Simple Rites
Held Here for
L. T. Newcomb
Early Forest Ranger
Dies at Age of 103

With the lack of ceremoniousness that characterized the 103 years of his lifetime, Louis T. Newcomb was laid to rest Saturday morning in the Sierra Madre cemetery, just about as close to the mountains he loved as he could properly be buried.

Louie Newcomb, pioneer forest ranger and one of the "all too few rugged individualists," to quote an acquaintance here, died July 25 in Sierra Madre Hospital after a brief illness. Having become quite feeble and almost totally blind, he had been cared for the last 14 months of his life in Mrs. Nell McElfresh's boarding home at 41 N. Mountain Trail.

Lived Simple Life

Prior to that he had lived the simple life of a dedicated mountaineer in a cabin on his homestead in the Angeles Crest area, Newcomb Ranch, near where Newcomb Pass also bears his name.

Newcomb, a native of Pennsylvania, became a seasonal forest ranger here before the turn of the century and William V. Mendenhall, Angeles Forest supervisor, recalls visiting Newcomb when he, Mendenhall, was a small boy. Particulars of Newcomb's service with the Department of the Interior go back so far that his file was long since sent back to Washington, D. C. However, Noren E. Eaton, attorney, who looked after some of the old ranger's affairs here in recent years, recalls seeing among his papers a notice from Washington dated May, 1889, reappointing Newcomb as a ranger, "he to receive $50 a month and to furnish his own horse and saddle."

Unofficial Arbitrator

Forest Supervisor Mendenhall says to the best of his memory he believes Newcomb resigned from the service early in this century to take up his homestead and to raise trees for reforestation. He also tells that Newcomb became almost a legend among rangers for his unofficial but effective arbitration when disagreements flared between sheep ranchers and cattle men running stock in Chilao and Horse Flats.

Newcomb was preceded in death some years ago by his wife, the former Grace Crandall of Sierra Madre, sister of the late Jessie Crandall, early Sierra Madre school teacher. His sister, the late Mrs. Alfred E. Pettit, also was a Sierra Madre resident.

Daughter Survives

His only survivors are a daughter, Mrs. Clarence Zoll of Glendale, and two grandchildren.

The graveside service for him Saturday was conducted by his niece by marriage, Ruth Crandall Barber, of the Siewert-Barber Funeral Home in Whittier. Preliminary arrangements were completed by Ripple Mortuary here.

Newcomb owned property in Sierra Madre for at least 60 years, a house at 138 E. Grandview, which he occupied on occasion when winter weather and advancing years forced him from his mountain retreat.