

'Father Of Hollywood' Dies



One of Hollywood's pioneer families was broken today by the death of H. J. WHITLEY, prominent resident. Mr. Whitley is shown above as he looked when he first came to Los Angeles, nearly 40 years ago. A recent picture of his widow, MRS. MARGARET WHITLEY, is at the left.

Hobart J. Whitley, Leading Developer, Succumbs To Failing Health

Hollywood today regretted the loss of one of its most notable and valued citizens, Hobart J. Whitley, the man who by 38 years of almost inspired activities has built and solidified the foundation for Hollywood of the present and future. Mr. Whitley, at 83, after a year of gradually failing health, died peacefully in his sleep last night at 9:30 o'clock at the Whitley Park Country Club, where he was staying with his son, Ross E. Whitley.

He is remembered by the affectionate title which his community long ago bestowed upon him, the "Father of Hollywood."

When Mr. Whitley came here in 1893, he envisioned Hollywood, then a rural settlement of 18 families, as a thriving suburb of Los Angeles. People laughed at him. He subdivided 400 acres of open fields and gardens into a residential section, and more families came here to live. In 1905, with a group of far-seeing Los Angeles business men, he undertook to develop 47,000 acres of land in the San Joaquin Valley and 50,000 acres in the now prosper-

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Whitley, Dev Hollywood,

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ous neighboring San Fernando Valley. Today Los Angeles is turning its eyes toward that valley for accommodation of its "second million" population.

Project Ridiculed

Ridicule met Mr. Whitley's project to subdivide the portion of Hollywood Hills now known as Whitley Heights. It was his last project and into it he poured his highest dream for his city-in-the-hills. The terraced roofs and gardens he had seen in Egypt, on a world tour, lingered in his mind as an ideal.

Today, in the handsome family residence at 6643 Whitley Terrace, on the hill which bears his name, with its world-famous view out over the film capital, his widow, Mrs. Margaret Whitley, sits alone.

Mr. Whitley was born in Toronto, Canada, and grew up in Flint, Mich. Real estate and its significance in human life and development always held a glamor and romance for him. He became land agent for the Rock Island Railroad and plotted and established towns in the Cherokee strip. Upon the admission of Oklahoma Territory to the Union, he declined the first governorship, for the spirit of the land developer was strong in his blood. He continued his work as land agent, this time with the Northern Pacific Railway. When he suffered a breakdown in 1893 he came to California.

Although a private fortune running into the millions was amassed here, it was understood that most of this wealth dwindled in one unfortunate investment at Paso Robles, ten years ago.

Couple Active Here

Mr. and Mrs. Whitley together took an active part in the cultural development of their community, and were identified prominently with every step in its growth from orchard land to city. Mrs. Whitley sent the first message over the Home Telephone wires here, and their daughter, Grace Virginia, a little girl at the time, pushed the button that turned on the first electric street lights here.

In addition to his real estate operations, the pioneer was identified with the founding of the Home Savings Bank, the First National Bank of Hollywood, the First National Bank of Van Nuys and the State Banks of Owensmouth (now Canoga Park), Reseda and Corcoran.

Beside his widow, son and daughter, he is survived by three grandchildren.

After funeral services conducted tomorrow at 2 p. m. in the St. Funeral Chapel, 6240 Hollywood Boulevard, the "Father of Hollywood" will be reverently laid to rest in Hollywood Cemetery. His will temporarily close the high on the hill and spend the mer quietly with an intimate