

Historic Context for The Dorr B. Lee Citrus Ranch Farmhouse



(Photo courtesy of the City of Ontario)

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INTRODUCTION

Dorr B. Lee is considered one of the early pioneers of the citrus industry in Ontario, California. After settling in Ontario in 1893, he began working in the citrus industry by setting out citrus groves for local growers. By 1902, he had established his own groves around his newly constructed home located at 607 West D Street in Ontario and had also purchased additional properties for groves. He became involved in local citrus associations and served on the board of the West Ontario Citrus Association in the 1920s. After his retirement from citrus ranching in 1928, his son Ernest took over the grove at 607 West D Street. Both of his sons, Ernest and Verne, followed their father's footsteps and became local growers in the Ontario citrus industry by taking over their father's groves, as well as establishing their own groves.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Dorr B. Lee was born to John S. Lee and Louise Lafaver Lee in Ohio on August 26, 1856. The Lee family moved to Lawler, Iowa where Dorr grew-up and pursued a career as a school teacher. During this time, he married his first wife, Florence Ward, who in 1889 gave birth to their first son, Verne W. Lee. For a short time they lived in Salt Lake City, Utah, where he operated a pawnbroker's business. There they had their second son, Ernest O. Lee, on September 20, 1892. Then in 1893, Lee moved his family to California by boxcar and quickly settled in Ontario. Lee's father, mother, brother and sister joined Lee in Ontario from Iowa. It is uncertain why the Lee family chose Ontario, perhaps they had heard of its innovative irrigation system and promising development as an agricultural community.

The first record of Dorr B. Lee's settlement in Ontario comes in the *Ontario Daily Report* on September 13, 1893 when it reports that "D. B. Lee is building on his ten acres on A Street, recently bought of A.C. Moorhead."¹ Dorr B. Lee's grandson, Philip Lee, son of Ernest O. Lee, believes that his grandfather first settled in a home on A Street near the railroad tracks.² It is believed that the residence mentioned in the newspaper could be Dorr's first home.

Lee began seeking work in Ontario and his family believes that he was possibly setting out citrus groves on a contract basis for local Ontario growers for the first couple of years he was in the city. By 1895, he was purchasing additional property and most probably setting out his own groves. According to deed records; on June 14, 1895, D. B. Lee purchased a property from C. E., and K. L. Harwood, and on March 13, 1895, D. B. Lee purchased a property from D. A. and B. M. MacNeil. Unfortunately, due to the limitations of Sanborn Fire

¹ *Ontario Daily Report*. No title. September 13, 1893. pg. 5, column 1.

² Smith, Rebecca. *Philip Lee Oral History*. October 18, 2006. pg. 2-3.

Insurance maps during this time and very little family knowledge of Dorr Lee's holdings, the exact addresses, sizes and uses of these two land holdings by Lee could not be found.

In 1901, Lee purchased a property located at 607 West D Street. According to County Assessor records, this property (Lot 1, Block 990) was listed in 1895 as belonging to the estate of Mary E. Morgan. From 1895-96, a \$70 building improvement was recorded on the property, indicating a small building (possibly a shed or barn) was constructed. Then in 1897, the property was sold to the Deering Brothers and Gronow. At this time, it was assessed at the value of \$400. Then in 1899, the County Assessor jointly assess Lot 1 and Lot 4 of Block 990 at a joint land value of \$720.00, with \$90 in building improvements and \$25 in "vines" (these were most likely the first groves on the property.)

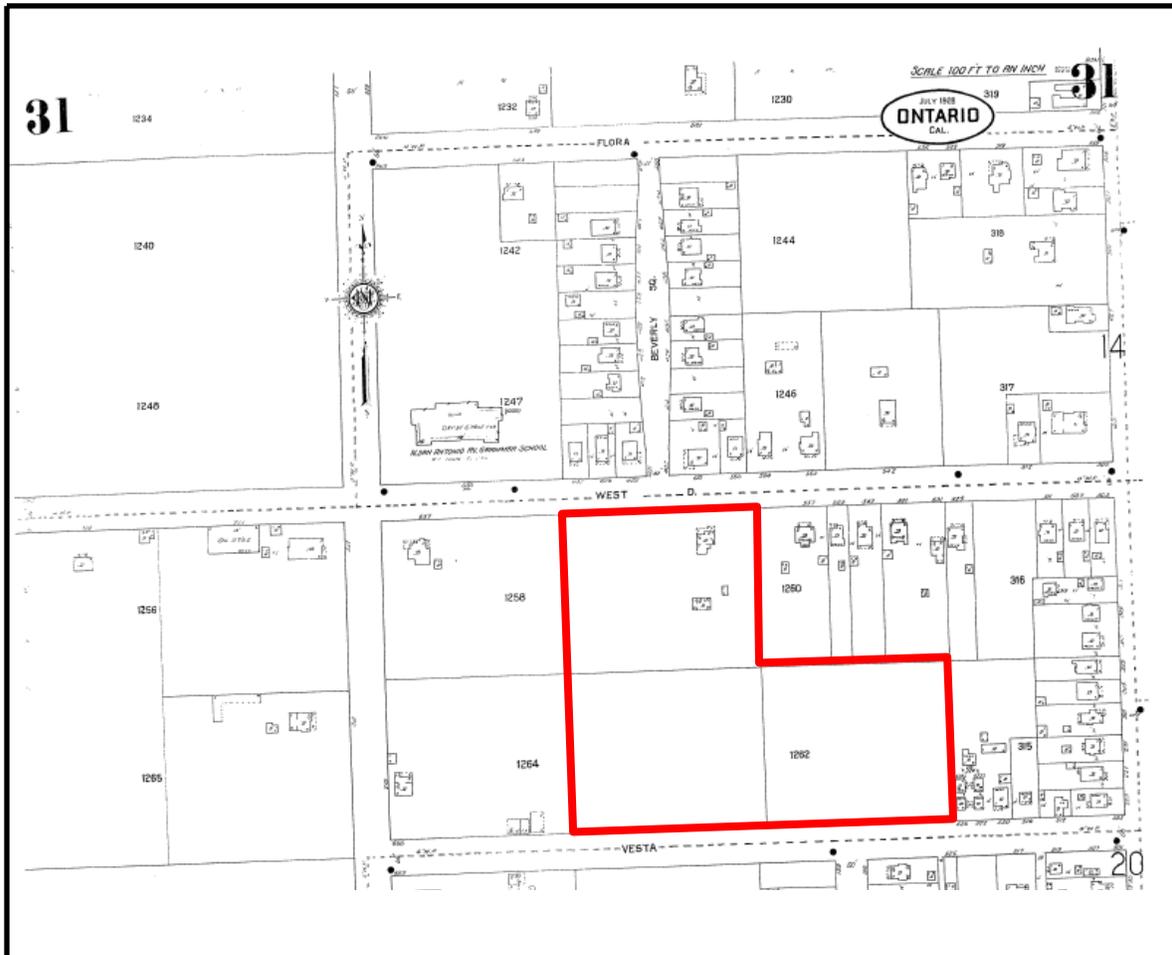
Lee purchased this property from various Deering family members and Tracy Gronow in two stages. On March 1, 1901, D. B. Lee purchased Lot 1 and Lot 4 Block 990, City of Ontario, from A. A. and Martha Deering, and Rufus A. and Anna Deering, and Tracy Gronow. Then on May 10, 1901, D. B. Lee received a Quitclaim Deed for the east half of Block 990 from Nathaniel W. and Harriet Deering, and Sylvester and Millie Deering. At some point, Lee expanded his property to include Lot 3 of Block 990, which according to Lee's grandson, made the original Lee property total some seven and a half acres (each lot equaling two and a half acres each).³

It appears that Lee immediately began construction of his family's new residence, which was completed in 1902. According to the July 11, 1902 edition of the *Ontario Record Observer*, a new building was constructed by Dorr B. Lee at 607 West D Street at a cost of \$1,400.00. This was most probably the announcement of the completion of the Dorr B. Lee Citrus Ranch Farmhouse. Lee arranged the property so Lot 1 (2.5 acres) contained the house and two ancillary buildings, and Lots 3 and 4 (5 acres total) contained the groves.

Lee constructed a two-story single-family farmhouse in the vernacular Queen Anne style. This was a popular style at the time for citrus ranchers who, depending on their wealth, built small to grand examples throughout the Ontario area. The house was situated on a raised River-rock foundation and was constructed with a timber-framed structural system. The building was covered by a cross-axial gabled roof. It was designed with an asymmetrical façade where the main entrance was raised and offset. Various wooden gingerbread details were attached to the roofline and around a few facade windows. Lead multi-diamond paned windows were located on the first floor of the façade and fish scale shingles were located on the top half of the north, west and east facing gables. The square footage of the house was 1,783, with the first floor equaling 1,098 square feet with four rooms (a living room, dining room, kitchen and back

³ Philip Lee Oral History. pg. 6.

bedroom) and the second floor equaling 528 square feet also with four rooms (three bedrooms and a small bath).



1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing the Dorr B. Lee property located at 607 West D Street in Ontario, California as it looked right before Lee retired and deeded the property to his son, Ernest O. Lee.

According to County Assessor records, a \$500 improvement was made to this property in 1914. This was most likely when a detached garage was added. And in 1922, the *Ontario Daily Report* announces that a permit was issued for a \$500 alteration to the home located at 607 West D Street. This was most likely when a rear addition and porch enclosure were added.

Due to the agricultural nature of the surrounding area, 607 West D Street does not appear in the Ontario Sanborn Fire Insurance map until 1928. There are two ancillary buildings directly south and southeast of the residence. Lee's grandson remembers a barn that was once a residence on Vesta Street which was moved and placed just south of the residence. It was remodeled to serve as a barn which housed the horses. It had a shed attached to it on either side. The 1950

Sanborn map does show a structure on the far southwest corner of the parcel and it is labeled as a “dwelling” that was not present in the 1928 map.

By the time Lee had constructed his new home, his parents had also established their home on West D Street at Fern Avenue, according to the 1900/1901 *Ontario Colony Directory*. By 1907, the Directory of Pomona (Ontario Section) lists his father, John S. Lee, as “retired” and he and his wife as living at 204 West D Street. This would indicate that Lee’s parents purchased property on D Street prior to their son.

Lee’s brother and sister were also establishing themselves within the Ontario community. His brother, Lane Roy Lee, had opened a feed store almost immediately after settling in Ontario. The store was located within a large brick building on A Street between Laurel Street and Euclid Avenue, and was eventually known as the Lee & McCarthy Feed Store. The following excerpt was taken from the August 5, 1905, “Industrial Souvenir Edition” of the *Ontario Record*:

Among the business houses having to do with the distribution of feed and fuel supplies, a prominent position must be accorded to the firm of Lee & McCarthy. This business was established about twelve years ago. Up to recently it has been known as Lee & Talbert, Mr. McCarthy purchasing the interest of C. P. Talbert the first of May. Mr. McCarthy is no stranger in this city, having formerly been a partner of Mr. Lee in the same business, and after remaining for three years went East, returning last summer. They handle a full line of hay, grain, feed and fuel, and in addition to their storeroom they have a large warehouse and a storage house, with a capacity of 300 tons of hay. They are the agents for the International Stock Food Company, and the Security Stock Food Company’s products and also deal extensively in chicken feed, egg food and poultry supplies of all kinds. Field, garden and flower seeds are handled, both in package and bulk and choice family flour from the leading mills. Owing to the large demand they have ordered a carload of field peas for early delivery and will be in a position to supply all orders. The car is expected to arrive in August. L. R. Lee, the senior member of the firm, has been connected with this business continuously since it was first established and his long experience in catering to the wants and needs of the people in this section enables him to meet every demand. This firm is one of our most prominent business concerns in Ontario and enjoys a good reputation throughout the colony.

Lane Roy Lee was the first prominent Ontario feed dealer. Precisely how closely linked Dorr B. Lee is to the feed store is somewhat in question. An 1898 *San Bernardino County Directory* (Ontario section) contains no listing for Dorr B. Lee, but does list Lane Roy Lee as a feed dealer and reference is also made to the Lee Bros. L. R. Lee and wife are also listed as operating a feed store on West D Street in the 1900/1901 edition of the *Ontario City Directory*. By 1907, L. R. Lee is listed as an orange grower, and as residing on the south side of A Street west of San Antonio, and in the 1911 edition of the City Directory of Ontario, L. R. Lee

is listed as an orange grower, and as residing on West A Street between Mountain Avenue and Benson.⁴

Dorr and Lane's sister, Eva E. Lee, married Lane's business partner, Grant E. McCarthy. The couple is listed in a January 19, 1944, *Ontario Daily Report* article as residing at 226 West F Street. Lee and McCarthy's partnership appears to have disintegrated after only four years, and according to Dorr's grandson, McCarthy began working for the San Bernardino Fire Insurance Company. After 1909, Lane is listed in the *Ontario City Directory* as an "orange grower" and by 1928 he is no longer listed as a resident of Ontario.

In the 1907 to 1908 Ontario City Directory, Dorr B. Lee is recognized as a resident and his occupation is listed as an "orange grower" or "rancher." By this time, he owned at least three citrus properties, and was becoming well-known within the community and on his way to becoming a civic leader. He helped to found the Ontario YMCA, took an active part in the organization of the Ontario Young Men's Christian association and was a member of the building committee of the First Methodist Church in Ontario. He also was an active member of the Ontario Masonic Lodge.⁵

It is unknown when Lee's first wife, Florence Ward, passed away, but *The Ontario Daily Report* announced Lee's second marriage to Lizzie Lauraine Lundy of New York in its February 19, 1916 edition titled, "Prominent Ontario Grower Weds in L.A." The following excerpt was taken from the article:

Coming at a great surprise today to his many friends here was the news of the marriage on Thursday afternoon of Dorr B. Lee, wealthy and prominent orange grower of No. 607 West D Street and Mrs. L. Louraine Lundy of New York and Pomona. The ceremony was performed in Los Angeles, the Reverend Charles Edward Locke officiating at the parsonage of the First Methodist Episcopal church. Mr. Lee slipped quietly away from Ontario presumably for a short visit in Los Angeles and at the coast and it was not until later that the real purpose of his trip was learned. The bride formerly resided in New York, but for the past several years has made her home near Pomona. She is well and favorably known in this section. Mr. and Mrs. Lee will be at home after March first at the D street residence of the bride-groom.⁶

The above article described Lee as a "wealthy and prominent orange grower." Although it is unknown the exact amount of citrus acreage that he owned and operated, it is obvious from this newspaper clipping that Lee was well known and regarded within the Ontario citrus community.

⁴ City of Ontario. "Diamante Terrace Condominium Project FEIR." 3.1 Cultural Resources. pg. 16.

⁵ Beatrice P. Lee, *The History and Development of the Ontario Colony*, Master's Thesis for University of Southern California, pg. 40; Smith, Rebecca. "Oral History interview with Phil Lee." October 18, 2006.

⁶ Ontario Daily Report. "Prominent Ontario Grower Weds in L.A." February 19, 1916. pg.1.

By the 1920s, Lee was taking an active role in local packing house associations in Ontario. He was on the board of directors for the West Ontario Association from circa 1924-1927. This association was founded in 1893 and was originally named the Ontario Fruit Exchange. It is the oldest and the second largest association in Ontario. His name was mentioned in both a 1925 and 1928 *Los Angeles Times* article as serving on the board.⁷

Lee retired from the citrus industry in 1928 when he deeded his home at 607 West D Street to his son Ernest. Lee and his wife, Loraine, purchased a home at 1325 East Third Street in Long Beach, where they resided for the next four years until Lauraine's death in 1932. The following excerpt was taken from her obituary in the *Ontario Daily Report*:

FORMER ONTARIAN, MRS. D. B. LEE IS CALLED BY DEATH

Mrs. Lizzie Lauraine Lee, wife of Dorr B. Lee, former well-known and long-time resident of Ontario, died yesterday at the Seaside Hospital in Long Beach, in which city the couple had made their home for the last four years, having resided at 1325 East Third Street.

Mrs. Lee was the mother of Verne W. Lee and Ernest O. Lee of this city. She was a native of Cornwall, N. Y. and was 63 years of age at the time of her death. She came to California 30 years ago and for 17 years was a resident of Ontario, making her home at 607 West D Street, until her removal to the coast city.

During her residence here, Mrs. Lee was an active member of Euclid chapter, Order of Eastern Star, and of the First Methodist church here...At the coast city, she became a member of the First Methodist church of Long Beach.

Besides the widower and the sons and their families, Mrs. Lee is survived by two sisters, residing in Cornwall, N. Y.⁸

The obituary incorrectly names Loraine Lundy Lee as the mother of Verne and Ernest. Their mother was Dorr's first wife, Florence Ward Lee.

Dorr B. Lee spent the last few years of his life alternating between living with his two sons, Verne and Ernest. Dorr B. Lee died on January 18, 1944 at the age of 87. Lee's obituary in the *Ontario Daily Report* calls him a "pioneer citrus grower and civic leader." The following excerpt was taken from that article:

WIDELY KNOWN ONTARIAN DIES

Dorr B. Lee, Here 50 Years Succumbs

⁷ *Los Angeles Times*. "Orange Receipts Mount." September 19, 1925. pg.9; *Los Angeles Times*. "Citrus Growers Happy." September 21, 1928. pg.13.

⁸ *Ontario Daily Report*. "Former Ontarian, Mrs. D. B. Lee is Called to Death." September 19, 1932. pg.6.

Dorr B. Lee, pioneer Ontario citrus grower and civic leader, died last night at San Antonio hospital following an illness of several weeks, at the age of 87 years.

Mr. Lee came to Ontario from Iowa in 1893 and during the more than 50 years had made his home here with the exception of a few years spent in Long Beach. During the last 10 years, he had divided his times between the homes of his sons, Verne W. Lee, 869 Mountain Avenue, and Ernest O. Lee, 607 West D Street.

Many of Ontario's present-day orange groves were set out by Mr. Lee. He was a former director of the San Antonio Water Company, took an active part in organization of the Ontario Young Men's Christian Association and was a member of the building committee for the new structure of the first Methodist Church. He was a member of the Ontario Masonic Lodge.

Surviving the pioneer besides the two sons is a sister, Mrs. Grant E. McCarthy, 226 West F street.

Funeral arrangements, in charge of the J. B. Draper Company are, incomplete.⁹

The obituary states that many of the present day orange groves had been set out by Lee. It also claims that he was once a director of the San Antonio Water Company. No conclusive evidence was found in the history of the Water Company or City of Ontario to prove that Dorr B. Lee was on the board or the Director of the San Antonio Water Company. He is not listed in any of their board rosters or in newspaper clippings of the time announcing elections of board members. Lee's grandson, Philip Lee, feels that this could have been a miscommunication since the "irrigation water there at the home place of 607 West D Street did come from the San Antonio Water Company."¹⁰

A second announcement of Lee's death appeared in the Ontario Daily Report the following day:

DORR B. LEE

Funeral services for Dorr B. Lee, 607 West D street, pioneer citrus grower and civic leader, who died Tuesday night, will be conducted Saturday, 10 a.m. at the J. B. Draper company chapel, 127 West C street.

The Reverend Roy L. Ruth of the First Methodist church of which Mr. Lee was long a member, will officiate. Interment will be in Bellevue cemetery.¹¹

Lee had filed his last will and testament on January 31, 1944. In his will, he stated the following, "I hereby give and bequeath unto my two sons, Verne W.

⁹ *Ontario Daily Report*. "Widely-Known Ontarian Dies." January 19, 1944. pg.2, column 1.

¹⁰ Philip Lee Oral History. pg.7.

¹¹ *Ontario Daily Report*. "Obituary." January 20, 1944. pg.2, column 3.

Lee and Ernest O. Lee, to be divided equally between them, all of my property of whatever nature or wherever found.”¹² It is apparent that Lee left any citrus property he still owned to his two sons.

In 1928, several years prior to Lee’s death, the Dorr B. Lee Citrus Ranch Farmhouse located at 607 West D Street became the property Ernest O. Lee and his wife, Beatrice Paxson Lee. Ernest was the younger of Lee’s two sons. Prior to taking permanent residence at this location, they were listed in the Pomona City Directory (Ontario section) as residing at 880 North San Antonio Avenue. The property reverted back to D. B. Lee in 1930-31, but appears to have been deeded back to Ernest and Beatrice by 1934. It is unclear why this reversal in ownership took place. Perhaps economic hard times during the Depression played a hand.

Ernest and Beatrice are listed as the primary residents from 1934 through 1964. He was listed as a “fruit grower” then simply as “owner” until 1959; by 1964 he was listed as “retired.” His wife, Beatrice Paxson Lee, passed away in 1963. A brief history of the Ernest O. Lee family is mentioned in the Biography Index at the Ontario Model Colony Room (Bio Book III/15):

MRS. ERNEST O. LEE

President, County Federation of Women’s Clubs

Born in San Luis Valley, Colorado, Miss Beatrice Paxson...Came to California about 1911...is a graduate of Chaffey High School and the University of Southern California...Taught in Bloomington before marriage to Ernest O. Lee here in 1917...They have one son, Philip, 8 years of age...A member of the First Methodist church, she is active in children’s work in the church...Hobby is working with children and writing on the subject... Resides at 607 West D Street.

As the above biography mentions, Beatrice was extremely involved with the County Federation of Women’s Clubs in Ontario and eventually became, district president. She also became the state parliamentarian in the California Federation of Women’s Clubs. Her name has since become well known among academics and researchers for her 1929 University of Southern California master’s thesis, “The History and Development of the Ontario Colony.”

After Beatrice’s death in 1963, she and Ernest’s son, Philip, inherited the house, even though his father did not pass away until 1988. Philip recalls some alterations to the residence in the 1940s including the removal of two chimneys that came into the living room and the kitchen, the removal of the original gingerbread detail on the residence and the removal of a faux balcony that lead into the master bedroom on the north elevation.¹³

¹² Dorr B. Lee Last Will and Testament. January 31, 1944. pg.1.

¹³ Lee Oral History.

Sanborn Maps show that 607 West D Street, which sat on Lot 1 and 4 of Block 990, and Lot 3, Block 989, remained unchanged until 1950 when a cul-de-sac was inserted. This cul-de-sac bisected Lot 4 vertically and cut into Lot 1 about one third of the way through. Since then Lot 1, which was the 2.5 acre lot the residence sat on, was subdivided and by the late twentieth-century the residence eventually sat on a 0.545 acre parcel. Philip recalls this change in his oral history:

Well somewhere in the '50s. It started, I believe in 1950 or 1951. Dad started subdividing the home place, and he put in the street there that is the little substreet that runs north into the property from (Vesta) Street.

Yes, the cul-de-sac runs north out of Vesta Street. It might be called Beverly Court. I'm not sure of that. Anyway, Dad put that in when he subdivided the property there at the home place. And that was in 1950 or '51. And then subsequently he subdivided the other properties, kind of over a period of time. I remember he subdivided by leaps and bounds the first ten acres on I Street. And that was, again, probably in the '50s. The last property which he owned was the property on G Street and Mountain Avenue. And in that time period, he actually, I guess, to use a Southern Term, sharecropped it with Silas Winger, the man who had done his truck and tractor work, etcetera. And that was the last property that he owned. I believe that was sold en masse to a developer, except for the lots along Mountain Avenue, which Dad subsequently sold off as business properties.¹⁴

Philip recalls his father owning a total of 37.5 acres of orange groves in Ontario which was principally navel oranges; 7.5 acres on West D Street (5 of which were navel oranges, 2.5 acres of Valencias on the southeast corner), 10 acres on the northeast corner of G Street and Mountain Avenue (all navels), and 20 acres on the southwest corner of I Street and San Antonio (a narrow row of grapefruit and the rest navels). It is not known whether Ernest inherited this land or if he purchased it. Some of the land mentioned by Philip is consistent with the deeds found at the San Bernardino's Recorder's Office, but the acreage numbers are not. For example, Philip remembers his father owning 20 acres on the southwest corner of I Street and San Antonio Avenue. The deeds found can only account for 10 acres of land at this intersection. It is very possible that there may be some missing deeds.

Also according to Phillip, early on Ernest did a lot of his own work with his truck and tractor. Eventually, he contracted out this work to a provider by the name of Gingrich and his partner Silas Winger. The citrus pickers, who were usually Mexican workers, were provided by the local packing house. He also remembers Mexican workers who were a part of the Bracero Program working the Lee groves. Ernest contracted labor with the West Ontario Citrus Association's

¹⁴ Lee Oral History. pg.8.

Narod packing house. The workers would bring their own ladders, bags and clippers and pick the groves.¹⁵

One of the strongest memories of growing-up at 607 West D Street for Philip was of the smudging pots. The following excerpt was taken from his oral history:

I usually worked in the groves after school. The exception to that, of course, is when I was a teenager. I helped with the smudging, and of course, that was night work. Depending on when it got cold and how cold, anytime from probably eight or nine o'clock in the evening, more likely about two o'clock in the morning, we would call out the crew to go light the heaters. And Dad liked to hire high school [students], and there was the local junior college. And he used to hire junior college boys most of the time. Although when I became a little older, he hired me and my friends. But that was night work. And of course, that was always very exciting to me. The idea of getting up in the middle of the night, and going out and lighting the heaters, I think Dad hated it because it was always expensive and dirty work.

I was involved in the track team. And I was the number one sprinter on the track team. And one of my good friends was the number one quarter-miler. Well anyway, when Dad was hiring a crew for that time, he hired me and some of my track team friends. And one morning out in the grove, it was a very unusual situation, but at about six o'clock in the morning, just as the sun was coming up, the temperature dropped precipitously. And Dad came around. See, Dad never got involved directly with the work. He always went around, watched the temperatures, and supervised the work. And he came around me and my track team friends and said, "Guys, the temperature has just fallen out the bottom." It was about 21 degrees outside the grove. And at that time, we were using a variety of heater known as a Huey tall stack. It was a nine gallon fuel bowl filled with oil. And then about a four-foot stack on the top. And on the side of the bowl was a draft which controlled the height of the flame. Well, when the heater burned, the stack tended to soot up a little bit and kind of suppressed the flame, and it didn't burn too hot. When this drop of temperature came in the morning, Dad came around and said, "Go through, open wide open." And that makes a tremendous flame, about a four-foot flame out the top of the stack. We really needed heat. So anyway, myself and my track team friends literally ran up and down the rows of heaters. We'd stop at a heater, we wore leather gloves, we'd take our leather gloves and we'd slap the stacks and knock the soot out of it, open a draft, and then run the next heater. And we did this over twenty-acres of oranges. It was really quite a track experience.¹⁶

Phillip stated that at the time he was growing-up in Ontario in the 1930s and '40s, the Lee citrus groves located at 607 West D Street were probably the closest to Euclid Avenue and the central core of town. By the late 1920s many groves on the eastern side of the city were being subdivided for residences to meet the growing demand for housing in Ontario.

¹⁵ Ibid. pg.8-9.

¹⁶ Lee Oral History. pg.21-22.

Ernest's older brother, Verne W. Lee, was also listed as a "rancher," and according to Phillip he had substantial holdings in the northwest section of Ontario (or west of Euclid Avenue, along D Street), although the exact amount could not be determined. Verne grew-up at the Dorr B. Lee Citrus Ranch Farmhouse and was listed in the 1907 edition of the *Directory of Pomona* (Ontario Section) as a "student" living at 607 West D Street. In the 1909-10 edition of the *City Directory of Ontario*, he is listed as working for the Ontario Power Company, and as residing at 607 West D Street. In the 1928 edition of the *Pomona City Directory* (Ontario Section), he is listed as living at 905 West I Street, and his occupation is listed as "rancher." Verne married Tilla E. Lee and they had five children.

Following Dorr B. Lee's exodus to Long Beach, Verne and his wife lived briefly at the 607 West D Street home before moving to 869 Mountain Avenue. Two articles listed in the *Ontario Daily Report* dated 1928 and 1936 reveal that Verne W. Lee requested two building permits from the city to make alterations to a property on Mountain Avenue, the latter reporting to add a sleeping room to his dwelling.

Besides his Uncle Verne, Philip could only remember his maternal grandmother, Hattie Paxson, living with them at 607 West D Street, and for a short time, his mother's sister, Aunt Nelly Paxson Schultz, before she was married to Arthur Schultz, the son of a local minister at the Ontario Methodist Church.

Closely following the death of his mother in 1963, Philip decided to sell his childhood home in 1965 after serving in the Air Force and deciding not to return to Ontario to put down his adult roots.¹⁷ The house and remaining acres were eventually sold to developers in 2004, and was demolished for a multi-housing project in 2006.

When comparing the Lee family citrus holdings to other citrus grower holdings in Ontario, Philip felt that the Lee family was probably considered moderate citrus growers. This was especially true if comparing the family's citrus holdings to large well-know growers such as the Stewart brothers, who owned several hundred acres of citrus groves and operated their own packing house. But overall, the Dorr B. Lee family is well documented as being a substantial contributor to the Ontario citrus industry, and Dorr B. Lee as one of the early pioneers of the Ontario citrus industry.

¹⁷ Ibid. pg.26-27.

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March 10, 1901: D.B. Lee buys from N.W. Deering et al.

June 13, 1916: Ernest and Beatrice buys from Charles and Kate Barr.

September 30, 1916: Ernest Lee buys from Dorr B. Lee.

September 30, 1916: Verne and Tilla Lee buys from Dorr B. Lee.

February 19, 1920: Verne and Tilla Lee buys from W.C. and E. Kelly.

February 12, 1921: Ernest and Beatrice P. Lee buys from Kate and Ellen Cooney.

February 6, 1922: Verne and Tilla Lee buys from Richard and Elsie Barr.

April 10, 1922: Ernest and Beatrice Lee buys from Verne and Tilla Lee.

June 1, 1928: Ernest and Beatrice Lee buys from Dorr B. Lee.

June 1, 1928: Ernest and Beatrice Lee buys from Kate and Ell Cooney.

June 1, 1928: Verne and Tilla Lee buys from Ernest and Beatrice Lee.

January 18, 1930: Verne and Tilla Lee buys from Mary Schisler.

May 25, 1930: Ernest and Beatrice Lee buys from Mary E. Graettinger.

July 1, 1932: Verne and Tilla Lee buys from J.B. Curtis.

January 19, 1934: Dorr B. Lee buys from Ernest and Beatrice Lee.

February 6, 1934: Beatrice P. Lee buys from Dorr B. Lee.

August 10 1934: Dorr B. Lee buys from Beatrice P. Lee.

October 31, 1934: Ernest and Beatrice buys from Dorr B. Lee.

March 8, 1935: Ernest and Beatrice Lee buys from Hattie L. Paxson.

September 4, 1935: Ernest and Beatrice Lee buys from Hattie L. Paxson.

December 12, 1937: Ernest and Beatrice Lee buys from Hilding and Betty Haggland.

October 17, 1939: Tilla Lee buys from Paul and James Curty.

August 16, 1948: Ernest and Beatrice Lee buys from Hilding and Betty Haggland.

October 2, 1953: Ernest O. and Beatrice P. Lee buys from Charles H. Hicks and Ruby J. Hicks.

OTHER DOCUMENTS

July 1, 1936: Release of Mortgage, Dorr B. Lee

March 22, 1937: Last Will and Testament, Lane R. Lee.

December 6, 1937: Final Distribution of Last Will and Testament, Lena E. Lee.

January 22, 1944: Death Certificate, Dorr B. Lee.

January 31, 1944: Last Will and Testament, Dorr B. Lee.

January 2, 1946: Deed of Reconveyance, Dorr B. Lee.

August 22, 1947: Deed of Partial Reconveyance, Dorr B. Lee.

February 5, 1948: Deed of Partial Reconveyance, Dorr. B. Lee.