



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

Volume 7

Winter 1967

Number 1

College of the Pacific

Rev. J. W. Hines a Methodist clergyman was president of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County 1903-04.

One of his greatest achievements was solving a problem handed to him by the trustees of the College of the Pacific, which was operated by the Methodists. His job was to subdivide and sell 400 acres of land located between The Alameda and the Guadalupe River. He had the land surveyed and laid out in blocks and lots. Some of the streets were named for Methodist bishops, such as McKendrie and Hedding.

Lots were selling fast and things seemed to be going well, when he was told by the President of the Board of Trustees that Messrs. Newhall and Polhemus, the men from whom they had purchased the land, wanted their money immediately. Mr. Hines had a conference with Mr. Newhall and won an extension of two weeks.

The next day he met John Spence, a local grocer on First Street, who told him he had just sold his ranch along Coyote Creek for \$16,000 cash, and intended to put half of it into his business.

Mr. Hines returned to the College office and told Dr. Hayden, secretary of the Board of Trustees about the \$8,000 lying idle. Next morning they went down town and visited Spence, "arrangements were made in a satisfactory manner," and they left with the \$8,000.

They drove to the home of John Polhemus, attorney-in-fact for Charles Polhemus and Newhall, paid him in full for the land, took his receipt for same, and the victory was won.

Later as the lots were sold off, Mr. Hines was able to repay John Spence for the \$8,000 loan, and the College of the Pacific remained in San Jose until the 1920's.

THE HIGH ROAD
Arthur M. Fisk

(This article is on file in the Yosemite Park Research Library. We are printing it in the Trailblazer by popular request.)

In June 1920 my wife Marjorie and I decided to spend our vacation in Yosemite Valley. Traveling by train we left San Jose at 9 a.m. on the Southern Pacific and changed trains at Niles and Tracy. At Merced we changed trains to the Yosemite Valley Railroad, which ran as far as El Portal where we transferred to a stage arriving at Camp Curry about 6 p.m.

The beauty of the valley surpassed our fondest expectations, so we decided to see some of the back country the following year via motor car. But we didn't make it until 1922.

We had a 1921 four cylinder Chevrolet touring car with an old style cone-shaped clutch that slipped when we got on a hard pull in low gear. So I carried a can of Fuller's Earth to throw up on the clutch for gripping power. Other necessities included two spare casings, two extra inner tubes, patches and a new vulcanizing kit, I had purchased for the trip. Also a desert bag, which I kept filled with water for the radiator.

We thought we were well equipped.

In June 1922 we were again on our way to Yosemite with our daughter Phyllis, via Pacheco Pass. The old dirt road over Pacheco Pass wound in and out of the canyon and became quite steep near the summit. With an average speed of about 15 miles per hour and one puncture, it was nearly noon when we topped the divide. We made better time across the San Joaquin Valley, but it was nearly dark before we got to a good spot near Mariposa, where we camped for the night.

There was no road into the valley by Briceburg at that time and the old wagon road out of Mariposa looped around boulders and wound around trees, with dust several inches thick and rocks that present day cars couldn't hurdle. The grade was steep, and we stalled several times when the clutch slipped. The hand brake wouldn't hold the car, so Marjorie got out and placed rocks behind the rear wheels before I could get out to dust the clutch. We had one blow-out on this stretch of road, but after some struggle we came into what is now Highway 41 near Fish Camp.

It was noon when we reached Fish Camp so we stopped there for lunch.

Leaving Fish Camp, we found the road in better condition through Wawona to Chinquapin. But from Chinquapin to the valley floor it was rough and rugged, and we lost elevation quite rapidly. Swinging around Inspiration Point on a hair pin curve, we got our first glimpse of the valley, and it was delightful.

That night we camped in Yosemite Valley.

We learned from a ranger that Tioga Pass would be opened for through traffic about four days later -- the following Monday morning. This was the bait we couldn't resist. What a challenge for a four cylinder Chevrolet and a couple of determined TRAILBLAZERS.

The Big Oak Flat Road, which we had to climb from the valley to Crane Flat was a one way, control road. Out traffic on either the odd or even hour (I have forgotten which) and traffic must clear the road before the hour was up.

Monday morning, we were waiting for the go signal and made the ascent to Crane Flat without seeing traffic of any kind in either direction. This was long before the present Tioga Pass Road was built, so we continued on past the Tuolumne Grove to Carl Inn, on the South Fork of the Tuolumne River. We left the Big Oak Flat Road here, crossed the river and headed north-east through Aspen Valley, over another divide and descended to the Middle Fork of the Tuolumne River, which we followed for some distance.

We stopped at Yosemite Creek to rest and refresh ourselves, and talked with a young couple camped there with a Model T Ford. They had burned out their low gear band a week before and were waiting for someone to bring up a new band from Merced. They had been living on fresh fish mostly, but did not seem discouraged.

We shoved on, and about five o'clock came to a beautiful spot at Tenaya Lake where we thought we would like to camp. When we got out of the car, the mosquitoes were there to greet us -- millions of them, and we were their first fresh meat that year. It didn't take us long to decide that we should keep traveling.

It was just about dark when we reached Tuolumne Meadows and camped near the Soda Spring. There was one other young couple camped there.

(Concluded in the Spring Issue)

IN THE BEGINNING

The State of California without history would be like a history of the Industrial Revolution without machines.

California was the choice prize of the War with Mexico, but it was not exactly part of the Mexican War when a group of American settlers, perhaps with the knowledge of Captain Fremont, who was on an exploring expedition in the west, captured General Vallejo on June 14, 1846, seized the town of Sonoma and established the Bear Flag Republic.

Commodore Sloat, commanding U. S. naval forces seized Monterey for the United States on July 7, 1846, and the occupation of California seemed complete by August 17 of the same year.

Sloat in his first proclamation at Monterey, after charging Mexico with the responsibility of the war, said: "I declare to the inhabitants of California that, although I come in arms with a powerful force, I do not come among them as an enemy to California; on the contrary, I come as their friend, as hence-forward California will be a portion of the United States and its peaceful inhabitants will enjoy the same rights and privileges as the citizens of any other portion of that territory, with all the rights and privileges they now enjoy, together with the privilege of choosing their own magistrates and other officers for the administration of justice among themselves; and the same protection will be extended to them as to any other state in the Union."

Sloat was soon replaced by Stockton who had a far less conciliatory attitude toward the native Californians but who did make promises of a civil government.

After General Kearny arrived overland from the "States," he outranked all other U. S. officials and soon tried to organize a civil government. In a proclamation he said that, "the people would soon be called upon to exercise their rights as free men, in electing their own representatives to make such laws as may be deemed best for their interest and welfare."

When Congress convened in December 1847 President Polk, in his annual message, recommended that, "stable, responsible and free government be provided for California." Congress, however, failed to take any action.

Only two courses were left open -- to wait for Congress to provide a civil government or for the people of California to take the power into their own hands and

organize a territorial or state government.

On December 11, 1848, the citizens of San Jose met "for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of establishing a provincial territorial government for the better protection of life and property." They adopted resolutions recommending that a general convention meet in San Jose. Similar meetings were held in San Francisco, Sacramento and Sonoma.

In the Spring of 1849, General Bennett Riley became de facto Governor of California. Riley proved to be more energetic than his predecessors and upon receipt of the news that Congress had again adjourned without provisions for a government in California, he immediately asserted his authority by issuing a call for a constitutional convention. The convention was to meet in Monterey on September 1, 1849.

On September 1, 1849, ten delegates to the constitutional convention met at Colton Hall in Monterey. They elected a temporary chairman and secretary and adjourned until Monday, September 3. On Monday there were twenty-eight members present. All told there were forty-eight delegates that attended the convention.

The convention was organized on September 4, and Robert Semple, delegate from Sonoma, was elected president and William G. Marcy was elected secretary.

Before the convention proceeded with the drawing up of the constitution, Halleck secured a direct vote on the question of whether a state or territorial government was to be organized. The only opposition to a state government came from the southern part of the state. The vote favoring a state government was 28 to 8.

When the convention proceeded to the new constitution, McCarver moved that, "the committee take the constitution of Iowa as a basis for the new constitution, because it was one of the latest and shortest." A committee of two members from each district was to prepare the new constitution article by article. The first article, the "Bill of Rights," was reported on September 7.

The much desired honor of being the State capital came first to San Jose, in 1849. In 1851 the state government moved to Vallejo and in 1853 to Benicia. Finally in 1854 the legislature decided that Sacramento would be the most suitable place as seat of the state's government.

During the first decade of California's statehood, life centered mostly in the area between San Francisco Bay and the gold fields of the Sierra Nevada.

TOURING CAR

Laura Morrison

(From a letter to my brother Dale)

You asked me to tell you something about our first car when it was new. You remember it as the Morrison Brothers' work car with lumber piled on its top or tied to its fenders. Dad and Uncle Kenneth built several large houses in those early days. In one Saratoga home the chimneys were cement from the ground up. A hand made frame, a pole on the roof, a cement bucket and the Overland for power was all the equipment needed. One unhappy carpenter had to drive the car back and forth all day long. But I remember the day Dad bought the car, our black, brass trimmed 1912 Overland touring car. He had tried to prepare Mildred and me for the sale of our horses, but we were broken hearted. Tom was as playful and gentle as a dog, and Lady tolerated children but won our respect.

It was a sunny afternoon. Dad was shown how to drive and had driven home alone. He looked triumphant and was ready to take us all riding. Mother refused, but she and the three of us children leaned over the front fence and watched Dad drive around and around the block, going fast and slow, backing often.

"I wonder if I'll have to raise three children alone," Mother said sadly when Dad did not appear as soon as she expected.

Dad practiced so much that day that Mother consented to a short drive Sunday morning. Dad cranked the car several times but nothing happened. Finally the engine coughed, then started with a roar. Dad rubbed his arm, but smiled; he said "he didn't let go of the crank soon enough."

We drove on the lightly traveled Homestead Road. The car not only went forward, but it also went up and down. I was afraid it might explode, and Mildred talked about Tom and Lady. Mother held you on her lap, and told us girls to sit close together in the middle of the seat so we would not fall out.

When the ride was over, Dad's eyes had dust in them, you had an earache from the wind and Mildred a headache. Mother and I were none the worse except for dry mouths.

Dad bought himself a grey linen duster, a tight fitting cap and goggles. Mother made herself and us girls veils of sewing silk to wear over our sailor hats. She

got you a warm, red cap called a toque. It had a tassel on top that tickled her chin or got into her mouth when she held you on her lap.

Dad was told the Overland would look longer and sportier if the top was put down. He and the man next door coaxed it down one day. It folded much like a buggy top. But getting the top back up was no easy job for two men. Yes, the car did look longer and sportier -- but just once.

The gasoline tank was under the front seat. This meant that you and Mother got out every time we went to a garage to fill her up. And gasoline was not clean. Dad got a chamois lined funnel and always had the gasoline strained.

The horn presented a problem. It took a strong hand to squeeze the bulb at a time when both hands were needed on the steering wheel. Then, too, it frightened horses. Dad installed a battery operated horn; now Mother could press a button between the front seats when we rounded curves.

We never had engine trouble, but we never took a trip without tire trouble.

I remember the first time we were caught in the rain. Dad struggled with ill fitting side curtains made of leather and isinglass. One cracked before it was coaxed onto the car. Then as we rode along the others cracked one by one, but still we were snug and warmer.

We kept night driving to a minimum though we enjoyed an occasional supper at the San Jose Coffee Club. Lighting the kerosene headlights was a problem as the wind blew out the matches. But Mother's skirts were full and could be held outstretched to make a good windbreak.

For a long time Mildred and I would gladly have traded the Overland for the horses, and then we had a wonderful thrilling experience. We had gone all the way to San Francisco. Coming out of the city, while we were still in the hills, a heavy rain began to fall. Now the Overland always made excellent time going downhill, but on this night the road was slippery. First the car crossed the road, throwing Mildred and me together. Then we turned completely around. Mildred and I laughed and grabbed each other, excited and unafraid -- such was our confidence in Papa.

Now we knew that the Overland was more fun than Tom and Lady.

THE CITY OF CATS

Arthur M. Fisk

In 1840 Governor Alvarado granted $1\frac{1}{2}$ square leagues, about 6,500 acres to Don Luis Peralto and Felipe Hernandez, which they called "El Rancho de la Rinconada de la Arroyo de Los Gatos," or "The Ranch at the bend of the creek of the cats."

The first man to recognize the business possibilities of the Los Gatos area was the British vice-consul, James Alexander Forbes. In 1850 Forbes built a flour mill on the bank of Los Gatos Creek. It was three stories high and one of the tallest buildings in Santa Clara County. This was the first building in Los Gatos.

By 1868 Los Gatos boasted of a blacksmith shop in addition to the flour mill and a few residences, all located on the east side of Los Gatos Creek. At this time the town of Lexington was much larger than Los Gatos, as it was the half-way stop for stages traveling between San Jose and Santa Cruz. In addition to a blacksmith shop it boasted of having a livery stable, a hotel and a one teacher school.

In 1877 the railroad came to Los Gatos and the town was off to a good start. It was then that Santa Cruz Avenue was laid out and business began to flourish on the west side of Los Gatos Creek. At that time the bridge across the creek was very low, and Main Street ran through a cut to the railroad station. It was some time later before the bridge was raised and Main Street leveled off.

In 1881 the first edition of the "Los Gatos Weekly News" was printed. If any person traveled a distance of five miles or more, for either pleasure or business, an item about the trip was printed in the paper. This practice continued until after the turn of the century.

The first bank in Los Gatos opened in 1883 on the south side of Main Street, east of College Avenue, and was known as the Bank of Los Gatos. The founders of the bank were two bankers known as Kirkland and Conkling. In 1926 they sold out to the Bank of Italy, which later became the Bank of America.

In 1887 Los Gatos was incorporated and many problems began to develop. Like all California towns Los Gatos had saloons, but two members of the Board of Trustees were prohibitionists. The other members wanted some special concessions from the prohibitionists, so they compromised and agreed to dry up Los Gatos and close all the

saloons. How long Los Gatos remained dry we have no record. Another ordinance authorized ringing of the curfew bell at 9:00 p.m., so that all children under 16 would be home unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

By the turn of the century Los Gatos had a livery stable, furniture store, drug store, French laundry, real estate office, restaurant, millinery store, dairy, insurance company, jeweler, theatre, Crall's book store, Lyndon Hotel and a cannery. In 1906 Ray Hicks bought an automobile, and became the first person in Los Gatos to own one.

Today the city limits of Los Gatos are adjoining those of San Jose and Campbell.

* * *

By-Lines from the President
Jessie E. Black

I sincerely hope that you have all had a very happy Christmas with your families and friends.

Wasn't the music beautiful at our December luncheon? How fortunate we were to have Mr. Patterakis and his wonderful carolers from Peterson hi-school with us again.

Before our March luncheon I am sure we will have over 1,000 members, whoever our 1,000th member may be we will let you know at that time and will honor them with an appropriate ceremony.

Also, at our March quarterly meeting we are honoring Mr. Frank Freeman, who has done so many favors for us whenever we have asked him to do so.

We were all so happy to see Miss Bernhardt at the Thanksgiving Day dinner at the De Anza Hotel. There were 26 of us present and a very nice time was enjoyed by all.

Miss Alice Vetterle is recuperating very nicely at Northern Inyo Hospital, Bishop, California. She sends her greetings to all, and will probably be in the hospital another month or so.

It is my sincere wish that you, one and all, have a very pleasant year, with health and happiness thrown in.

* * *

LOOK FOR IT HERE

18 members over 85 years of age were honored at our quarterly meeting on December 3rd. Those present were: Harriet Burnett, William B. Calvert, Josephine Franklin, Herbert C. Jones, Della A. Montgomery, Dora Owen, Dr. Ernest O. Pieper, Edna C. Ridley, Ida Skow, J. Winter

Smith. Those that could not be present were: Mary D. Ferry, Una B. Hughson, Lavinia Lindeman, Mildred L. Overfelt, Mildred Robinson, Emma Rutan, Ann E. Topham and Mary D. Warburton. ***

Your editors are in receipt of a letter from Miss Alice Vetterle, Northern Inyo Hospital, Bishop, Calif. 93514, in which she says, "thanks very much to all my friends in the Pioneer Society who have sent me cards and letters during my convalescence." She also states, "the post office had to put on extra help to deliver her mail." Keep on sending those cards and letters. ***

Mrs. Gladys Hood found among the effects of her late husband, Hubert, a marriage license issued to John Widney and Sallie A. Wyman on May 3, 1864. It was issued by James A. Clayton, county clerk at that time. Also a certificate of marriage signed by the minister, D. A. Dryden. Both documents bore Civil War stamps, which cost the bridegroom 10¢ and 5¢ respectively. According to Clyde Arbuckle, City Historian, John Widney in later years owned about half of Santa Clara and at one time was an agent for Wells Fargo. ***

The historic old Hall of Records Building at North First and St. James Streets, erected in 1891-93 was knocked down by the wrecker's ball last month. Its demolition was no easy job, as the walls were two feet thick made of brick and supported by brick arches. The building was faced with granite and built to last forever. In its place will be built a perpetual fountain and a parkway to glorify the new county courthouse. The Belgium glass doors and hand-honed exterior granite artifacts were moved out and will be preserved. ***

1967 DUES may be mailed to Mrs. Eveleen C. Duff, 82 South 9th Street, San Jose, California, 95112. ***

Miss Gertrude Bernhardt is now recuperating at home and wishes to thank everyone for the letters, cards and many kindnesses extended to her while she was hospitalized during her recent illness. ***

Correction: The wrong list of police officers was copied in Mr. Cannell's office when reporting the original members of the San Jose police department in the Fall issue of the Trailblazer. We hope to have the correct list for our next issue. ***

I used to think I knew I knew,
But now, I must confess,
The more I know I know I know,
I know I know the less.

WELCOME

Congratulations to our new members: Catherine J. Aurrecoechea, Lelia J. Awbrey, Blanch Beam, Beulah Berry, Chester Berry, Lillian E. Bishop, Frances S. Boogaert, Johan Boogaert, Rachel Brown, Martha L. Bulmore, Henry J. Calloway, Laura Calloway, William B. Calvert, Esther Crow H. Leslie Crow, Margaret C. Di Fiore, Edward J. Kelley, Geraldine Kelley, John M. Kelley, Naomi B. Kelley, Mary Malone, Vera A. McCready, Emmett C. Miller, Camilla Owen, Clemens A. Plasker, Clotilda M. Schoppe, Jeanette E. Schuh, Ann E. Topham.

* * *

UNDER THE WEATHER

Mrs. Ethel Monogue, Miss Laura Morrison, Miss Ethel Prosser, Mrs. Juliette S. Strothers, Mr. Leo Sullivan, Miss Alice M. Vetterle and Mrs. Mary D. Warburton have been reported ill. Our very best wishes and hope for a rapid recovery are sincerely extended

* * *

BEYOND THE SUNSET

Hubert E. Hood

October 25, 1890 - October 9, 1966

Gladys Budde

December 9, 1891 - October 23, 1966

Gertrude J. Gale

October 29, 1890 - October 31, 1966

Edna F. Espinosa

February 5, 1883 - November 18, 1966

Frances R. Fowler

January 26, 1886 - November 23, 1966

Mabel G. Ogier

September 15, 1879 - December 3, 1966

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

Issued in January, April, July and October

Editor: Arthur M. Fisk, 1335 Singletary Ave., San José

Associate Editor: Marjorie B. Fisk

Staff members: Olin and Edna Lake

Subscription rates to non-members \$1.00 per year. Single copies 25 cents each.

Officers for 1966-67

- President Jessie E. Black
- 1st Vice President Dr. O. S. Hubbard
- 2nd Vice President Robert E. Nelson
- Recording Secretary Alice M. Vetterle
- Corresponding Secretary Eloise Leslie
- Financial Secretary Eveleen C. Duff
- Treasurer Howard L. Worcester
- Directors: Clyde Arbuckle, Laurence E. Bulmore, Minnie L. Clark, Ruth M. Heath, Fred R. Menzel, Marjorie Rusht, Austen D. Warburton and Mabel M. Wiley.

* * *

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 Mrs. Effie M. Hawkins, phone 295-2868. 10 a.m. until 12 noon only.

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

* * *

If undelivered return to:
82 SOUTH 9th STREET
SAN JOSE, CALIF. 95112

Return requested

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. P O S T A G E
P A I D
San Jose, California
Permit No. 1234