

WHITE HOUSE RUINS

Madera Canyon was originally called White House Canyon after the white washed adobe structure said to have been built by a sheep man named Walden in the late 1870s or early 1880s. By 1882, the White House was being used by Tucson merchant Theodore Wellish as a vacation retreat. Wellish brought his family to the White House to escape the summer heat in the city. It is thought that Wellish may have been the first to Whitewash the two-room structure and cause the canyon to become known as White House Canyon. Atondo Paz, and then his brother Rufino Paz, lived in the



White House circa 1920s
AZ Historical Society Photo

White House around the turn of the century. About 1909, the house had been expanded to three rooms and was occupied by Alcario Morales and his family. Alcario was a Mayo Indian from Sonora. Mr. Morales kept burros, mules and horses. He also made and sold cheese. There was an orchard nearby from which the family sold fruit and small trees. Mrs. Morales and their infant son Manuel died in 1921 and are buried near the White House ruins.. The White House was abandoned in 1940 upon the death of Alcario Morales at the age of 90.



White House Ruins circa 2016

The remains of an adobe wall and a historic marker identify the location where the White House stood. The wall and marker are located just off the surfaced trail near Proctor Road. It is not known when the name of the canyon was changed to Madera Canyon. The road leading to the canyon was, and still is, called White House Canyon Road.

Summarized from *The Nature of Madera Canyon* by Douglas Moore. White House Ruins and graves photos by T. Johnson

Additional Material: GVRHC Library File 36



Morales Graves