

Memoirs of a Neighborhood

349 East 100 South

by Clark N. Nelson, Sr.



1944 Front yard at 349 East 100 South

Camera angle toward the northeast Home and property at 359 East 100 South in the background

Pictured standing, left to right: Larry Nelson - Dick Bracken

standing in front: Clark Nelson

I have no idea who had this home built or who the first occupants might've been, but our family moved into this home following a Conger rental home on Diagonal St.

My dad owned a 2-door Model A Ford coupe with a rumble seat and I was five years of age when we moved in. There was a light-weight fence at the front, similar to lattice-work, running the full width of the property, something like two, or maybe three feet in height.



I still remember riding in the Model A Ford coupe to Oak Grove Sunday April 5, 1942 for a large Easter Sunday picnic. I rode in the front passenger seat with my mom; my cousins Donald Milne and Mona Rae Milne were in the rumble seat.

That house at 349 East could feel like an oven during the summer months, especially overnight while trying to sleep; there were no cooling units of any type, make, or design. Then sometime around 1943 we moved into my grandmother's duplex, the duplex on the west side.

The Bracken family moved into that home at 349 East following our moving next door. Their son Dick Bracken was around the same age as my brother Larry. Summer nights could at times, be hot and uncomfortable, so Dick, Larry, and I would spread a blanket on Bracken's front lawn and sleep there under the stars. Then a Blake family with son Karl moved in following the Bracken's departure.

George Whipple and his wife moved in next. George Whipple was an accomplished pitcher for the local baseball team, sponsored by the St. George Elks Club, as I recall. Dean Fullerton and a few others, over time, drove every street in town with two huge speakers atop their car(s) announcing the identical message: "A big game tonight between St. George and i. e. Enterprise! Don't miss tonight's big game at the city ballpark!"

The city ballpark in those days was always the same, near the point where 300 East meets 100 South, with the ballpark to the west of the old grandstand and former rodeo grounds. The seating area behind the backstop was a section of wood bleachers, with five rows of seats; the 5th row being the top row, something like seven feet in height.

One evening my mother and I were seated on the 3rd row enjoying a ball game when the bleachers suddenly collapsed in rippling succession, much like the shuffle of playing cards. Most of us seated there were surprised that no one was injured, either from the fall itself, or from legs or feet that may have been caught beneath the seats.

There were also the foul balls that careened over the backstop then suddenly disappeared into the night, either across the street, or coming to rest in a spot least likely expected. Youngsters of all ages could be seen scrambling to retrieve the foul balls since the reward to that effect was usually a dime, just enough to purchase a candy bar and a soft drink. There were also those instances when having a new baseball was of greater value than returning it for the dime.

One afternoon, while standing in the front yard near the fence adjacent to 349 East, George Whipple walked over and asked if I would be interested in digging a trench in his back yard for something like five or six dollars. I accepted his offer and began digging the trench, a somewhat shallow trench running the full width of the rear property.

After digging for awhile, I stumbled across something that has yet to be solved, at least not to my knowledge. The shovel hit something hard, like a rock, but when I reached down to toss it aside, I discovered a skeletal section of vertebra.

I naturally wondered if these were human or animal remains. At that point, the Woodward Junior High School science teacher Arthur Paxman came to mind, proving an excellent source for identification.

I removed a single vertebra and showed it to Arthur Paxman the following day. Mr. Paxman looked it over then told me it was definitely a human vertebra; furthermore, I must say that I was stunned awhile later when no one seemed to care what it was or where it came from, not even George Whipple. So I naturally returned the single vertebra to the spot where I found it. I eventually completed the trench work and was paid for the dig.

Incidentally, I do I recall the lay of the land from that period, the gradual slope from north to south, which might've proven a factor considering the actual burial depth of the human vertebra. There was a mound of dirt where the property to the north and the Whipple property came together, including the site where I had completed the trench.

As a consequence, the Whipple property line was lower because that location would've been either dozed or graded prior to building the house. Accordingly, this tends to suggest that the skeletal remains might've been four or five feet in depth upon burial; moreover, I would imagine those remains are still there. Furthermore, I suppose I'll always wonder who that individual might've been and what might've brought about their passing.

O. M. Porter moved in next, a local Wonder Bread distributor, followed by the Ray Thompson family as I recall. I believe the Thompsons were still living there when I left the area in 1956.