



QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS
OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY
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GRANDPA'S COAL OIL LAMP

My Grampa says we really need one-hundred watts to see to read. "You bet!" says he. "Lectric'ty's fine... just flip a switch a n d light will shine. No match to strike, no oil to pour, no tedious chimney-cleaning chore. And yet the old-style coal oil lamp was like a friend at hand," says Gramp.

I recollect we used to sit through twilight's charm, till the lamp was lit; and then the family gathered tight within its golden pool of light. Shadows, and the cares of the day, were pushed to corners, held at bay by our old lamp's protective gleam, allowing us to read or dream.

I see my mother, mending there....her loving face, her gentle air. My father, too...who liked to spin his lim'ricks there to make us grin. I see my teacher, Miss Morrell, bent on teaching me to spell. Her hair was gray before its time....I fear the fault was mostly mine! I thought her quite a bother, there; cheered her when she moved elsewhere, but now, looking back I see how much her teaching did for me.

Dad smoked his pipe, lost in a book, while we played Tiddly-Winks or Rook. Sometimes my Mama fed us cakes, courting dreams and tummy aches; and when we climbed the stairs to bed, the oil lamp lit the way ahead.

Electric lights are better, true...without them I would hate to do....but 'neath that lamp our youthful dreams were born and blended in its beams. Its beacon light we glimpsed afar....a path to home....our guiding star.

(The above item is from the November issue of "Good Old Days." Permission to use was granted by the editor.)

THE HIGH ROAD

Arthur M. Fisk

(Continued from the Winter issue)

In the morning Marjorie got the happy thought of mixing the Aunt Jemima flapjack flour with soda water from the spring. I had never seen such light weight, fluffy hot cakes in all my life, and they were delicious. After breakfast we filled up with gas at the store. This was our last chance for supplies, and gas was 50 cents per gallon. The ranger here told us the road over the summit was open, but take it easy, as it had not been entirely cleared. We inched on, and in doing so left all human life behind us.

By the grace of God, Fuller's Earth and Marjorie's help, we reached the summit safely. One look over the rim at Leevining Canyon and the road ahead prompted me to shift into low gear and leave it there all the way down the grade. The road was narrow and full of good sized rocks, and I knew if I hit one of those rocks with our hard tires at any speed it would bounce us off the road. It was a long ways to the bottom of the canyon.

After several hours we reached Leevining without meeting any traffic. Our destination now was Lake Tahoe. But that night found us camped north of Topaz Lake, near Holbrook, Nevada. (At that time there was no road listed over Monitor Pass to what we now call Highway 89, so we had to go to Gardnerville and back to Woodfords or take the short cut out of Minden.)

We felt refreshed the next morning and eager to reach Lake Tahoe. We were never much on going the long way around when we could take a short cut, so we decided to go up the Kingsbury Grade over Dagget's Pass. On this approximately 15 miles of road we found more switch-backs, hairpin and corkscrew curves than we ever dreamed existed. The builders should have named this road the "Grapevine Grade." We eventually reached Lake Tahoe near the present Stateline. At that time there were no resorts here. A California State Inspector greeted us and requested us to place our blankets and extra clothing upon a platform for inspection. The inspection didn't take long, and we were soon on our way to the north end of the lake via Emerald Bay. It was a long, hard, dusty day. That night we camped at Carnelian Beach, where we stayed for several days.

Tahoe Tavern was the main attraction at the lake in those days. Passenger trains departed from the hotel for

Truckee, where they connected with through trains for the East and San Francisco. Quite often they brought in pullmans and private cars which were placed on a spur near the hotel.

When it came time to leave this wonder-land behind, we decided to return home by Donner Summit and Sacramento. The old road from Donner Lake to the summit crossed over to the south side of the rock wall near the Southern Pacific tracks and ascended quite rapidly. I was glad when we reached the summit because our supply of Fuller's Earth was about gone. The descending road was quite crooked and dusty. This night we camped near Auburn.

It was time we got home, as all six casings we had started with were worn down to the tread and full of boots. Our last day's journey was uneventful as I recall it, but we were glad to get home, or were we?

We had seen the elephant, 20th century style.

* * *

THE COURT HOUSE

Henry Calloway

This is what was said in the Register (the newspaper of the era) to describe the Court House after its completion in 1868. It should be noted, however, that time, accident and the elements throughout the years wrought several changes from this original description. "The magnificent Court House, the finest in the state next to the State House, the most splendid -- construction started in the summer of 1866 and completed in 1868--this splendid edifice of Roman Corinthian order is situated on the west side of First Street, opposite St. James Square. Its foundation walls rest on a substructure of concrete extending six feet below the surface of the ground and six feet in thickness. The lower floor is supported by heavy brick arches. All of the walls are of brick four feet thick from the basement up. The building has two stories above the basement; 100 foot front; 140 feet in depth including portico; height to cornice, 56 feet; to top of dome, 115 feet; to top of flag staff, 185 feet. The greater diameter of the dome is 50 ft. and the lesser 17 ft. It exhibits ample evidence of the ability of the architect, his correct knowledge of inter-columniation, which is of vast importance, inasmuch as the heaviness or lightness of effect depends upon the interspace; and also much rests upon the proper observance of the relative dimensions of cornice, frieze and blocking cornice.

It is indeed artistic in every particular, showing richness, elegance and strength. The portico is 76 feet long and 15 feet deep; height of the columns, 38 feet; diameter, four feet. On each side there are 16 windows the upper ones with pediments; the lower ones with arched pediment heads. The windows are made of the best French plate glass, manufactured expressly for this building.

The front elevation at the entrance has 14 windows. All of the window frames are highly ornamental -- made of cast iron, weighing 300 lbs., with 600 lb. iron shutters, and supplied with interior blinds.

The roof is covered with zinc. The dome is lighted with 11 elliptical windows, surmounted with an iron railing 3½ feet high and is reached by a stairway of 175 steps with 3 landings.

The exterior of the structure is cemented in imitation stone. The main entrance is by an ascent of nine feet, up 13 granite steps which lead to iron doors 12 feet high. The building has 21 rooms, two of which are court rooms. The ceiling is supported by fluted pilasters of Corinthian and Ionic orders. In the corners of rooms are niches supplied with drinking water, gas and all the modern style conveniences. It is heated by one of the largest sized "Chilson" furnaces, erected in the basement. Mr. Levi Goodrich was the architect and it was built under his supervision. The cost of the building, furniture and fixtures, up to June 1868, was \$173,737.96.

This noble and massive pile is a monument to the wealth, the taste, the pride and the advancement of its contributors. From its lofty dome, you may behold the beauty and grandeur of San Jose, sitting like a queen surrounded by her regal estate."

So went the story as it appeared in the Register. The newspaper people of the time should be around now, writing industrial advertising copy for the massive, powerful and all too effective bulldozers rambling about the countryside creating, as Clyde Arbuckle says, "the most historic parking lots in the state."

* * *

The first locomotive to run on a regular railroad in the United States was the British built "Stourbridge Lion," which ran on the Delaware & Hudson Company's track Aug. 8, 1829. Later that same year the "Tom Thumb" (American-built) made a trial run on the Baltimore & Ohio. **

Why is it, we get so soon old and so late smart? ***

REMEMBER WHEN

(A reminiscence from Ralph Rambo's "Remember When." Permission to print was given by F. Ralph Rambo.)

My favorite companions in the early 1900's were Rache and Kenneth Coykendall, who lived on Stevens Creek Road. The two boys and I were inseparable playmates. We had one magnetic bond, our constant desire to invent or improvise all of our original forms of recreation.

While many of our inventions never progressed beyond the "anticipation" stage, we did have one project with rather a sensational, boyish ending. We decided to build a GIANT eight foot KITE. To insure success, we patterned it after that old dependable three stick, six-sided model, using lath for frame and light, oiled canvas for covering instead of paper. We wound yards and yards of salvaged, hay-baler, hemp rope on a homemade crank-reel, as substitute for the usual kite string.

We chose Coykendall's dry-yard as our launching base. Before the days of dehydraters, all orchardists had dry yards for processing fruit. Trays of lye-dipped prunes were spread on the ground to absorb their sun-dried wrinkles and their "sunsweet" qualities. Coykendall's had three acres of dry yard with a steel track for the hand pushed flat cars. We chose this site because we scented possibilities. The yard had a long track and one of these flat cars would easily accommodate three boys. Then too, we had a captive audience -- the nearby prune pickers and dry-yard workers. In every boy there is an abiding desire to show off. Here lay our opportunity!

We had underestimated the pulling power of an eight foot kite and overestimated the strength of three small boys. With skidding heels we, (and the windlass) were starting to drag down the field. Now flying high, the KITE had all the pulling power of a spirited two-horse team. Now or never! We somehow hooked the rope to the little car and leaped on. Just why we failed to provide some sort of brake, or reason that all tracks must end, remains unanswered. We had become so accustomed to failure, we never expected the unusual to happen. IT DID. The wind suddenly increased and with it, our speed. While we three voyageurs clung to each other in delicious excitement, our little car raised its front wheels completely off the steel track and at a 30-degree angle we screeched down the yard 40 miles an hour! (As we retell this story over the passing years, our speed increases. Quien sabe? With longevity favoring writer, it may some day stretch to 70 miles an hour!)

"Cut the kite loose, Rache," I yelled. But Rache was in no position to either find or open a knife! So too late! The track was about two blocks long with a sturdy stack of trays as a terminal. The wind increased the car's angle. We had no choice but to leap off the car onto the trays of fresh dipped prunes. We skidded to a bottom splintered stop in the juicy fruit while the kite continued its merry course. Finally it looped the loop into an oak tree shading the corral of the Portuguese family's barnyard. The oak tree is still standing (I hope) overlooking the Cupertino High School Football Field.

One of my Portuguese pals told me their horse was so frightened he broke down the corral fence and their cow not only was terrified, but "went dry" and was never her gentle self again.

Meanwhile, we picked the squashed prunes out of our hair and elsewhere! Later, mothers would remove the redwood try splinters from our posteriors.

But we had been SENSATIONAL! REAL STARS! We had attracted attention and disrupted all work within a mile radius. Even horse and buggy traffic on Stevens Creek Road had halted and Rural Mail Delivery was delayed at least thirty minutes.

* * *

McCABE THE HATTER

San Jose's pioneer hat store was established in 1864 by J. S. Woods. In 1875 a young man named A. M. McCabe went to work for Mr. Woods as a clerk in his hat store to learn the retail business and also to make mens' hats to order, including silk hats and other patterns.

In 1882 after seven years experience in that capacity he bought out Mr. Woods, lock, stock and barrel. According to Pen Pictures of Santa Clara County, "Mr. McCabe carried the largest and most complete stock of head gear on the west coast--larger, indeed, than is kept by any retail dealer in San Francisco. He also manufactures silk hats to order, and every year witnesses a big growth in his business."

Mr. McCabe came to California from Ireland when he was 20 years of age. He is the father of our Jay McCabe who succeeded him in business and carried on as San Jose's top hatter for many years.

* * *

IN MEMORIAM

At a meeting of the Pioneers of the Counties of Sonoma, Napa, Lake, Marin and Mendocino held on Dec. 6th, 1879 in Poppe's Hall, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted.

Whereas, the Pioneer Society having lost in the demise of J. A. Poppe an esteemed brother member, therefore be it resolved that J. A. Poppe, a former President of the above-named Society, was a gentleman greatly respected by his brother Pioneers and that we deplore the untimely loss of our faithful and worthy member.

Resolved, that we, the Pioneers, offer herewith our heartfelt Condolence and Sympathy to the bereft and grieving family. J. A. Poppe was born near Berlin, Germany, Dec. 12, 1823. He arrived in California by way of New Orleans and Mexico in February 1844 and established himself in the Cigar and Tobacco business in San Francisco. Early in 1853 he settled in Sonoma Valley and ever since has been an active business member of this Community. After giving his attention to farming he embarked successively in Merchandising and Winemaking.

In the year 1872 he went to Germany for the purpose of bringing carp to this country, in which enterprise, as well as breeding these fish here, he was eminently successful.

His eventful earthly career was closed after a protracted illness on the 4th day of December 1879; and be it further resolved that the above resolutions and records shall be spread on the Books of the Society of Pioneers for future reference and be printed in the Sonoma Index, and a copy of the same be presented to the family of the deceased. Committee: Nicholas Carriger, Charles Van Geldern, Horatio Appleton. President, Thomas Earl. Recording Secretary, W. M. Boggs.

(The above resolutions were recently recovered from the Poppe estate. Mr. J. A. Poppe was the grandfather of Marjorie B. Fisk, associate editor of the Trailblazer.)

* * *

THE PIONEER-1897

"The Pioneer" which is the forerunner of "The Trailblazer," was edited by Alexander P. Murgotten, who was also secretary for the Pioneer Society at that time. The society's meeting place was in the Native Sons' Hall, San Fernando and Third streets, last Saturday of each month.

I have before me copies for 1897 which I find very

interesting. The following two items are from the January issue: "The Santa Clara County Pioneers held another of their pleasant quarterly meetings at A.O.U.W. Hall on the 26th of last month. Five pioneers were elected to membership: S. P. Stockton, H. Messing, Wm. Crates, H. A. Crawford and Mrs. J. J. Crawford.

After the regular business, the following programme was rendered: Piano duet, Misses Coil and Gordon; vocal solo, "Ben Bolt," Mrs. Myrtle Merithew, and for an encore she sang "Annie Laurie;" Violin solo, Edward Williams with Mr. Jaffee accompanist, which was well done and received an encore; recitation, comic, Miss Bowen, and in response played a piano solo.

The Pioneers and their guests sat down to an elegant repast prepared by the committee to which they did ample justice. Toasts were responded to by President Coykendall, Mrs. de Jarnette, S. W. Boring, Mrs. George Evans and D. J. Porter. Secretary Murgotten acted as master of ceremonies.

Murgotten evidently enjoyed the following Christmas newspaper editions, quote: "The San Francisco Call and the Sonoma Democrat each got out very creditable Christmas editions."

The Pioneer refers to the early days; "An old pioneer, speaking of the early days, says that the tools used in mining in 1848, were a spade, a pick, a six-quart pan or wooden bowl of about the same capacity, a skoop made of a bullock's horn and a butcher-knife; this constituted the ordinary outfit. Some had small rockers for washing that were never protected by letters of patent, and a man could carry one upon his shoulders. Quartz mining had not been thought of. The miners of 1848 were the Pioneers of California. They were moral, honest, industrious and law-abiding. A man could pack his one, two or three hundred pounds of gold on a mule and go where he pleased in perfect safety. The year 1848 furnished but two or three instances of larceny, robbery or violence in the whole country."

Advertisements in The Pioneer: "We will dress you like a Prince for \$15 or we will dress you like a King for \$20. Made to order. Every garment perfect fitting. Angevine the Tailor, 39 South 2nd Street."

"Vacant land in Santa Clara County cannot remain cheap long. Land increases in value each year. Catherine Dunne Ranch, 10,000 Acres Valley, in subdivisions to suit. Land \$25 to \$125 per acre; interest at 7 per cent per annum. Burbank & Devendorf, 17 North 1st Street."

By-lines from the President

Jessie E. Black

Now that it is beginning to look like Spring with so many trees in bloom, I wish you could have taken a walk over in the college grounds, as I did, and seen the plum trees in bloom, with all their pink splendor. It really was worth one's time to do so.

We are all happy to have Miss Alice Vetterle back with us after her long siege in the hospital. Also Miss Bernhardt at the old stand, taking reservations for bus tours.

The recipient of our annual Scholarship Award is Mr. Robert Zambetti. He has for his research topic, "The Status of the Japanese in Santa Clara County--1940-'50." Dr. Benjamin Gilbert of San Jose State College will present him at our June quarterly meeting, when he will give us the results of his research on this subject.

We have not quite made our 1000 membership quota at this time, but believe we will have it by June. We have less than 30 more to go!

* * *

LOOK FOR IT HERE

MARRIED--Emmett Miller and Henrietta Gaston, last January. They are now at home. Our congratulations. **

At our last quarterly meeting Mr. Frank Freeman of "Here 'Tis" fame was our Guest of Honor. Our featured speaker, Mr. Daniel Stern, public relations director of the San Jose Mercury and News, gave an excellent account of conditions in Santa Clara County 100 years ago. ***

Miss Alice Vetterle is now recuperating at home and wishes to thank everyone for the letters, cards and many kindnesses extended to her while she was in the hospital.*

Our artist member Ralph Rambo has designed some special hand-drawn letterheads for the Pioneer Society which are printed on best quality bond paper in two-colors and will be sold to members of the society -- 25 sheets for \$1.00, with envelopes. Our pioneers made their way to California by two means, overland or by sea. At the top of the page is the covered wagon with the oxen, and in the lower right hand corner, the sailing vessel. *

We think the new two-color look on the front page reflects real pioneer colors. If you like it please let us know. ***

On February 25, 1967 the Agnew Post Office was abandoned, and became the substation of the Santa Clara of-

fice. The town of Agnew was founded as a station on the old South Pacific Coast Railroad and named for Abram Agnew, a farmer in that locality. The Post Office was established there May 9, 1884. ***

Over 100 years old, Dergans' Corner at Franklin and Lafayette streets in Santa Clara was recently reduced to rubble by bulldozers working for the urban renewal agency. Dergans' saloon was at one time known as the unofficial Santa Clara City Hall. Its 14 foot plastered ceiling was decorated in traditional western style with an odd ornate decoration surrounded by steer horns and antlers. ***

The old Notre Dame College Pergola, the only remaining part of the convent that once rested near San Augustine and Santa Teresa streets, has been saved by the Historic Landmarks Commission and moved to Pioneer Town at Kelley Park for restoration and preservation. When the convent was relocated in the 1920's the gardener moved the small, eight-sided shrine to his property at 540 Prevost Street, where it has been standing until the recent move to Kelley Park. Original foundation was laid in 1854. ***

Rainfall in Santa Clara Valley, as reported in Pen Pictures from the Garden of the World: "1883-84, 35.42 inches; 1884-85, 21.07 in.; 1885-86, 32.13 in.; 1886-87, 17.31 in.; 1887-88, 23.90 in. Average, 25.97 in." ***

A number of members of San Jose Barracks, Veterans of World War I, belong to the Pioneer Society. All World War I veterans are eligible for membership in San Jose Barracks No. 710. ***

THE STORY OF NEW ALMADEN--A book, Cinnabar Hills. - The Quicksilver Days of New Almaden, a collaboration of two of our Pioneer members, Milton Lanyon & L. Bulmore.

Mr. Lanyon, a native of San Jose, whose father William Lanyon, a miner, came from Cornwall, has written the story. It tells of the life and times of this famous and first mining community in California, from its discovery in 1845 to 1912 when most of the miners left.

Mr. Bulmore, a native of New Almaden, has furnished the source material and most of the photographs used to illustrate the book. These pictures to a major extent - are the work of Laurence's father, Robert R. Bulmore, an official of the Quicksilver Mining Company for over twenty years, and an amateur photographer of no mean ability. The majority of these pictures are previously unpublished.

The publication date is set for June first. ***

WELCOME

Congratulations to our new members: Mary M. Brown, Arthur G. Cook, Louise Cook, Alice E. Doherty, Lena Fisk, George M. Gattorna, M. A. Gattorna, Everett M. Graham, Mildred L. Graham, Amy M. Hedberg, Alma Hawes, Leslie R. Hawes, Martin L. Hischer, Olga K. Hischer, Iva M. Kingsbury, Arthur R. Lack, Irene M. Lack, Irma J. Lang, Milton C. Lanyon, Josiah H. Lance, Theresa E. Lance, Helen Mathewson Miller, Bert Magoon, Marion F. Magoon, Gladys Morden, Lewis Morden, Sandina F. Piazza, Isabel M. Rebeiro, Harry F. Rediker, Olive I. Rediker, Lyla G. Richardson, Prudence C. Rogers, Florence Stahl, Marguerite Stahl, Jeanne A. Scarlazzari, John P. Scarlazzari, L. Dorothy Stewart, Paulyne B. Wheeler, Mrs. Singne A. Weingand, Elwin H. Weld, Idabell Weld, Ethel A. Williams.

* * *

UNDER THE WEATHER

Mrs. Mary D. Warburton, Mrs. Ethel B. Donovan, Mrs. Mary T. McLellan and Dr. A. T. Leonard have been reported ill. Our very best wishes and hope for a rapid recovery are sincerely extended.

Kindly keep your officers informed as to the condition of any ill member, and report any sickness or death to the chairman of our Sunshine Committee, Mrs. Ruth M. Heath. Phone 292-2609.

* * *

BEYOND THE SUNSET

Margaret C. Di Fiore

March 25, 1904 - February 25, 1967

William F. Runge

April 19, 1897 - March 6, 1967

Nettie D. Wagner

December 24, 1891 - March 8, 1967

In behalf of the officers and members of the California Pioneer Society of Santa Clara County, the TRAIL-BLAZER extends their sincere sympathy to the relatives and friends of our departed members.

THE TRAILBLAZER

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Associate Editor: Marjorie B. Fisk

Staff members: Olin and Edna Lake

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* * *

THE SOCIAL CLUB of our society meets on the 1st and 3rd Monday afternoon of each month. Card playing and various activities highlight each meeting. For further information call Mrs. Kate L. Owen, 295-1153.

BUS TOUR information for members of the Pioneer Society may be obtained from Miss Gertrude A. Bernhardt, phone 293-3087.

PIONEER SCRAP BOOK items may be sent to Mrs. Elsa Jensen, 520 Bradley Ave., San Jose, Calif. 95128.

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