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A WEAKNESS FOR FINE DRESSES AND JEWELRY: THE TALE OF ALICE T. BLAIR a.k.a. ANNIE DAVIS

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INTRODUCTION

For more than 30 years, I have been actively working on my family genealogy. I started asking my grandparents a lot of questions beginning when I was in high school. This was back when my Nana's memory was better, before she had dementia. The things I've since learned are sometimes heartbreaking and sometimes inspiring, but always fascinating. When I embarked on my ancestor hunt, I had absolutely no prior knowledge of any familial connection to the area that I now call home, as most of my known family had settled in the northeastern United States. However, my research revealed that I do indeed have a family history connection to Santa Clara County and the San Francisco Bay area beginning in the 1890s. This includes a scandalous and tragic event that took place right in our backyard in 1895, which made newspapers nationwide. The stories of the people, circumstances, locations, and events involved that led up to this event are the focus of this essay.

I moved to Santa Clara County, specifically Mountain View, in July 1997 from the east coast. Like many people who have come to Silicon Valley from other places, I work in the technology field. I was born in Boston, spent my K-12 years in New Hampshire, and went to college in Boston. About 10 years into my career in marketing and business development, I was living in nearby Watertown, Massachusetts, when an opportunity for a job promotion that required managing a team of people for a big computer hardware and software company headquartered in Palo Alto, finally made me leave the harsh Boston winters and move to *The Valley of Heart's Delight*. I thought I would be here for two or three years; it has now been more than twenty.

In 2002, the death of my 86 year old Nana, Millicent Helene Cordner, who was my maternal grandmother, coincided with my departure from that Fortune 150 company. This was the major impetus to ramp up my genealogy research, because I finally had some extra time.

As this story unfolds, you will also see that newspapers have been a tremendous (and revealing) resource in uncovering my family history. In addition to more mundane types of information, through searchable, digitized newspaper archives, I have learned about multiple family scandals, people, and incidents that were certainly never spoken about by either side of my family, or may not have ever been known by my grandparents.

***A WEAKNESS FOR FINE DRESSES AND JEWELRY:
THE TALE OF ANNIE DAVIS a.k.a. ALICE T. BLAIR***

by

Kathleen Pacyna

**The Stage is Set (1883-1886)
One Scandal Will Lead to Another**

Before I can arrive at the local area focal point of this story, I need to give readers some relevant background history and context, which illustrates how I came to learn about these previously unknown relatives, and likely is a large part of the reason certain relatives moved west.

My great grandfather, Earl Farnham Cordner was born on July 16, 1890 in Monson, Hampden County, Massachusetts, to Mary Lucinda Farnham (1851 - 1917) and William Henry Hyde Cordner (1843 - 1892) . Earl was only two when his father, William, a stone mason, died of La Grippe (influenza with complications from pneumonia) at the age of 45. My Nana was only two when her grandmother, Mary, died, so that might explain why she did not seem to know about some of the people and things about which I am going to tell you. For example, she knew her grandfather's name was William Cordner and that he was born in Rhode Island. She did not know that William was a Union soldier (Connecticut Infantry, 5th Regiment, Company K) during the Civil War and was wounded in his left leg and foot by gunshot, at the Battle of Peachtree. Left a widow at 40 with two young children, Mary filed an application for a Civil War widow's pension, in order to receive financial support for Earl and his older sister, Effie May.



Top Left: William Henry Cordner, Civil War daguerreotype Top Right: Mary Lucinda Farnham
Bottom Left: Effie May Cordner, age 20 Bottom Right: Earl Farnham Cordner, age 19

The thick manilla envelope I received from The National Archives and Records Administration containing William's Civil War pension file included copies of any documentation Mary needed to support her widow's claim for herself and her dependants. It turned out to be a treasure trove of information. It included copies of birth certificates, service records, medical reports, as well as written affidavits from other relatives, friends, neighbors, and the doctor who delivered Earl and attended William at his death. There was also a copy of the marriage certificate for my second great grandparents, dated June 16, 1883, in Thompsonville (now Enfield), Connecticut. But most surprising, was a marriage certificate and "proof" of divorce for my second great grandmother and her first husband, Jarvis Harris Blair, as well as a birth certificate for their son, George Henry Blair. Yes, this was how I discovered that Earl Farnham Cordner had a half brother who was 23 years his senior! It is also how I found out that Mary L. Farnham was only 14 when she married Jarvis, who was 24, in Otis, Massachusetts in 1866! Their son, George, was born on May 5, 1867 in Salem, Rockingham, New Hampshire, when Mary was only 15! The contents of the pension file was the beginning of dispelling the myth for me that people did not get divorced back in the 19th century. I also found out Mary was not William's second wife, but his fourth! His first wife, Susan Palmer, with whom he had a son and daughter, died in 1875 at the age of 25 from phthisis (pulmonary tuberculosis). Previously unbeknownst to me, was that he also had two other marriages and subsequently, two divorces (neither produced children). All of these revelations came as quite a shock, but this barely scratched the surface of what I was yet to uncover.

According to the 1880 census, Jarvis, Mary, and George were living in Springfield, Massachusetts. Jarvis was listed as working as a farmer and blacksmith. William Cordner was living in Leicester, Massachusetts, some 50 miles away, with his third wife, Elizabeth, working at

the local woolen mills. However, at some point in the early 1880s, William Cordner had moved in with Jarvis, Mary, and George, as a boarder, *without* Elizabeth. You can probably imagine, at least to some extent, what transpired between Mary and William, and you would be correct.

Keeping in mind that Mary had provided documentation to the federal government in her Civil War Widow's Pension File application that she was divorced from Jarvis in 1882 and a certificate for her marriage to William dated June 1883, I was more than a bit surprised to find this notice in the *Springfield Daily Union* paper:

NOTICE - All persons are forbidden to harbor or trust my wife, Mary L. Blair, she having left my bed and board without my consent.

JARVIS H. BLAIR

Springfield, Mass, Sept. 15, 1883

The tone of that news item alone may give some insight as to why Mary may have decided to run off with William Cordner. The other probable "reason" is that their daughter, Effie May Cordner, was born on December 12, 1883, in New Haven, Connecticut, where William and Mary were living together. However, whatever happiness they may have experienced was short-lived, as they were soon arrested for adultery, however (and surprisingly), with no charges of bigamy.

I found numerous articles about the court case which also made news around the country, including *The New York Times*, but this article is from the *New Haven Register* in February 1884. It provides a dramatic account of some of what transpired and offers a lot of insight about the family turmoil and rift that was likely created between George Henry Blair and his mother, Mary.

***What a Boy Had to Do
And What Lawyer Robertson Would Have Done With Him For It***

"Oh Georgie, for whom I have done so much," was the agonizing cry of a middle-aged woman in the city court this morning. Her name was Mary H. [L.] Blair. She sat beside her attorney, Lawyer Robertson. Her head was bowed and resting on her hands on the table. Her whole frame

shook with convulsive sobs. Her first born and only son, a boy of perhaps 17 years of age, well spoken and well appearing, was gazing at her from the witness stand and pronouncing words which proved his mother guilty of adultery. Before he had begun to testify, he had been advised by his mother's counsel that he need not utter a word against his mother unless he wished to. He stood and trembled for a moment or two. His lips quivered and evidently, he was biting them to keep back the tears. But the salty drops struggled out from his eyelids despite his utmost efforts to restrain them."

"He said he had seen his mother and Cadron [Cordner] occupying the same bed on several occasions. He knew they were holding the relations of husband and wife to each other from the time they ran away from Massachusetts. On at least one occasion to Cleveland also he had seen Cadron leaving his mother's bed. His mother, the defendant, left his father last March [1883] and ran away with the other defendant in the case, William H. Cadron to Cleveland, Ohio. Cadron's boy [Walter] and young Blair had accompanied the pair to Cleveland, Ohio. The boy had once induced his mother to leave Cadron and return to Otis, Mass, to her husband. But she ultimately left her husband again, because she claimed, of his cruelty. Recently her husband expressed a willingness to take her back. At the same time, he attempted to punish Cadron, who was recently arrested in this city on a charge of adultery, and Mrs. Blair being found living with him, was attested on the same charge, likewise."

"Before the opening of the court she had promised to testify against her paramour, but when the time came, she would not go on the stand. Therefore had her relatives, her mother and brother and son turned against her to prove her guilty. But there appeared no really damaging evidence against the guilty pair until the son gave testimony which will probably have the effect of sending his mother to state's prison. After the evidence for the state was all in, Mrs. Blair was again asked whether or not she wished to make a statement. Her lawyer forbade her to speak. Her mother tottered to her side and implored her to tell all that she knew. Mrs. Blair appeared frantic as she begged her mother to leave her to herself and her God. Her son approached her and attempted to speak to her, She broke out in bitter reproaches and with tears told him that she wanted to have nothing further to do with him. He sprang back as if stung and started for the door. After a few steps, he turned, looked back and came back and kissed her. Cordner advised him to let his mother alone. The boy raised his fist and was on the point of striking the man when Officer Nettleton interfered."

"During the arguments over the continuance and amount of bail, Lawyer Robertson took occasion to remark that there was not a person in the courtroom who did not loath that boy who could swear away the character and liberty of the mother who has nursed him. The lawyer insinuated that a hempen-noose was somewhere in the world waiting for him. The court ordered the lawyer to desist from further remarks of that kind. The cases were continued for a week and the bonds fixed at \$300. The worse than motherless boy put his hands about his mother's

shoulders and escorted her downstairs, where she was placed in the lock-up and afterward taken to jail, awaiting a bondsman."

The story of my second great grandparents made national news. The February 15, 1884 article appearing in the *St. Louis Dispatch* "His Mother's Shame. A Courtroom Scene That Was Touching in the Extreme," quoted Robertson as saying, "'That young man," said Col. ROBERTSON to the court, "who testified against his mother will someday come to a bad end; the rope is waiting for him. I'd sooner be the meanest thief in New Haven than be in his place."

Mary was released on a 300 dollar bond provided by her brother, Curtis Farnham, and returned home by train to Springfield with her husband Jarvis, George, and baby Effie. I can't even imagine how uncomfortable that must have been! William remained in jail awaiting trial, but was eventually released on bond, and Mary, William, and Effie were soon reunited. Jarvis and Mary did officially divorce by September of 1886. William became legally divorced from wife Elizabeth in 1885. I haven't found any evidence that William and Mary remarried following their respective legal divorces, so it's possible they were never *legally* married. Regardless, they went on to have a second child, my great grandfather Earl in 1890, living together as man and wife, until William's premature death in 1892.

The archivist at the Massachusetts State Archives who I spoke with on the phone said that my grandmother had indeed filed a petition for divorce from Jarvis Blair on that date, but no further action had been taken. She pointed out that associated costs may have been a factor. Perhaps when they found out they were pregnant in March 1883, William and Mary decided the easiest thing to do under the circumstances was just run away together. Now, if you're reading and wondering: *did* George end up at the end of a hempen noose as his mother's lawyer had postulated?

Whatever happened to Jarvis and what does any of this have to do with my family ties to Santa Clara County? You're about to find out, read on!

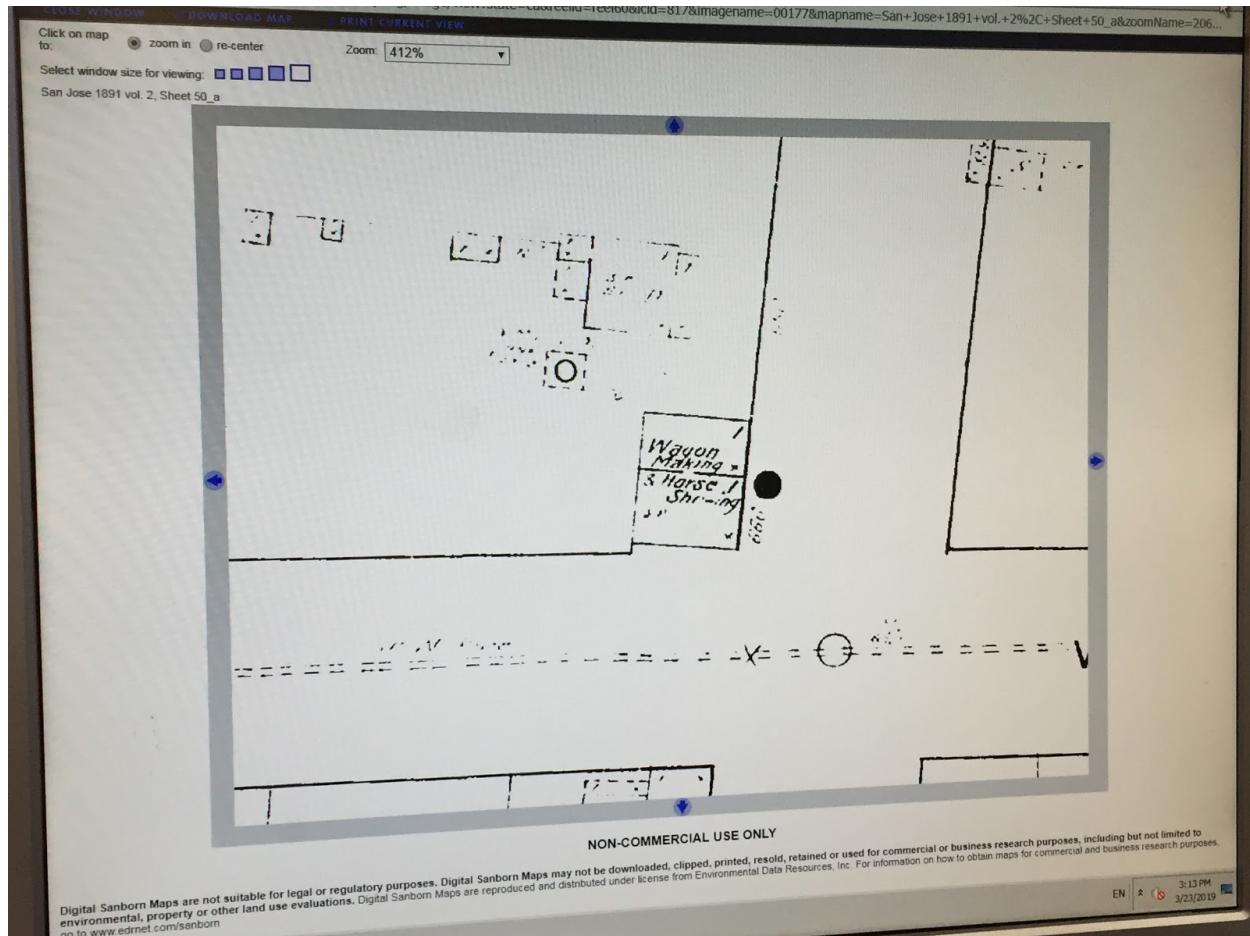
Heading West - A Fresh Start (*Maybe*)

On March 1, 1888, George Henry Blair, who was by then 20 years old and working as a hairdresser, married a young woman named Alice T. Hennessey, at the Methodist Episcopal church in Boston, Massachusetts. According to records, Alice was born on March 1, 1865 in Cambridge, Massachusetts so was two years older than George. At the time of their marriage, Alice was employed as a paper boxmaker. My research on Alice further showed that she was born the fifth of six siblings, to parents who were Irish immigrants. The censuses indicate that her father, James, worked various jobs throughout his life, including as a watchman and a huckster (peddler or salesman of small wares), so Alice grew up in a family of relatively modest means.

Perhaps the events of the last few years had taken their toll on Jarvis and George, so they were looking for a fresh start and a bit of excitement and adventure. I do not think that during this time period, blacksmiths and barbers in New England needed to relocate to California for socioeconomic reasons due to lack of employment opportunities in their respective fields. As you may know, most of the 1890 U.S. Census materials were destroyed in a fire, including those for Massachusetts and California. In addition, local records may have been destroyed due to the San Francisco earthquake in 1906. So I have never been able to definitively place the exact year when Jarvis, George, and his wife, Alice, all decided to move across the country to California, collectively or individually, or where they were when they first arrived. The following is what I do know.

Jarvis Blair Goes to San Jose

In 1890, the population of San Jose was 18,060 and by 1900, it had grown to 21,500¹. The first location that I was able to document Jarvis living in California was in San Jose working as a blacksmith beginning in 1892.



Above is an image of a digital Sanborn Map showing the location of Jarvis Blair's residence and Wagon Making Horseshoeing business address as a blacksmith (1895-1898) at 999 Orchard Street at the corner of Willow. In 1924, Orchard Street was renamed Almaden Avenue.

¹ San Jose Public Library, "A Timeline of San José History," <https://www.sjpl.org/sjhistory> (accessed Mar 30, 2019)

Other than the 1900 Federal Census, which lists Jarvis, age 56, living as a boarder at 72-80 South Market Street in San Jose, and had been unemployed as a blacksmith for four months, these are the only other references I have found regarding Jarvis' life in Santa Clara County (1892 - 1908):

San Jose, California, City Directory

1892 Page J.H. Blair Blacksmith S. McGarvin, res 415 West Santa Clara
 1894 Page 96 J.H. Blair Blacksmith H. Prindle, r 44 S 2d
 1895-1896 Page 90 Jarvis H. Blair Blacksmith Orchard c. Willow, r same
 1897-1898 Page 90 Jarvis H. Blair Blacksmith Orchard c. Willow, r same
 1900 Page 112 Jarvis H. Blair Blacksmith Meridian Rd near Willow
 1901 Page 97 Jarvis H. Blair, emp H. Prindle, r Campbell

San Francisco City Directory

1904 Page Jarvis H. Blair, Blacksmith C A Dumont, r 214 3d

San Jose, California, City Directory

1907 Page 131 Jarvis H. Blair Blacksmith rms 265 S 1st
 1908 Page 131 Jarvis H. Blair Blacksmith rms 265 S 1st

By 1910, Jarvis had relocated to Sonoma County and changed careers:

1910 California Census

Jarvis H. Blair, age 67, Living on Cleveland Lane, renter Occupation: Poultry Farmer
 Year: 1910; Census Place: Petaluma, Sonoma, California; Roll: T624_109; Page: 9A;
 Enumeration District: 148; Image: 552.

Thus far, there has been no indication that Jarvis ever remarried and the last record I have of him is a listing in the 1915 Petaluma City subdirectory of the Santa Rosa City Directory for Rural Free Mail Delivery (p. 275). I have never been able to discover when or where Jarvis died and is buried, in spite of a road trip to Petaluma in an attempt to uncover this information locally. I have always had the feeling that he is bitter and prefers to be left alone, whereas other ancestors seem to want to be found and for their stories to be told.

George and Alice Blair

The marriage record in 1888 is the last known evidence I have of George and Alice living in Massachusetts, or anywhere other than California. However, the story of George and Alice is a

complicated one. I don't have all the answers, though I continue to search for them. In 2010, I began another stretch of intensive research, including working with the Yolo County archivist and started piecing together the rest of their story. The earliest I have been able to place George and Alice together in California is via a *second* marriage record for them.

On March 26, 1892, George and Alice married *again* in Woodland, Yolo, California. George is listed as a native of Massachusetts and a resident of Dunnigan; Alice is listed as a native of Massachusetts and a resident of San Francisco, but her name is now Alice T. *Henderson*. I have not been able to find a marriage record, or any documentation of Alice marrying anyone named Henderson, anywhere. So I question if the Henderson surname was another one of her aliases, or maybe she married Henderson while under another alias (so the record would not list her as Alice/Annie Blair or Hennessey). I also have not located any reference to or records for a divorce between Alice and George prior to 1892. It's unclear whether they separated in Massachusetts and each decided independently to go west (less likely), or if they separated after both arriving together in California (more likely), or if one pursued the other to the west coast (possibly).

In addition to their remarriage, there are a few mentions of George and Alice in the *Woodland Daily Democrat* based on the following snippets of news under *Dunnigan Dots*:

“George Blair has moved into one of M.T. Emmert’s tenement houses.” - March 31, 1892

“Mrs. George Blair is resting comfortably today.” - August 25 1892

“Ed Sterling and family, of Blacks, and George Blair and wife, of Dunnigan, are off on a camping tour somewhere.” - August 25, 1893

One promising lead placing Alice in San Jose, possibly in early 1892 or even 1891, is definitely worth mentioning. On August 4, 1892, *The Evening News* detailed a civil court case² earlier that

² “Profits in Straw. The Lady Proprietors of a Hat Works in Court Today.” *Evening News* (Published as *The Evening News*) San Jose, CA, August 4, 1892 <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.scccl.org/> (accessed on March 18, 2019)

day involving two lady proprietors of a hat works over an alleged \$50 debt. Based on the testimony given, “some months prior” the plaintiff and former sole proprietor in the case, Mrs. Mary A. Trowbridge, had sold a half interest in a straw hat works in San Jose to the defendant, a Miss Alice Blair for \$300, \$50 of which was still due on the contract.

“The ladies of San Jose have cause for self-congratulations over the fact of the establishment by Mrs. M.A. Trowbridge, at 38 Nucleus Block, South Second Street of the San Jose Straw Works. It is a women’s exchange, in addition, where articles made at home are sold on commission. It is the only straw works in this section, and all orders are promptly and artistically executed.”³

Alice Blair, the defendant in the case, was described as “a young lady of very pleasing appearance and address” and “she is a late arrival in San Jose from the east.” The article also states, “she made a very straightforward statement of the details of the affair, and seemed to be very much disgusted with her first experience in business in the wild west.” This Alice Blair alleged that she had bought the interest in the business based on the representation by the plaintiff that the profits during the busy season would be \$60.00 per week. However, as the bookkeeper of the business, Alice learned that the profits of the place were closer to .60 cents a month than \$250 a month. She testified that because business was so slow, she had plenty of time to reflect on the situation and had decided she “would have to withdraw from the straw hat works and go into some more lucrative venture.” Mention was made of the recent weather not being conducive to the sale of straw hats. The case was tried before a jury of seven men. The verdict come back in favor of Alice Blair. Furthermore, the jury expressed belief that Miss Blair should not only *not* be required

³ Brown, E. T. and Overstreet E. H., *Souvenir Publication for Horticulture, Viticulture, and Agriculture: the railroads, manufacturing, financial, commercial, and professional representative firms of Santa Clara County, CA, The San Jose Daily Herald* (San Jose, CA Herald Publishing Company, 1890), 54.

to pay the remaining \$50 on the contract, but they recommended that Alice should also receive the \$250 that had already been invested in the business which had proved not worth anything.⁴

Although attempts to further investigate the case and validate her identity with additional documentation including via the Santa Clara County Court Archives came up empty, if this was in fact my Alice Blair (I believe it was), it demonstrates that she was an enterprising young woman, not just a *fallen* one. Entering into a partnership for a straw hat works business would have been an attempt at legitimate entrepreneurship also in keeping with her affinity for fashion and accessories. It also makes sense because we know for certain that George's father, Jarvis, was established in San Jose by 1892 (and possibly earlier), that San Jose may very well have been the first place that George and/or Alice went when they arrived in California.

I have never found any evidence that George and Alice had any children together. At some point after that camping trip in 1893, Alice must have decided that living in a small, rural town about 35 miles north of Sacramento and being the wife of a tonsorial artist, or maybe of George in particular, no longer suited her. She left George, moved 125 miles south (back?) to San Jose, and began living under an assumed name, Annie Davis.

On January 22, 1895, a notice appeared in the *Woodland Daily Democrat* under a header called "Mismatched Couples" stating:

"George Blair, the Dunnigan barber, asks that he be granted a divorce from his wife, Annie Blair, alias Annie Davis, on the grounds of adultery and that the unfaithful Annie is now an inmate of a bawdy-house in San Jose. They were married in Boston in 1888."

⁴ Ibid., "Profits in Straw."

It was not uncommon for a woman who joined “the sisterhood” to change her name to escape her past or bad marriage, and/or not be traced back to family. Alice did have an older sister named Annie in Massachusetts, so that may be why she used that first name. One possible explanation for why she chose ‘Davis’ might be because Woodland is about 11 miles north of Davis, California, or maybe she just liked the sound of it. Other than in newspaper articles included in this essay, I was not able to find any additional references to Annie Davis living in San Jose.

Double Tragedy at The Hensley House

Alice’s decision to leave George a second time would prove to be a very fateful one. Shortly after midnight on April 23, 1895, Alice was murdered in her room at the Hensley House in San Jose by Albert Anderson, a jealous former lover of only 22, who then immediately committed suicide. She may have found a more “lucrative venture” but ultimately, it cost Alice her life. She had only just turned 30 years old the month before her murder. The following chronicles in detail the murder of Alice Blair a.k.a. Annie Davis as reported in the San Jose *Evening News*, the *San Jose Daily Herald*, and *San Francisco Call* newspapers (though the incident made news around the country). Here is the entire article from the *San Jose Daily Herald*, in the Tuesday, April 23, 1895 edition:

The Face That Kills

The Victims at the Morgue - Albert Anderson Murders Alice Blair

A Horrible Sequel to the Existence of the Plaisance --

Terrible Midnight Tragedy at the Hensley House -- The Statements

A tragedy, sickening in the details was enacted in one of the rooms of the Hensley House just after midnight this morning. Albert Anderson, a discarded lover of Alice T. Blair, a bebe of the tenderloin⁵ strata of society, stabbed her to the heart and then turned the dagger on himself with deadly effect.

⁵ Online Etymology Dictionary, Douglas Harper, 2010, 1828, "tender part of a loin of pork or beef," from **tender** (adj.) + **loin**. formerly a district in New York City noted for corruption and vice: so called because police there could eat well from their bribes.3. a similar district in any U.S. city. The slang meaning "police district noted for vice" appeared first 1887 in New York, on the notion of the neighborhood of the chief theaters, restaurants, etc., being the "juiciest cut" for graft and blackmail." <https://www.etymonline.com/word/tenderloin> (accessed April 14, 2019)

The inmates of the place were aroused shortly after midnight by the commotion in the Blair woman's room but not much attention was paid to the hubbub. Nicholas Stoner, the proprietor of the house, states that from the noise it was judged that someone was trying to gain admittance into the Blair woman's room. It was only a few moments after the racket that Alice Blair knocked at the door of Mrs. Stoner's room, and agonizingly stated that Anderson had killed her. Mrs. Stoner opened the door and as she did, Alice Blair staggered across the threshold and fell on the floor. The landlady placed a pillow under her head but in less than five minutes life was extinct. She had no time to say anything other than Anderson had killed her.

Hurrying to the room occupied by the murdered woman, landlord Stoner was horrified to find the body of young Anderson lying in a pool of blood in the middle of the room, stone dead. It did not take long to summons Drs. McDougall and La Spada and an examination revealed how thoroughly the discarded lover had wreaked vengeance on the creature upon whom he had fastened his affections, and who in turn discarded him. It was found that the woman had been stabbed twice in the left breast, the first cut being the result of a vicious lunge that gashed her breast cruelly. The second stab was evidently a straight thrust deep into the heart. After being cut the woman ran down the hall about fifty feet, descended the stairway to the floor below where Mrs. Stoner's room was located, and there expired.

After taking vengeance on the woman, Anderson turned the knife on himself, and with insane nerve and purpose, inflicted on himself a dozen deadly thrusts. He must have hacked away at his heart and his strength failed him, and then fell upon the floor where he was found on his face lying in his life blood.

It is supposed that Anderson went to the room of the Blair woman, demanded admittance and was refused. He then broke open a swinging window, making the noise that aroused the inmates of the tenderloin story of the house. The woman, seeing that he was about to gain entrance became alarmed and ran for the back door to escape and as she did so, fired three shots at Anderson. They were fired from a 32 caliber revolver of dainty pattern, evidently the property of the woman. Only one mark of a bullet was found in the room, this was directly opposite the door at which the stabbing occurred and would indicate that Anderson had forced his way into room and the woman fired at him as she ran out. The bullet is high up on the wall a foot or two above where Anderson's head would have reached.

Anderson jumped down from where he was standing and rushed to the back door where he met the woman. He drew a knife with a blade scarcely three inches long and thrust it into her breast. She was dressed in a low-cut dress and the knife gashed her breast cruelly. The cut which was probably made first was the uglier of the two as it caused a wide gaping slash, but the second, which as a straight thrust was the one which caused death. The latter stab probably penetrated her heart.

The Face That Kills - Young Anderson at the Plaisance

The murderer, and suicide was Albert Anderson, little more than a boy being just past his majority. He's the son of respectable and esteemed people who reside at 231 Orchard Street. For ten or eleven years, the father of young Anderson was a trusted employee of the Santa Clara Valley Mill and Lumber Company but about three months ago was laid off owing to slackness in work. For a number of years, Anderson attended the Lincoln Grammar school and was there looked upon as a steady pupil, about the last boy in the world of whom it would be supposed that he would come to such a tragic end. But the time came when about two years ago when he began frequenting the Plaisance, there he fell into the association of dissolute women who made the notorious place their calling and and amusement headquarters. In time, trouble arose in the little home by reason of the son's waywardness. He became a waiter in the joint and it was where in this capacity that he met Alice Blair, a beautiful woman seven or eight years his senior, with whom he became madly infatuated. He became her constant companion, lived with her for over a year until the breaking up of the Plaisance, which left Anderson penniless and without employment. The woman's interest began to cool. She thought she was dealing with a foolish boy who she could throw oil whenever she so wished. She tried it and the tragedy resulted.

Alice Blair - Something About the Woman Who was Killed by Anderson

Alice Blair the woman who was killed came to San Jose about two years ago, and since that time has been noted as the beauty among that class of women who occupied the Hensley House and vicinity. In person she was very attractive, possessed a good education, was seemingly outfitted to adorn the home of any good man, but chose deliberately the life of degradation and dishonor in which death finally overtook her.

The woman was at one time a prominent society lady of Woodland. Her husband, George H. Blair, is represented as being one of the leading men of that city. A few months ago he sued for a divorce in the Superior Court of this county and the woman allowed the matter to go by default. She has always been known here as Annie Davis.

From all that can be learned, Alice Blair threw aside a beautiful house in Woodland, abandoned the love of a devoted husband and entered into a life of shame of her own volition. The fact developed today that once before she had deserted her husband, that he had been divorced from her, and remarried her again, forgiving her escapades because of his love for her. Mrs. Blair was again established in a cosy home and the wealth of her husband's love was once more lavished upon her as though she had never sinned. But with all the husband could do to make her homelife a happy one, she was not satisfied, and it was not long before there came to the husband's ears, ugly rumors regarding the conduct of the wife whom he had forgiven so much. He refused to give credit to the rumor, but when he went home one night he saw with his own eyes that which sealed

the question of his wife's guilt, the end came, and Alice left her home and with it a broken hearted husband.

Her most intimate friend in the city of her own sex, was one who goes by the name Addie Clark. The latter stated today that in regard to her early life the dead woman always seemed very reticent but that she always spoke of her husband, as a man, kind, generous, and noble hearted, who loved her always even in the midst of her life of shame.

"Alice, or Annie as we knew her," said the Clark woman, "was finely educated, but seemed to be utterly without heart." Anderson lavished everything he made on her, bought her diamonds and other jewelry, but as soon as his money was gone, she had no use for him. We had a little spat not very long ago and have been on the outs for a few days. I heard her screaming, Mrs. Stoner, Anderson, as she ran down the hall last night. That is all I know about the case."

A Reconciliation

Another Woman of the Hensley House Tells Some New Facts

Georgie Raymond is the name of another woman who rooms at the Hensley House and knew the dead woman quite well. "She used to talk to me quite frequently," she said today, "and I have reason to believe that a reconciliation was on foot between herself and her husband. She showed me a beautiful diamond brooch a few days ago and said she had received it from Mr. Blair."

"Anderson found out that she had received a letter from her husband about the time the gift came, and it made him insanely jealous." She gave me to understand that her husband was one of the best of men, who loved her devotedly and of whom she had never been worthy. She had grown tired of Anderson and his attentions, just as she always grew tired of any one person."

Of Her Husband - The Last Thoughts of the Dead Woman Were of Him

From what Reta Snow, another of the Hensley House flock says, the thoughts of Alice Blair were with her husband just before her death. "I heard her screaming awfully last night as she ran down the hall," said Miss Snow today, "crying Mrs. Stoner! Anderson! My husband! My husband! Mr. Blair was a good man and if I had had a husband like him, I never would have been here today. Don't you know that I went hungry for three days in San Jose before I came up here. Poor Annie. I didn't know much about her. She always seemed so reticent, but she seemed to have been well-educated and always spoke in highest terms of her husband. I believe too that she has quite a bank account."

At the Morgue - A Great Crowd of Curious are Disappointed.

Hundreds of people called at the morgue this morning to view the remains, but Coroner Secord had locked the dissecting room door and gone to Mountain View with the key in his pocket so the

crowd of morbidly curious went away disappointed. The bodies lay side by side on marble slabs and presented a ghastly appearance. An inquest will be held this afternoon.

The autopsy on the bodies was held by Drs. La Spada, McDougall, and Felton and showed but two wounds on the body of the woman, the blade of the knife penetrating the heart through one incision. On Anderson's body, there were ten distinct stabs, two of which penetrated the heart. Coroner Secord held the inquest this afternoon with the following jury: G.W. Alexander, A.M. McCabe, F. Bourisseau, M.H. Decker, J.A. Adams, N. Lee, F. Allender, J.E. Howie and B. Crichtien.⁶

Verdict of Coroner's Inquest for Alice Blair⁷

⁶ "Stabbed To Death." *The Evening News*, 23 Apr 1895 San Jose, CA <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.scccl.org/> (accessed Mar 20, 2019)

⁷ Medical Examiner-Coroner's office records, 2008-013, Santa Clara County Archives. https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt8d5nf1ht/entire_text/

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Verdict of Coroner's Jury.

State of California, }
COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA, } ss.

We, the jury summoned to appear before
J. K. SECCORD, M. D., Coroner of Santa Clara County, on the 24th day
of April, 1895, to inquire into the cause of the death of the person
over whose body we were duly sworn, and after hearing the evidence adduced, do
find the deceased to be Alice Blair
A Native of Unknown
Aged Unknown years _____ months _____ days,
*Married, Single, Widow, Widower. Divorced
Sex Female, Race Caucasian, Residence San Jose
Occupation Unknown
And that he came to his death at San Jose
on the 22nd day of April, 1895
From Knife wounds inflicted
by one Alvin Anderson with
th homicidal intent and malice
prethought.

Body embalmed and sent to Mrs. Lauperson
a sister living at Dedubridgeport Mass by W. L. Woodman
Body sent by Wells, Fargo & Co Express Co

All of which we certify in writing, and by us signed, this 24th day
of April, 1895.

<u>B. F. Christian</u> <u>H. S. Allen</u> <u>L. A. Calcott</u> <u>A. McGregory</u> <u>Wm. B. Collier</u>	<u>G. Reed</u> <u>R. A. Kelley</u> <u>E. H. Dean</u> <u>E. Housley</u> <u>E. E. Hugh</u>
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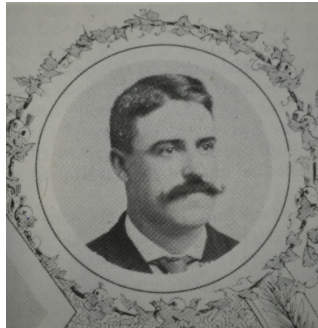
*Erase words not used.

Wm. M. Collins
Stenographer

Alice Blair Was Not a Pauper

"The Coroner received a small sum of money from Mr. Hennessy this morning by telegraph in response to a call for a sum with which to defray the expense of embalming and shipping the remains. In the message, it was said that as they could raise no more money, the remains should

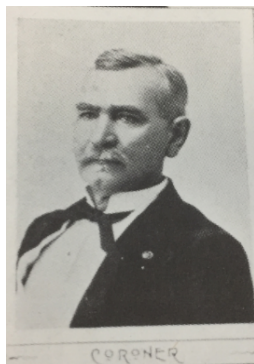
be buried here. After that, the discovery was made that the woman was possessed of the money and word was at once wired back that the remains would be shipped East, and the expense paid out of the money discovered in her possession. The remains will be shipped tomorrow.”



Attorney W.A. Bowden⁸ filed a petition in San Jose Superior Court, asking that J. K. Secord be appointed administrator of the estate of Alice Blair. Just after her death there was a rumor that she had been frugal regarding money matters and had money in one or more of the banks in San Jose. According to the *San Jose Daily Herald*, “W.A.

Bowden had been her legal advisor in some other legal matters, and was satisfied that, in addition to lots of clothing and jewelry, she left behind quite a sum.”

***Hid in Vaults - The Wealth of Murdered Alice Blair is Found
Her Effects Valued at About Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars Mostly Money in Banks***



Today search was made by Coroner Secord⁹ for property of value among the possessions of Mrs. Alice Blair, the murdered woman, and the search revealed that she had \$1500 on deposit in the Bank of San Jose and \$575 mostly in \$5 gold pieces in a safe deposit drawer in the Union Saving Bank. The certificate of deposit was locked in the drawer in the Union Saving Bank with the gold coin.

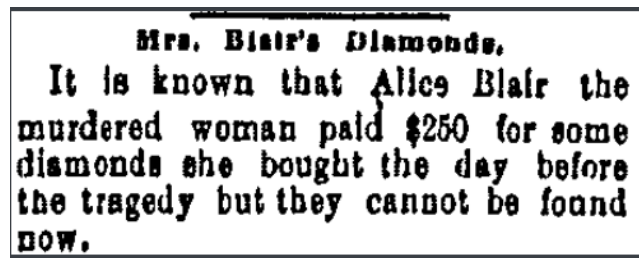
W.A. Bowden who had done some legal business for the woman during her lifetime had some knowledge of her savings and informed the Coroner. Today they made inquiry together. They also procured the services of JJ. Zing, the locksmith and had him open her trunks. Some jewelry of a value of about \$400 was found and her other personal effects were also found to be worth about \$300.

As the relatives of the dead woman do not live in this state, Coroner Secord this afternoon applied for letters of administration upon the estate setting forth that the probably value of all her effects is about \$2500 and the only known relatives are a brother, James Hennessy, Cambridgeport, Mass., and Annie Lampron, a sister residing in the same state.¹⁰

⁸ Shortridge, Charles M., *Santa Clara County And Its Resources, Historical, Descriptive, Statistical: a Souvenir of the San José Mercury, 1895* (San José, CA: San José Historical Museum Association, 1986) Photo of W.A. Bowden, attorney, 272.

⁹ Ibid., Photo of J.K. Secord, Santa Clara County Coroner, 213.

¹⁰ “Hid in Vaults. The Wealth of Murdered Alice Blair is Found.” *Evening News*, 25 Apr 1895 San Jose, CA <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.sccl.org/> (accessed March 23, 2019)



That September, the estate of Annie Davis was valued at \$2139¹¹, after expenses such as legal fees, embalming and a train ticket to ship her body cross country in an iced car, was distributed to her mother, Mrs. Bridget Hennessy, in Massachusetts. “According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer price index, today’s prices in 2019 are 2,926.12% higher than average prices throughout 1895. The dollar experienced an average inflation rate of 2.79% per year during this period, meaning the real value of a dollar decreased. In other words, \$2,139 in 1895 is equivalent in purchasing power to \$64,730.72 in 2019, a difference of \$62,591.60 over 124 years¹².” At the time of her death, Alice could easily have afforded to purchase her own home in San Jose. One must wonder what plans Alice had for herself and her money had she not been murdered. In 1895, the \$250¹³ that Alice paid for the diamonds she purchased is equivalent in purchasing power to \$7,523.10 in 2019. The diamonds were never found.

The Scene of the Crime - Hensley House

The structure located at the northwest corner of West Santa Clara and Market Streets was probably the first multi-story building in San Jose. It was built as the Masonic and Odd Fellows building in 1865. The building was damaged in the earthquake of 1868. It was repaired and renamed the Hensley Block in honor of one of the building’s investors, Major Samuel J. Hensley.

¹¹ “Brevities, Estate of Annie Davis,” *Evening News*, 30 Sept 1895. San Jose, CA,

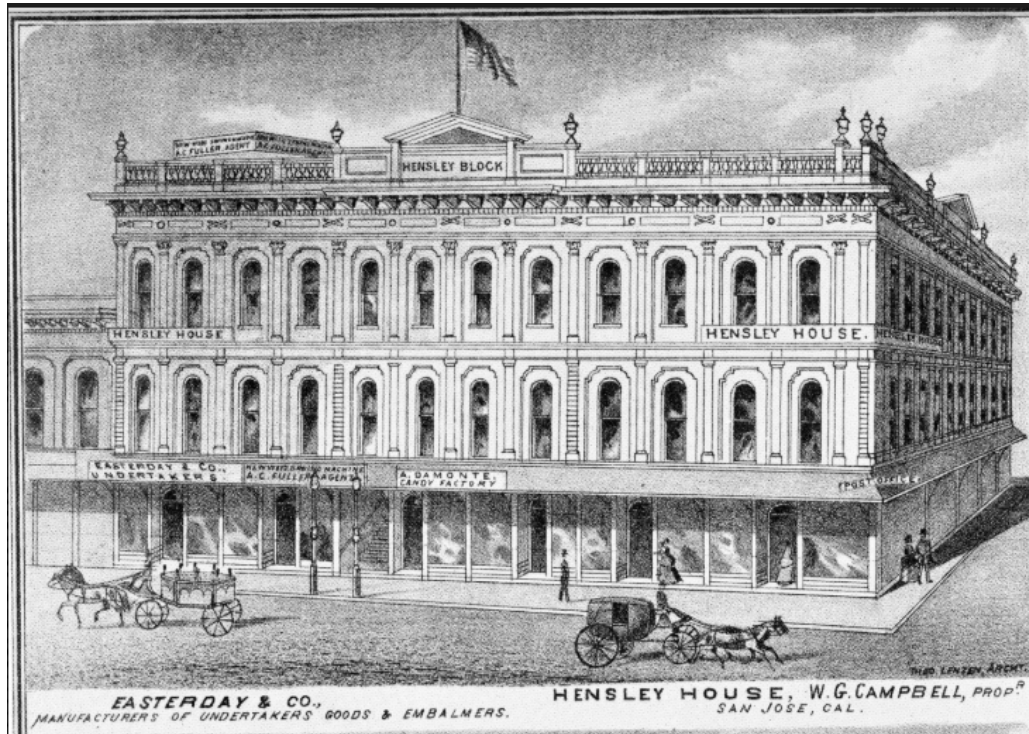
<https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.sccl.org/resources/doc/nb/image/> (accessed March 23, 2019)

¹² CPI Inflation Calculator <http://www.in2013dollars.com/us/inflation/1895> (accessed April 14, 2019)

¹³ “Mrs. Blair’s Diamonds,” *Evening News*, San Jose, CA, 25 Apr 1895

<https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.sccl.org/resources> (accessed Mar 21, 2019)

In 1895, the Hensley House was a hotel in the large two story building known as The Rea Building on The Hensley Block.¹⁴



Source: Thompson & West's Historical Atlas of Santa Clara County, 1876

In 1890, Hensley House was described in the following terms:

*A quiet, cozy and well-appointed lodging house where suites or single rooms can be engaged by the day, week or month at most reasonable prices. Nicholas Stoner, the proprietor, is a model "mine host," the furniture is new, the rooms are large and clean, the beds sweet and soft, and everything is conducive to health and comfort. Besides all this, the house is strictly first-class, no disorderly persons being admitted or retained.*¹⁵

A mine (or mein) host is an antiquated and humorous term referring to the landlord or landlady of a pub. During the 1890s, there were saloons called "The Grotto" and "The Fredericksburg" on the ground floor. The term Lodging House was also, more often than not, a euphemism for a house of ill repute. Prostitution is a form of disorderly conduct codified under California Penal Code

¹⁴ Gibson, Lauren Miranda and Johnson, Bob, *San Jose's Historic Downtown* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia, 2004) 17.

¹⁵ Ibid., Brown, E. T. and Overstreet E. H., *Souvenir Publication for Horticulture, Viticulture, and Agriculture*, 54.

647(b), making it a crime to solicit or agree to engage in or actually engage in any act of prostitution. The shady El Dorado Street was one street over from West Santa Clara Street.

“The gold rush brought countless men to California, but very few women. This is key to understanding the nature of El Dorado Street as an alcohol/sexual Disneyland for manly men. The civilizing influence of women would take years to reach fruition. Certain discerning women in the 1850's (and afterwards) had a keen appreciation for the laws of supply and demand . . . and began supplying. These were early marketers - also known as bawds, harlots, whores, soiled doves, prostitutes, daughters of joy, sisters of misery, or (a favorite) habitues of the demimonde. Brothels and saloons stood side by side with bakers, butchers, gunsmiths, Chinese laundries, secret Chinese lotteries, cigar stands, fish shops, boot makers, and barbers.”¹⁶

“The semi-legality of sex work—and the lax execution of the laws that were in place—didn’t make prostitution any *easier* in the 19th century than it is today. Women still faced violence from clients and the threat of venereal diseases. Nevertheless, prostitution was one of the few professions open to female entrepreneurs. “There wasn't a lot of things that single women could do in the 19th century,” Bass says. “There was also a dearth of women in the mining economies of the American West. So a good-looking smart woman could set herself up and do decently.” A self-employed sex worker could also make a pretty decent living: In a *Renegade History of the United States*, Occidental College history professor Thaddeus Russell writes, “Prostitutes made, by far, the highest wages of all American women.” In the West, brothel owners (colloquially known as “madams”) were accepted as part of the community—according to both Russell and Bass, many had good relationships with law enforcement, and even hired police officers for protection.”¹⁷

¹⁶ “El Dorado Street 1869”, San Jose Underbelly, SanJose.com., (San Jose, CA, Boulevards New Media), <https://www.sanjose.com/underbelly/unbelly/Sanjose/dorado/dorado4.html> (accessed May 24, 2019)

¹⁷ Berlatsky, Noah. “The Law’s Tougher Today on Sex Workers Than It Was in the 19th Century: How suffragettes, wartime paranoia, and 9/11 stripped Victorian entrepreneurs of rights and reputation.” *Pacific Standard Mag.*, 5 Oct. 2015. <https://psmag.com/social-justice/what-is-up-with-that> (accessed online: Mar 24, 2019).

As the 1890s progressed, the reputation of the Hensley House seemed to decline. Exactly one year after the murder of Alice, on April 23, 1896, another woman, Emma or Ella Hawkins, described as a “dissolute woman” was killed with a knife by a man in her room at the Hensley House. An *Evening News* article on May 6 commented, “From the revelations made in connection with the investigation of murder in the Hensley House recently, it would appear that the lodging house is a most disreputable place and that little or no effort is being made to conceal that fact.” Shortly after, the July 25th edition of *The Evening News* referenced the murder of yet another woman in the Hensley House, Annie Zabel.

Albert Anderson

Not much is known about Albert Anderson, who in some articles is referred to as Alvird, the man who committed this crime of passion and then committed suicide at the young age of 22. His father, John Anderson, was a Swedish immigrant who worked as a carpenter and for the Santa Clara Valley Lumber Company. In the years preceding Albert’s liaison with Annie Davis and the subsequent murder/suicide, Albert had also worked as a waiter at In the Home Restaurants, the Western Hotel, and was a student living at home with his parents. He “was considered a model young man and his parents who reside in this city on Orchard street are very respectable.”

In 1894, *“He became a waiter at the underground saloon, “The Plaisance,” a resort for fallen women and it was here he met the woman he killed.”*¹⁸ Even if during their relationship as one article states, *“He lavished all of his money on her and bought her diamonds. When the Plaisance closed she deserted him.”*¹⁹, Albert would not have had all that much to offer Alice materially.

The Plaisance and The Sunday Laws

¹⁸ “Due to Jealousy. Cause of the Midnight Tragedy at San Jose.” *San Francisco Chronicle* April 24, 1895, <https://www.genealogybank.com> (accessed March 14, 2019)

¹⁹ Ibid, “Due to Jealousy.”

The Plaisance was a restaurant and saloon owned by a French immigrant, H.H. Jeantrout, located in the basement of the Louise Building on Second Street and San Fernando. In other sources, the Plaisance is later referred to as also a music hall and a theater.

The Louise Building²⁰ (as it was in 1895)



The Plaisance opened amid great controversy and remained so. On November 16, 1893, *The Evening News* reported²¹ that seven protests were filed with the City of San Jose Board of Supervisors against granting Henry Jeantrout a “license for the purpose of selling malt and intoxicating liquors and wines in quantities less than one quart at a public saloon, bar, or restaurant at the northwest corner of Second and San Fernando streets.” Among the seven

²⁰ Sourisseau Academy for State and Local History

²¹ “Seven Protests. They Open the Fight Against H. Jeantrout.” *Evening News*, San Jose, CA (Published as *The Evening News*) November 16, 1893 <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.scccl.org/> (accessed Mar 16, 2019)

protesters were the Normal School with its 800 or 900 students and the San Jose School of Business. Another of the protests was from members of the First Methodist Episcopal Church South, which owned land diagonally across the street from where the saloon would be located. They stated, "It is a fact requiring no proof that with every saloon and bar-room march hand in hand intemperance, drunkenness, vice, pauperism, and crime. The influence of such places is degrading and immoral. Many of the members of said church are compelled to pass by said corner to attend their places of worship and would meet with insult, indecency, and immorality from the dissipated characters who would congregate around said saloon or within its walls." Henry Jeantrout stated that he had already invested over \$9,000 to ready the joint's restaurant and saloon. After debate, the petitioners were denied with a unanimous vote by the Board and Jeantrout was granted his license. When The Plaisance opened in late November 1893 it was described as a "finely fitted up" French restaurant.

"The opening of the "Plaisance" in the basement of the Louise Building on the corner of Second and San Fernando streets, has given those who prefer good substantial cooking to the ordinary service, an opportunity to enjoy themselves as they would at a feast. The restaurant is being conducted by Mr. Jeantrout in a strictly first class European style and in full keeping with the elaborate and costly fixtures and furniture that make the place marvelously grand in appearance."

*"The chef employed is a man of prominence in the world of cookery, having presided over the kitchen at the Palace Hotel, and the Cliff House kitchen in San Francisco. From the chief steward down all the help employed is competent and attentive thus assuring patrons a comfort that cannot be obtained anywhere else in the city."*²²

By the time The Plaisance closed in 1895 causing Albert to become unemployed, it was being written about in the following terms:

²² "The Plaisance. Opening of the Finely Fitted up French Restaurant." *Evening News* (Published as The Evening News), San Jose, CA, 23 Nov 1893, <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.scccl.org/> (accessed March 25, 2019).

*"The Mayor and Common Council met last evening. A petition against the Plaisance was presented by H.V. Morehouse, on behalf of the petitioners, over 5,000 in number, who urged the Council to revoke the license of the Plaisance."*²³

*"...After his election, the "church people" began to wonder. Austin had not been in office a month before he signed an ordinance repealing the Sunday law. His next move was to cast the deciding vote which granted a license to the notorious Plaisance., the dive that caused so much scandal in San Jose during the winter and spring of 1894-5"*²⁴

*One month later, the Plaisance the underground theater and restaurant was under attachment. The first suit was a claim for \$39.50 brought by Lina Crews, an actress who was appearing there. The other creditors were so eager to receive the money owed them that they threatened to all bring suits at one time Henry Jeantrout the proprietor decided to close the doors. The help is owed \$500 and the sum of the other creditor suits totaled about \$1,500.*²⁵

Henry Jeantrout ultimately filed for bankruptcy.

A Happy Ending for George?

From an article regarding the murder/suicide appearing in *The Evening News*, April 24, 1895:
*"Alice T. Blair, the murdered woman, came to San Jose just two years ago after she deserted her husband in Woodland. She had a weakness for fine dresses and jewelry, and, although possessed of a good home, persisted in leading a wayward life. Several months ago her husband applied for a divorce and she allowed it to go by default. Mr. Blair, who is a prominent businessman of Woodland, did all in his power to turn the woman from the downward path she has chosen, but to no avail. As a last resort, he sought the courts and obtained a separation. But little testimony was introduced at the inquest and the jury brought in a verdict in accordance with the evidence."*²⁶

In spite of Georgie Raymond's testimony as reported in the newspapers, I have my doubts that a reconciliation between Alice and George Blair was on the table near the time of Alice's murder.

Although George may very well have made previous attempts, or one last ditch effort, to rescue

Alice from her wayward life after she left him the second time, it appears George was gearing up

²³ Legislative Acts/Legislative Proceedings, *Evening News* San Jose, CA (Published as *The Evening News*) - Feb 26, 1895 <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.scccl.org/> (accessed Mar 19, 2019)

²⁴ "The San Jose Letter. Vols. 3-4. Dec. 7, 1895 - Nov. 28, 1896." online Ebook edition (accessed Mar 20, 2019).

Note: Paul P. Austin was Mayor of San Jose, CA 1894 - 1896.

²⁵ "The Plaisance Attached. The Demand for Money Causes the Doors to be Closed", *Evening News* (Published as *The Evening News*) Mar 23, 1895 <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.scccl.org/> (accessed Mar 25, 2019)

²⁶ Ibid., "Stabbed To Death." *The Evening News*, 23 Apr 1895

to move on well before Alice's murder, and even before their divorce was final on March 12, 1895. First of all, the *Evening News* reported, "Last evening Coroner Secord wired to George H. Blair, the divorced husband of the dead woman, asking the names of relatives who could be advised of the death of Mrs. Blair. The answer came, simply giving the address of her brother James Hennessy,"²⁷ along with his residential address. An apathetic response relative to some of the testimony given in the news articles. Of greater significance are these facts; back in 2010, I received a package from the Yolo county archivist in Woodland detailing the proceedings of the divorce, which was granted to George on March 12, 1895 on the grounds of adultery and prostitution. The divorce went uncontested by Alice. She did not appear in San Jose Superior court to testify and in court documents, George referred to Alice as a common prostitute. Lastly, only ten days after the divorce was granted, on March 21st, 1895 George married Minnie O. Roberts (nee Simons) in San Francisco. Minnie was a young widow from nearby Knights Landing, with a two year old son named Albert Henry, who had lost her husband to typhoid fever in January 1893.

On May 5, 1900, George and Minnie added a son to their family, Calvin Jarvis Blair, born in College City, Colusa County, California. According to the San Jose City Directory (p.696), George and Minnie and their two sons moved to a house at 74 Wilder Avenue in Los Gatos, Santa Clara County, and lived there from 1910 to 1912. During this time, George worked as a barber at W.W. Cox.

²⁷ "A Sister's Claim. She Has the Body of the Dead Cared For." *Evening News* (Published as *The Evening News*). San Jose, CA, April 24, 1895, <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.scccl.org/> (accessed Mar 21, 2019)

In 1913, the Blairs relocated their residence from Los Gatos to 1521 Sutter Street in San Francisco. George was only 47 when he died in San Francisco on January 27, 1916 of mitral insufficiency. He is buried at Cypress Lawn Memorial Park in Colma, San Mateo County. It does appear that George and Minnie were a better marriage match than George and Alice, and he is referred to as “beloved husband of Minnie” in his obituary. His Death Notice from the *San Jose Mercury Herald* reads, ““Was Well-Known Among The People of Los Gatos - The many friends of George H. Blair will be shocked to learn of his death which took place this morning at 1:30 am in his home on 1521 Sutter street, San Francisco. Mr. Blair and his family lived here for several years and he has many warm friends in this vicinity. They moved to San Francisco about four years ago, but have always kept in touch with friends here and less than two months ago Mr. Blair visited this city. He was there taking a vacation on account of ill-health.””²⁸

His mother, Mary, whom he had testified against in court so many years prior, died the following year in Palmer, Hampden, Massachusetts. I don’t know whether my second great grandmother ever heard from her son George again after he moved to California, or if she even knew that he had died. I don’t know if my great grandfather, Earl, who died in 1950 long before I was born, ever learned that he had an older half brother, or vice versa, given Earl was born in 1892.

The Past Revisited

While I will continue my search for all of the many remaining unanswered questions surrounding Jarvis, George and Alice Blair, my curiosity about why Alice made the choices that she did and what kind of future she envisioned for herself, will probably never be fully satisfied.

²⁸ “Death Notice: George Blair Dies At His Home in S.F.” *San Jose Mercury News* (Published as *San Jose Mercury Herald*) 28 January 1916 <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.rpa.scccl.org/> (accessed March 14, 2019)

When I searched the address of the former Hensley House to see what is located there now and zoomed in on Google Street View²⁹, the results gave me goosebumps. I had the sudden realization that in 2007, I had worked part-time as a marketing consultant and trainer for the Silicon Valley Small Business Administration Development Center, which at that time was in the building located at 84 W. Santa Clara Street in downtown San Jose.



That building at the southeast corner, diagonally across the street of the exact same intersection where The Hensley House had once stood at 119 West Santa Clara. Today, the modern building at that address houses the San Jose Chamber of Commerce. Google Street View captured from North Market Street view clearly shows the proximity (the cross street is West Santa Clara). It was a surreal feeling, knowing I had been regularly visiting the location so close to where Alice had been murdered 124 years ago.

²⁹ "W Santa Clara St & N Market St San Jose" Google Street View image capture (accessed April 14, 2019) <https://www.google.com/maps/place/W+Santa+Clara+St+%26+N+Market+St,+San+Jose,+CA+95113/@37.3357268,-121.8923487,3a,60y,154.1h,95.88t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sq1ykYPNPLz5zQzP7BC9yQQ!2e0!7i16384!8i8192!4m5!3m4!1s0x808fcca316fc871d:0xeef264ea5add162c!8m2!3d37.3354701!4d-121.8920706>

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Additional Resources Used in Researching and Writing This Essay

Ancestry.com

FamilySearch.org

National Archives and Records Administration, Civil War Archives

Connecticut State Library and Archives

GenealogyBank.com

Massachusetts State Archives

San Francisco Public Library

Santa Clara County Archives

Yolo County Archives

Google.com

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