



Photo courtesy Jeff Ward

**273 E. Highland Avenue
Ward Ranch and Home
Barn: 1902
Home: 1903**

**By Leslie Ziff
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The Ward Ranch is the oldest surviving business in Sierra Madre. When you walk on to the property you feel as though you have stepped back in time. E. Waldo Ward & Son has been a thriving family run business since 1917, but our story starts even before then.



Image courtesy John Johnson

Edwin Waldo Ward came to California in 1887 to recuperate from tuberculosis. While staying in Lamanda Park, known now as East Pasadena, he rode on horseback throughout the hills of this area. At the time he was working for James P. Smith & Co., a New York importer of luxury foods. After a full recovery he began to survey the area as a potential market for his New York Company, which eventually acquired the entire western states as a selling territory. In 1891 E. Waldo Ward Sr. purchased 10 acres of land from Nathaniel Carter. Navel Orange trees were planted, and soon 20 more acres were added. After his

marriage to Geraldine Wayne in 1900, and the birth of their son Edwin Waldo Ward Jr. in 1903, the Wards moved permanently to Sierra Madre.

In 1915 E. Waldo Ward had a friend send him two trees of a special variety of oranges from Seville, Spain. These, the first of their kind in America, became the grafting stock for a grove that later numbered over 600 trees. He began experimenting with marmalade until able to produce a kind of bittersweet marmalade that rivaled the English brands. By 1917-1918 Ward Sr. started his own preserving business. In the age of "Fine Dining" by train, Ward's marmalades were the only ones served on several train lines. Over the years other products have been added and today marmalade is only 5% of the fine foods they produce.

The barn was built in 1902, and the home in 1903. A Montana architect, who met Ward Sr, when their train was delayed in Colorado due to a rainstorm, designed the home. It is a beautiful three-story Victorian redwood structure. The kitchen still has the original wood cabinets. It has four bedrooms, a complete basement and attic. The house was actually started in 1902 and finished in 1903. At that time there was no electricity (or refrigeration) in the home. The original pantry was vented for air circulation to accommodate a cooler atmosphere and the keeping of ice. Electricity was later added. Approximately fifteen years ago the house was bolted to its foundation. The barn includes a storage tower, which held weekly deliveries of water. The water was used for both irrigation and household use. The height of the tower provided the gravity needed to supply water to the upper part of the house. Today the barn, house and other buildings of the "Ranch" are still maintained in wonderful condition. One of E. Waldo Ward's great-granddaughter's family now lives in the home. Her son is now part of the 5th generation of Wards on the Ward Ranch.

Carrying on the family tradition today is, E. Waldo Ward Jr's son Richard, and Richard's son Jeff, (fourth generation), that run the business. This amazing family has always strived for the best in quality and service. Their slogan: "Taste the History," says it all!

[Ed. note: For a very detailed history of the Ward Ranch, and a wealth of old photographs, visit www.waldoward.com.]



Photo courtesy Jeff Ward

Memories of the Ward Ranch and Family

By Shari Wingate Eing

2013

The story begins in 1921 when my grandfather, Roy D. Shipway, was hired by Mr. E. Waldo Ward ("the old man" as Ray referred to him) to become the foreman and chief cook in the marmalade factory. He and his new bride, Della, moved into the "company" house on the Laurel side of the orchard, where they raised their family of four children: George, Rowena, Wesley and Ardis.

Roy worked for the Wards for 19 years, and, besides cooking, his job responsibilities included the schedule of watering and fumigating the trees, supervising the washing drying and packing of the oranges when brought to the bard from the orchard.

The Shipway kids grew up next door to Ed Ward's children: Geraldine, Betsy and Richard. The Ward's attic provided hours of fun. My mother, Rowena, and the Ed's daughters loved playing dress-up with the clothes stored in large trunks, while Wesley enjoyed Richard's elaborate train set up there. Wesley laughs at the memory of Richard and him climbing the big Mulberry Tree, only to be yelled at by E. Waldo to "get down out of there." He says they soon learned to scurry out of the tree when they heard the back screen door bang shut. Ed Ward was also Wes's sunday school teacher at the Congregational Church.

The company house was sold in 1947 and moved to 37 W. Grand View, at which time Roy purchased land from the Wards, 2 lots east, on Laurel, and built a new family home.

As a child I followed my grandfather everywhere so I knew all of the neighbors on the Laurel, loved visiting the nursery with the little pond at the corner of Mt. Trail, played among the orange trees and climbed the avocado trees there, and, of course, made visits to the Ward factory. My younger sister played back and forth with Richard's children.

What began in 1921 became a multi-generation association between the Ward and Shipway family.