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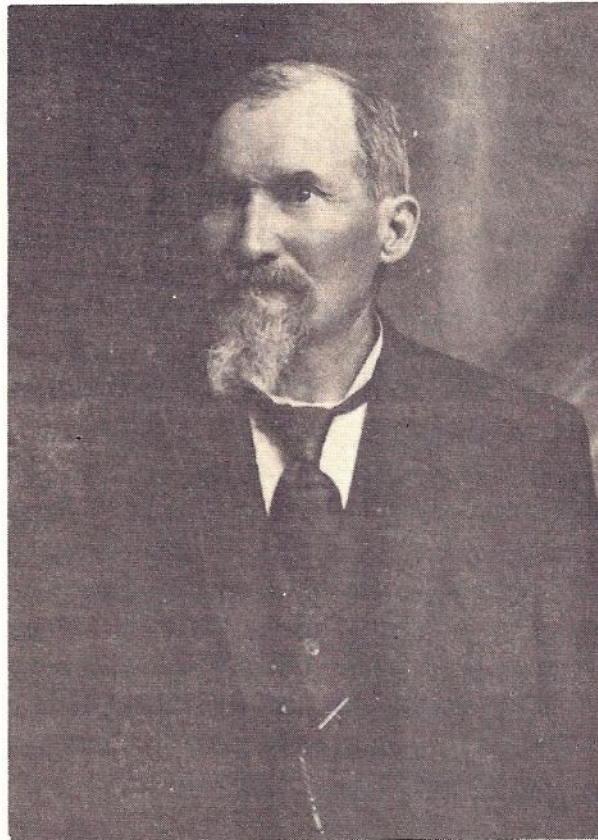
TRAILBLAZER

QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS
OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY
INCORPORATED 1875

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Number 2



ROBERT SCOTT

**His New Almaden Furnace Revolutionized
The World In Quicksilver Reduction**

Bulmore Photo

WHALE BLAZERS

San Jose, Feb. 10, 1890 - One of the most elaborate Chinese temples of worship on the Coast had just been completed. Chinese quarters near North Fifth between Taylor and Jackson, then known as Heinlenville, was in holiday attire and local Chinese jubilant. Flags, lanterns, bunting and firecrackers sparked a procession led by D. Wing, the chief mogul of Chinatown.

Expenditures for the two story brick Joss House amounted to \$2225. Magnificent inside fixtures, all imported from Canton, were valued at \$2265. Regrettably this last remnant of Chinatown had vanished by 1948. Current plans, however, call for a replica of the temple at Kelley Park Historical Museum.

Santa Clara, May 12, 1890 - A fire alarm sounded as the roof of Morrison's blacksmith shop was off to an encouraging start. A fire that would have devastated a row of disgraceful shanties was unfortunately put out in time. The town folks were somewhat disgruntled by the overly fast action of the Hope Hose Co.

San Jose, July 24, 1912 - Herman & Son just completed painting the Court House. As a climax to their work, flag pole painter Lee Jensen shimmied the 65 foot shaft for its share of paint. With paint pot and brush he scaled the pole from the dome to the tip. The task nearly proved disastrous for Jensen when the huge glass ball that capped the pole broke, scattering glass in all directions. Within a few days fearless Jensen was back to complete the job, installing a non-glass gilded ball while giving the pole its final coat.

San Jose, Aug. 1912 - LIGHTS TO MAKE CITY SHINE! An electrical firm had a force placing electric light bulbs outlining the entire northern front of the City Hall. The lights ran from the ground to the roof at the north-east and northwest corners and extended along the cornice of the entire north front and also outlined the central tower. Five hundred bulbs were required at a cost of \$700. This 1887 brick structure which withstood the 1906 earthquake was doomed by progress in 1952.

H.C.

UNIQUE SID GRAUMAN'S UNIQUE THEATRE

Sid Grauman, pioneer theater great who staged amateur shows and sold newspapers in Alaska during the Klondike Gold Strike, never lost touch with his "old hometown" as a 1925 letter to Amanda Miller, San Jose Mercury Herald feature writer, reveals.

"Believe me I look back to those good old days with a great deal of joy," the letter begins. "It seems but yesterday since I opened the Unique which was more than twenty years ago (1903). I had been told that San Jose was a 'corking' show town. I was living in San Francisco and managing a small theater for my father on Market St. I made a trip to San Jose to see Mr. Mitchell Phillips, a realtor, who informed me he had an excellent location near First and Santa Clara Streets, which was then two stores with a frontage of about fifty feet.

"The owner, Mrs. D'Oyley said she would be happy to remodel the stores but was not in favor of a theatre on her premises. I gave her a good talk, convincing her that my policy would be to cater to ladies and gentlemen and children and my presentations would please the most fastidious.

"I was then 20 years old, and I believe Mrs. D'Oyley was impressed with my youth and enthusiasm. We closed a five year lease and Mrs. D'Oyley agreed to build the stage, lobby and incline floor. I was to do the decorations, install the fixtures and projection room.

"My financial position was not large. I believe I had less than \$2000; so I had to do some tall thinking to equip the theatre with that amount, which would include 600 chairs, electric signs, scenery, lighting fixtures, carpets, etc. I purchased kitchen chairs and had them veneered, and was compelled to use roll scenery, as there was no gallery constructed back stage for rigid scenery. Most of the embellishments I paid for, but received credit for about half.

"I used six acts of vaudeville, mostly California talent, as in those days there were no circuits. A great deal of the show was composed of San Jose talent, for which I was always on the look out.

"The moving pictures used were of short length, rarely over 500 feet as there were no long features made

at that time. Most flickers used were made in France.

"Some of the biggest directors and movie stars today played the Unique, as well as a great many headliners that are now playing in vaudeville.

"On opening week, to my great delight, the theatre showed a profit of \$600. It was only a few weeks until I had my investment back and everything in the theatre paid for. The Unique developed into a tremendous winner and rarely made less than \$30,000 a year profit.

"This is the theatre that started many of the circuits, namely the Pantages Circuit, Loews Circuit and possibly thousands of houses throughout the U. S.

"I certainly hold San Jose near and dear to my heart for the fine start it gave to my theatrical career."

Grauman went on to become Southern California's greatest film exhibitor, best known for his glittering Chinese Theatre in Hollywood. Although much of its faded magnificence lingers on, this picture palace landmark continues to lure tourists by the thousands.

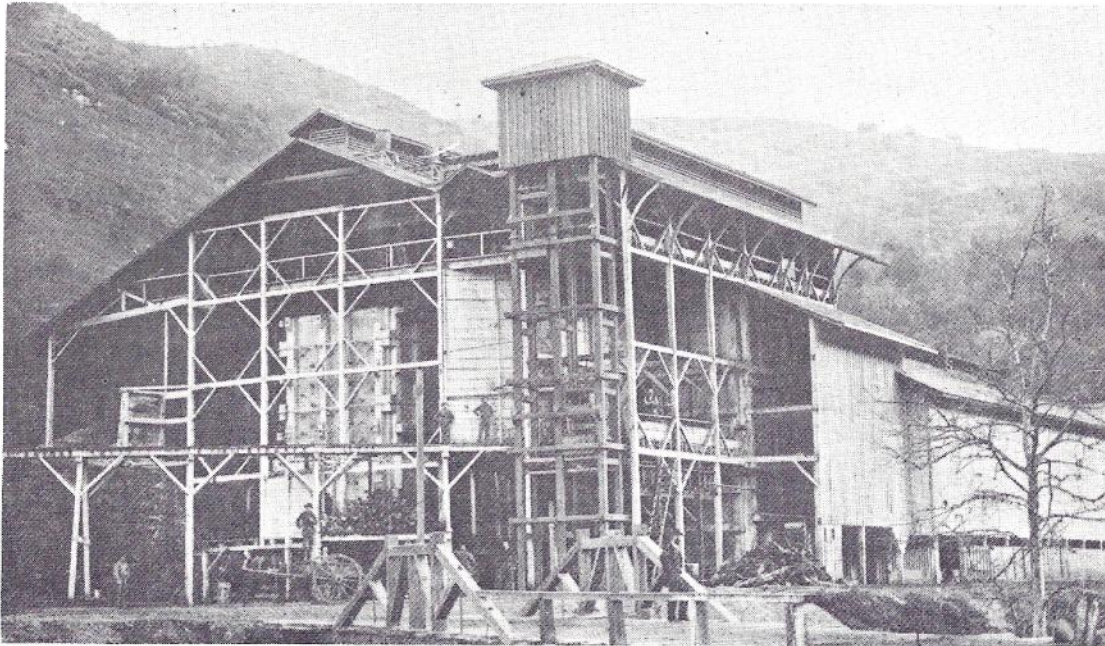
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Saratoga's First Blossom Festival

Saratoga, March 20, 1900 -- "The citizens S a r - atoga invite you and your friends to a Blossom Festival at Kane's Hall, Saratoga, Tuesday, March 20, 1900. The Southern Pacific R.R. Co. will make a special rate of one fare for \$1.65 the round trip on the Narrow Gauge train leaving San Francisco and Oakland, at 8:15 A.M. for Los Gatos. Return train at 3:18 P.M. Buy these tickets only at Grand Hotel and the Ferry Building, San Francisco, and at Fourteenth St., Oakland, and at Park St. Alameda. Those who notify the Committee will be given a free ride from Los Gatos to Saratoga, passing through the famous Hume Ranch. The regular stage fare is 25 cents. A dinner for 25 cents will be served to those who desire it. Friends with lunch baskets will find coffee free: also two barrels of soda water. There will be music, speeches and athletics. A hearty welcome from all awaits you."

.....Courtesy Saratoga Historical Foundation

New Almaden's Revolutionary Furnace Built By Robert Scott



"At this point I want to state that I consider without the invention of the Scott-Huttner furnace the New Almaden Mine could not have run for this term of years, and could have been a bankrupt concern!" This in part was the 1886 stirring report by Hennen Jennings, superintendent of the mines when questioned about the major mechanical improvements at the mining properties. Jennings further affirmed, "This must be regarded as the most important contribution to the art of quicksilver reduction which has originated at New Almaden."

When James B. Randol was elevated to general manager of the mines in 1870, he immediately set out promoting the most productive and prominent re-

gime in New Almaden. His primary concern was to increase quicksilver production by eliminating outmoded methods.

Old adobe furnaces, at the time, were crude operations, referred to as the intermittent type best suited for coarse cinnabar. Repeated delays due to cooling off and "cooked ore" extraction caused intervals of time wasted. Most unfortunate was the constant loss of quicksilver due to obsolete condensers, a procedure which had to be licked.

Two highly rated men in their field, employed at the mines, were consulted: Robert Scott, inventor, stone mason and builder and H. J. Huttner a designer-engineer. Both made extensive studies of the furnace

problem to the last detail.

By 1874 the first experimental furnace was put into operation. Results proved to be highly effective at a most vital time. The furnace operated around the clock with continuous ore feeders. "Spent" ore was emptied by non-stop releases. Less fuel was demanded due to a constant temperature level. The cooling off period was eliminated.

The results paid off bringing greater production and a minimum loss of quicksilver. This outstanding creative effort was to also reduce the danger of salivation, an occupational hazard among furnace employees. Salivation proved injurious to the nervous system and general health by inhalation of quicksilver fumes.

Laurence Bulmore, foremost living authority on the life and times at New Almaden, points out, "It was while living in New Almaden, Robert Scott's extended improvements to the Huttner further added to the reduction of quicksilver and from then on it was the Scott Furnace."

Eight furnaces eventually dominated the Hacienda reduction area by 1880, roasting up to 145 tons of ore every 24 hours. "New Almaden's production soared to well over 70 mil-

lion dollars in quicksilver. Any California mine exceeding this production figure did so not as an individual mine, but as a combination of mines!" So addressed State Mineralogist Walter W. Bradley on the Centennial of the mining site on November 17, 1945.

Robert Scott was born in London, Ontario, Canada on July 29, 1840. By 1861 this adept stone mason had applied his craftsmanship to the Old Palace Hotel in San Francisco among other notable California structures.

Scott arrived at New Almaden in the winter of 1863-64 taking up residence in the miner's dormitory until his marriage to Sarah Walters in San Jose in 1881.

The Scotts then moved into Cottage No. 4 in the Hacienda where their son Robert Walter was born. During this occupancy Scott built a cellar by the side of the cottage which he lined with brick and used as a storeroom. It is still in good repair and can still be seen. According to Mr. Bulmore it is the only cellar of its kind in the settlement.

Scott moved to San Jose in 1894. This diverse mechanic continued to install his now patented and sought after furnace for quicksilver extraction in California, Oregon, Mexico

and Spain. He was negotiating with the Chinese government for a Scott project there, when his untimely death on June 22, 1920 in a distressing San Jose automobile accident prevented the completion of the contract.

Laurence Bulmore's father, Robert R., was engaged by James Randol in 1878 as company cashier and foreman during Scott's most inventive sessions there. Scott and Robert Bulmore were both born in the month of July 1840, Robert Bulmore being born in London, England. "I do believe," Laurence offers, "that if they met during the week of their births, they always managed to have a social drink together."

On August 2, 1964 the U. S. Department of Interior dedicated a plaque declaring New Almaden a National Historic Landmark.

Laurence Bulmore and Mountain Charlie Chapter No. 1850 of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus, reinforced by a friend or two, have firm hopes of locating a marker near the Scott dwelling, a small gesture indeed to the man who excelled in the world of quicksilver reduction.



Laurence Bulmore Visits
the Scott Cottage

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TOURS

Say! You Californians! Look what the Tour Committee came up with in their trip interest survey taken at the March Luncheon:-

SPRING 1978, A cruise on the Mississippi Delta Queen

FALL 1978, Exploring New Mexico with Austen Warburton

SUMMER 1979, An extended tour by land and sea of Alaska

SUMMER 1980, The Passion Play in Oberammergau, Germany

which is given only every ten years.

June 4th Luncheon brochure will have details on One Week in Maui.

Space is still available on the Northern Cascades Trip, July 26-August 5, 1977.

Call Ruth Gross 294-9830 for brochures and reservations. Monday through Friday 9 am to 12 p.m.

An Early California Howdy!

Helen Schoenheit Moore

Traveling was somewhat different in the year 1875 when my grandparents decided to go to Monterey for a short vacation. Making due preparations, including enough clothes for their three year old son, they took the train from San Jose to Watsonville. At that time there was no through line to Monterey; so they had to take a stage from Watsonville to Castroville. Arriving at Castroville, Grandmother noticed the trunk had not arrived and in alarm said, "The trunk with all the child's clothes is not here!"

At that moment a tall Spaniard came forward and sweeping his hat from his head and bowing low said, "Madam, may I help you? I am Don Castro." After she explained the circumstances, he said, "I will hold the train and send my wagon back for the trunk." When this was accomplished, the trip was resumed and they duly arrived at the Washington Hotel in Monterey. How different circumstances would be today.

Editor's note: The town of Castroville was laid out and named in 1864 by Don Castro (Juan B.) on Rancho Bolso Nueva del Cojo which was granted to his father Simeon Castro in 1825 by Mexican Governor Luis Arguello.

FIRST EDITION: A Century of Service to San Jose
Here is an absorbing account of over 50 San Jose business firms, organizations and institutions which still continue to be after a century or more. They all share in their origins. Hard, often back breaking tasks was their lot; making do was a way of life. This limited edition is well arrayed with vintage photos and sketches. This San Jose Bicentennial Heritage Task Force book will be published in June. Pre-publication price is \$4.00 plus 26 cents sales tax. The price will be \$4.50 after June 15th. Write: San Jose Bicentennial Commission, One Paseo de San Antonio, San Jose, CA 95113.

Our SOCIAL CLUB meets at the TOWN PARK TOWERS, at 60 North 3rd St., on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month. For further information call Lovene Luhrman, 292-0070.



Clyde Arbuckle

Fellow Pioneers:

It seems only yesterday that we held our annual essay awards meeting, but eleven months have slipped by since that event, and another is almost upon us. We therefore hope you will all attend the next one, at Lou's Village on June 4, to see for yourselves what local college and high school students are doing to preserve our historical heritage.

These students are producing solidly researched papers that merit archival preservation for future reference.

Incidentally, you, too, can contribute much to history--human interest. You've all had interesting experiences and heard old-time family anecdotes. Jot them down and send them to The Trailblazer. They will give life to what otherwise may be dull records.

LOOK FOR IT HERE

For the well-being of our members who have a sight or hearing problem, a special seating has been reserved near the speaker's platform at our Quarterly Luncheon Meetings.

U. S. POSTAGE STAMP TO COMMEMORATE SAN JOSE'S FOUNDING: First day cancellation covers relating to San Jose's Bicentennial will go on sale Admission Day, Sept. 9, 1977 at a downtown location. The stamp, designed by author-artist Earl Thollander of Napa, California, will carry a likeness of the Peralta Adobe.

DATES TO REMEMBER: June 16,17,18, 1977 The Twenty-Third Annual Meeting of Conference of California Historical Societies will be held at the San Jose Hyatt House.

The San Jose Electric Light Tower blazes away again after 62 years. We thank the San Jose Real Estate Board for this grand recreation at Kelley Park Historical Museum.

The Roberto Adobe on Lincoln Ave. was dedicated as State Landmark # 898 on March 18, 1977.

On April 22, 1977 St. Joseph's Church was officially recognized as an historical landmark by the State of California.

Dues of \$3.00 each for 1977 are now due. Check your ID card to avoid loss of membership. Call or write the Financial Secretary, Byron Bullard, 1085 Tasman Dr. Sp. 404, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 or phone 734-0481.

Post Scripts 'bout members ---

The Oak Grove School District has the Bertha Taylor Elementary School scheduled for completion in September. Bertha? Why, she taught at the District's first school for a proudhearted number of years.

Louise Catania's father arrived in California from Lucca, Italy in 1901. He worked for the Southern Pacific when the railroad completed the conversion from narrow to broad gauge through the Santa Cruz Mountains in 1908.

Rose Alcorn Hale's grandfather, Branciford Alcorn and her uncle, John Alcorn settled on a timber claim in 1865, the present site of Boulder Creek which they later sold for \$1500. The Alcorns and a few other lumberjacks incorporated the Bear Creek Toll Road Co. in 1873, connecting Boulder Creek with Lexington near Los Gatos. Rose was born on Bear Creek Road, near Boulder Creek.

After Jim Hickey retired from U. S. Postal Service in 1974, he enrolled in college to major in history. This ceaseless native son now imparts California history as a volunteer to nearabout 50 folks at the Santa Clara Senior Center. Jim welcomes all history "buffs" to his sessions every Monday AM at 9. Free!

How well we remember Charles Montoya who was San Jose's congenial ever-helpful trolley car-bus conductor for 42 years! Louise Rumsey, his daughter also reports her mother was born on Mine Hill at New Almaden in 1875.

ATTENTION!

MEMBERS, PLEASE BE MORE CONSCIENTIOUS ABOUT SENDING IN CHANGES OF ADDRESS. IF THIS TASK IS LEFT TO THE POST OFFICE, WE ARE CHARGED 25¢ PER ADDRESS CARD, A 150% INCREASE OVER LAST YEAR!

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