

## ONCE UPON A TIME IN NORTH PARK

### When Homes Were a Bargain

By Katherine Hon

Joe E. McFadden (“Positively No Inflated Values Listed”) claimed in a December 1910 Sunday morning classifieds section of the San Diego Union that “Fortunes are being made by many foresighted people in San Diego realty. This city is forging to the destined position among cities of the United States. The progress for the next two or three years will be marvelous in our eyes. How easy to look in retrospective, yet how few dare prospect. We claim title to being an expert in our chosen business, and venture to place within your safe possession the finest bargains. WEST END ADDITION is the choice location- where the cream is fast rising and waiting to be skimmed. Choice lots now offered at \$500 and up. All lots 50x100 . . . I have whole blocks available for the construction of residences at from \$5000 and up. These will show a handsome profit with homes worth from \$1500 to \$2000.”

Consistent with Joe’s claims, in January 1911, a ready built house and 50 ft. lot was advertised for \$1690, and described as follows: “This cosy [sic] bungalow has five rooms and bath, front porch, rear screen porch; street is graded to official grade and cement sidewalk is installed. It is connected with sewer and city water. Sidewalk has black acacia trees set every 50 feet.”

A few years later, the Park Villas Blocks were advertised by “Barnson for Bargains” as having “Panoramic view of all creation to the horizon at every point of the compass. Unobstructable view of the mountains to Mexico, Point Loma, Coronado Islands and down over the big park to the EXPOSITION grounds. Lots are 50 x 125 to alley. Deep, dark, loamy soil. Prices range from \$550 to \$750. Considering the magnificent view, unequalled car facilities, proximity to what is very soon to be most unique play grounds and wonderful International Botanical Gardens in the world, and its nearness – 20 minutes by car, or 10 minutes through park to the business district. This section is sure to become the favorite residence district of the city and will undergo a most wonderful change in the next twelve months. We offer here the nearest absolute guarantee possible to double your money invested during the coming few months. Now, there won’t be much left to crow about after Saturday of this week.”

But wait! Maybe there still could be some crowing, or at least cackling. Around the same time, a furnished bungalow was advertised for \$1200 and described as follows: “Three-room bungalow, furnished. Lot 50x140. On University Heights west of Texas street and south of El Cajon. Price includes furniture and a nice lot of chickens.”

Try getting that kind of bargain today!