

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,
Imagine my surprise recently when, upon viewing Facebook, I found a series of pictures of an aged glass bottle that bears a label "Nelson Brothers", 328-5th Street in Eureka. You gotta be kidding, that was my father's paint store back in the 1930s. The bottle still contains a portion of its original contents which was turpentine. The current owner of the bottle was curious as to its age and where it came from. I made contact with him and now, through the graciousness of the owner and his wife, I am in possession of the 'prize' which they wanted to return to my family. I not only received a family keepsake, I had the pleasure of meeting a very nice couple. As a kid, I was about 7 or 8 years old, I have many memories of my father's paint store. H.O. and his brothers John, August, Emil and Clarence were in the paint contracting business located at 328-5th Street. Up front was a retail paint store with a warehouse in the rear accessible from the alley. This is the block on 5th Street between D and E Streets. I spent many an hour with my dad at this location. Paint products of the time were for sale in the store with the warehouse in the rear where paints were mixed and readied for the jobs. My father was an expert in matching paint colors and he estimated most jobs at the time. I remember accompanying him on job estimates, one in particular, was the new juvenile detention home which is now part of the County Health Department building located at 6th and I Streets. That was an eye opener for me as I had never seen a 'lock-up'. Tape measures were unknown back then and Dad used a folding wooden measuring stick. Uncle John was an expert at hanging wall paper, and Uncle August was an expert in applying wood grain finishes. I remember watching John applying wall paper and it was a sight to behold. John was not a big man and you could hardly see him as the wall paper seemed to fly through the air as he worked. Uncles Emil and Clarence were basic painters. Clarence left the business and moved to Salinas where he became a well known painting contractor for many years. The paint store facing 5th street was eventually closed but the warehouse in the rear was retained. The store was relocated to face E Street with an agreement with Eddie Koskela to work for my dad and to operate his ski rental business on the premises. Eddie later became a well known artist in the area. Later, in Eureka, the boys went their different ways with John becoming an independent contractor as did my father. Emil painted for Eureka City Schools and August went to work as a painter for Loleta Creamery.

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