the aqueduct near the town of Lone Pine.

On November 15 of the same year a mob of Valley townsmen and ranchers, under the leadership of M. Q. Watterson, seized the Alabama Hills spillway gates of the aqueduct, and for three days wasted the full flow of the aqueduct upon the barren sands of the surrounding desert.

Following the seizure of the aqueduct there was a period of comparative peace for almost a year and a half. On May 14, 1926, however, the dynamiters again resumed their activities. On that date a ten-foot section of a concrete-lined section of the aqueduct was blown out one mile south of the Alabama Hills spillway gates.

Another year passed, and then, on the night of May 27, 1927, ten masked men overpowered the city's guards at the No Name Canyon siphon and destroyed by dynamite a 150-foot section of this gigantic siphon pipe. The following night the penstock of the City's Big Pine

Sophie Braslau Is Philharmonic Soloist Thursday

Sophie Braslau, contralto, will be the soloist at the third symphony concert of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, George Schneevolt, conductor, Thursday evening, November 24, and Friday afternoon, November 25, at the Philharmonic Auditorium.

Born and educated in New York City, America can justly be proud of Miss Braslau. Despite the popular credo that a European reputation is essential to success in this country, Sophie Braslau was first established here long before she duplicated her American triumphs on the other side.

Philharmonic Miss Braslau will sing two numbers of Mussorgsky "The Classical" and "On the Dnieper" and Tchaikoff "The Swan" (based on Theme of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony). Conductor, Schneevolt, will open the program with the Schubert, Symphony No. 8 in E minor (unfinished), and close with Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39 by Sibelius.

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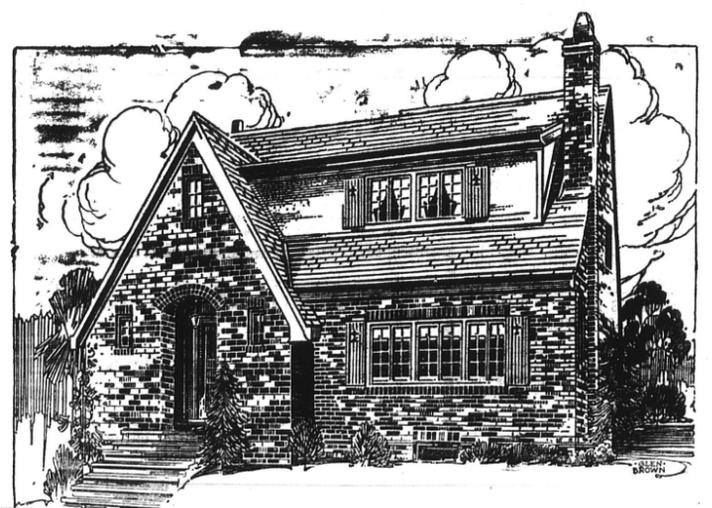
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Home Emphasizes the Economy of Brick



Cost figures are always of equal interest with the design when one is considering final choice of the house he expects to build. In this instance it is possible to supply these, for this exceptional little home, of English influence though perhaps not strictly an English type, was built but recently in the outskirts of Boston at the astonishingly low cost of \$10,323. The exterior walls are of common brick, skintiled, with the second story in stucco treatment by way of variety.

Henry I. Fitzgerald, a building contractor of long experience and marked success, built this little home for himself. He built it partly as an experiment, desiring to satisfy himself regarding the comparative costs of brick and frame construction. And when it was finished his verdict was that it could not have been built cheaper of wood. The figure quoted above does not include either the cost of the lot or of the excavation but covers everything else.

Itemized, the items of cost were as follows: 15,000 antique brick (clinkers) at \$30 per 1,000, \$450; 12,000 hard common brick, \$228; masonry work, foundation, etc., \$350; laying 27,000 brick, \$675; plastering, \$750; tile, two baths, 1 toilet, \$1,000; inside finish, \$650; doors and windows, \$595; plumbing and heating, \$1,700; wiring and fixtures, \$350; painting, \$350; lumber, including floors, \$1,000; carpenter labor, \$950; copper screen, \$190; shades, \$85.

It will be noted that although this is a brick home there is a greater lumber cost than brick, and carpentry labor exceeds the cost of laying the brick. These facts will surprise some folk.

A study of the plan discloses its excellence almost at a glance. Every room is large; all are well lighted with far more than the usual number of windows. And it has good appearance from every point of view.

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