

Tulare County CA Archives Biographies.....Balaam, Alfred September 5, 1839 - January 17, 1919

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#### "ALFRED BALAAM

It was in Louisville, Ky., that Alfred Balaam, stockman and farmer, ex-sheriff of Tulare county, was born September 5, 1839, a son of George and Sarah (Swain) Balaam, natives of England. The family moved from Kentucky to Arkansas and from there to Texas, and from the Lone Star State came with a train of fifty ox-wagons across the plains to California in 1853, settling at El Monte, Los Angeles county, where they remained until the end of December, 1857. They then set out for Tulare county, where they arrived soon after January 1, 1858. The head of the family took up land a mile west of Farmersville, entering it at the government land office, a raw tract of one hundred and sixty acres, on which he raised horses, cattle and sheep. He was a man of ability who took a leading part in local politics, served in the office of justice of the peace and promoted the best interests of the community as long as he lived.

The following nine children of George and Sarah (Swain) Balaam are named in order of birth: George, the eldest, is dead; Sarah Ward; Ann Ward; Martha is the wife of Joseph Homer; Frank S.,; Alfred; Edward; Mary Van Gorden is dead; and Mrs. Emily Van Gordon [sic] resides at Watsonville.

Alfred Balaam was educated in the public school near his boyhood home and early worked with his father at stock-farming. Later he farmed for himself and at one time operated a half section of land. At this time he owns thirty-one acres near Farmersville, Tulare county, which he devotes principally to hay, alfalfa and Egyptian corn. For sixteen years he has filled the office of roadmaster and has been instrumental in introducing great improvements in local roads and bridges. By appointment of Sheriff Wells, he served as deputy sheriff under that official and in 1885 was elected sheriff of Tulare county, which office he filled for one term with great efficiency and integrity. A man of abundant public spirit, he has always promoted the prosperity of the community.

In 1862 Mr. Balaam married Anna Whitlock, a native of Ohio, who bore him two children, Charles and Nellie. His present wife, whom he married in 1869, was Miss Marion Bequette, a native of California, and children as follows were born to them: Ida Higdon, Carl and Edward." END

