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MISSION SAN JOSE

(The following item copied from May 1897 issue of "The Pioneer," official publication for the Pioneer Society.)

The one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Mission San Jose, was appropriately celebrated last month.

The old church, which the padres, aided by Spanish soldiers and Christianized Indians, erected just 100 years ago, still stands and will be the center of the festivities. It has not known many changes in the century born after its erection, for its masons knew the art of giving strength if not architectural beauty. A wooden addition was built a few years ago, but the old adobe wall and part of the roof of woven grass still remain.

The Mission San Jose was founded by Father Lasuen. He landed at a point on the old Alameda, accompanied by a detail of soldiers and a couple of assistants on January 10, 1797. The Indians who inhabited the district called their settlement Oroysom. Toward the end of the month several adobe and thatched buildings had been erected. Work on the chapel was commenced 100 years ago. Fathers Isadoro Barcenilla and Augustin Merino were placed in charge of the mission when it had been fully established.

In 1800 the service of mass was attended by fully 400 Christianized Indians. In the early part of this century the mission was one of the most important in the State.

About the mission are many traces of the handiwork of the padres and their Indian pupils, which still defy the changes of time. There are rude carvings in oak and other native woods, and the vines which they planted still thrive.



The Alameda



BETWEEN MISSION SANTA CLARA AND THE PUEBLO OF SAN JOSE TRAVEL WAS DIFFICULT, EVEN DANGEROUS. NUMEROUS LITTLE BROOKS, MARSHES AND SMALL LAKES HINDERED THE PEDESTRIAN OR HORSEMAN AND BOGGED DOWN THE HEAVY CARRETA WHEELS. ADDED HAZARDS WERE THE BANDS OF WILD CATTLE THAT ROAMED THIS UNFENCED TERRITORY, AT TIMES A FOREST OF YELLOW MUSTARD 10 TO 12 FEET HIGH. IN WINTER A DETOUR OF 6 MILES TO THE WEST WAS NECESSARY. SO WAS BORN THE PLAN OF FATHER MAGIN CATALA, "HOLY MAN OF THE SANTA CLARA MISSION." FROM THE BANKS OF THE GUADALUPE HE TOOK BLACK WILLOW CUTTINGS AND STARTED A NURSERY OF THOUSANDS. FOR TWO YEARS HE TENDED THEIR GROWTH. THEN, 18 YEARS AFTER MISSION FOUNDING, IN 1795, WITH TWO HUNDRED INDIAN NEOPHYTE HELPERS, HE STAKED OUT AND PLANTED THE ENTIRE 3 MILES OF OUR ALAMEDA. (MEANING: A GROVE OF SHADE TREES.) IRRIGATED BY DITCH DUG FROM THE GUADALUPE, THEY FLOURISHED, THEIR TOP BOUGHS EVENTUALLY MEETING TO FORM A NATURAL CANOPY. FOR 75 YEARS THEY REMAINED UNDESPOILED. "MANY PASSED, THE NAKED RED MAN, THE DARK, SLOW MOVING DON AND THE BLUE EYED GRINGO." BENEATH THEIR SHELTER PASSED THE SAINTLY FATHER SERRA AND THE BANDIT SINNER, VASQUEZ; BEAUTIFUL

SEÑORITAS, CABALLEROS, PIONEERS, GOLD HUNTERS, WEDDINGS, FUNERALS, PARADES OF EVERY DESCRIPTION, FROM THE PRANCING, VICTORIOUS JUAN PRADO WITH THE HEAD OF THE RENEGADE INDIAN YOSCOLO ON A POLE, DOWN TO OUR ALMOST FORGOTTEN BUT LOVELY FIESTA DE LAS ROSAS SPECTACLES.... AS TRAFFIC INCREASED, RAIN MADE TRAVEL ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE. IN 1856, CRANDALL BROS. STARTED AN OMNIBUS LINE. FROM 1868 TO 1878 THE SAN JOSE & SANTA CLARA HORSE RAILWAY CO. MADE ITS SLOW BUT SURE WAY AND IN 1870 WAS GRANTED RIGHT TO USE STEAM, PONY, OR PNEUMATIC POWER." AN ATTEMPTED UNDERGROUND TROLLEY SYSTEM HAD BEEN SOON FLOODED OUT IN 1886. WITH ADVENT OF ELECTRIC STREET CARS IN 1887 CAME DESTRUCTION OF THE CENTER ROW OF TREES. (DUE TO PUBLIC INDIGNATION, DONE DURING NIGHT.) GRADUALLY THESE AGED SENTINELS MARKING OUR MOST HISTORIC AND ROMANTIC HIGHWAY HAVE FALLEN BEFORE THE MARCH OF TIME OR PROGRESS. TODAY, 1964, I SEE ONLY ONE BRAVE AND HEALTHY SPROUT STILL SPARED FRONTING THE SAN JOSE INN.

THE PEN AND INK DRAWING ABOVE WAS SKETCHED FROM AN ORIGINAL PHOTO TAKEN BETWEEN 1868-78. THE CAR IS ON EAST SIDE OF THE ALAMEDA RETURNING TO SAN JOSE. SHOWN WERE REMAINING CATALA WILLOWS.

(This is a reduction of page 9, appearing in Almost Forgotten. Permission to use is granted by the author F. Ralph Rambo.)

INDIAN MEDICINE SHOW

Leo Sullivan

(My appreciation to Clyde Arbuckle, San Jose City Historian for his assistance with the material for this article.)

Theatrical people and Theatres in the 70's and 80's were frowned upon and regarded as frivolous individuals and questionable institutions, not measuring up to the standards of America's puritanical straight-laced propriety.

(Actors, ordinarily, were poorly paid, receiving as little as a dollar per day; thespians, with a "rep" made as much as \$25 a week -- according to Blum's "One Hundred Years of American Theatres.")

The public failed to realize that only individuals of unusual stamina, strength and ability could endure the emotional strains of play-acting in tents, theatres or wagons, then riding all night and day over rough, unpaved roads to the next town.

It must be remembered that railroads, (once so numerous, profitable and powerful) were then few and far between throughout the hinterland. All traveling had to be done by horse and wagon.

The Indian Medicine Show, the writer recalls, consisted of an Indian "Doctor," a tall, dark, suave, distinguished looking man, adorned with a king-sized mustache, shoulder-length jet-black hair, nattily clad in a Prince Albert coat, while sporting lavender-colored trousers tucked into high-heeled, patent leather boots. A company as a rule, included a vocalist, banjo-player, dancer, acrobat, plus a couple of versatile helpers--one a Black-Face, the other a "Ham" and, of course not forgetting the "Schill."

(Prior to the invention of modern tube make-up, actors applied a thin layer of bacon-grease, or fat to their face, thus preventing burnt-cork or harmful paints from poisoning their skin. Ham and bacon having the same origin, it's easily understood why actors, who could not afford the costly new make-up tubes, resented being classed in the same category as the lowly swine or "Ham".)

(A "Schill" was and is, a necessary member of the traveling carnivals or combinations, who's job is to mingle unobtrusably in the crowd and make the first purchase to start the money flowing from the onlooker's pockets to the Indian "Doctor's" purse.)

Arriving in town, the emblazoned rig proclaimed to the world the efficacy of the "Doctor's" cure-all in restoring youth and vitality, beside healing a multiplicity of human ills from fallen arches to ingrowing toe-nails.

Choosing a likely corner, Market and San Fernando streets, night was awaited--the kerosene torches at darkness spread friendly, cheerful gleams into the blackness of the night. (Street lighting was practically nil.)

When the crowd had reached worth-while proportions, the singer and banjoist "went into their liveliest number followed by the acrobat displaying his gymnastic skill", meanwhile the "hoofer" (dancer) kicked up his heels in a jig, horn-pipe or buck and wing dance.

The Black Face, the "comic" of the group, did a monologue; the "Ham" recited a dramatic scene, ostensibly from Shakespeare's "King Lear."

These preliminaries paved the way for the main event of the evening--the "Doctor's" announcement. He and his troupe of speciality artists would grace the same corner nightly for the balance of the week: emphasizing, that for the first time, he was permitted to sell his "Miracle Elixer at the rock-bottom price of only One Dollar per bottle."

The good "Doctor" used keen psychology, the supply of his magic formula never seemed to meet the demand. Sensing when sales, evidently, had reached their peak, the "Doctor" regretfully announced "The evening's supply of his Marvelous Elixer was sold out, and that individuals desiring more should return the following night."

By Saturday, the crowd needed no urging in parting with its hard earned cash.

The writer well remembers his Mother and neighboring friends returning home laden with their precious bottles of "Turee." "T-U-R-E-E, the Redman's gift to the White Race."

The "Doctor" and his troupe visited San Jose annually.

"Turee," like "Lydia Pinkham's Compound" and "Peruna" was later found to be a gentle laxative, composed of a mixture of water, cloves (bitters) and a high percentage of alcohol.

(Other Indian Medicine units visiting the Valley were "The Pawnee Indians," "Doctor Kamama," and "Brother Benjamin Brunns" shows. Another "Indian" outfit held forth in a vacant lot on Santa Clara Street near Delmas.)

THE CORNER SALOON

Donald Tustin

(The following item is from the files of the late John L. Tustin, Donald's father.)

Present day taverns have replaced the old time corner saloon, but only in the sense that a grandson replaces his more robust grandfather. Sawdust protected the floor, large brass spittoons served well when needed, and a brass rail was just right to rest tired or wobbly feet and act as a foot hold to steady patrons leaning against the bar. This was the meeting place for male members of the neighborhood.

Men were free to come and go as they pleased, but women were admitted only through a back door Family Entrance equipped with a table and chairs. This was also the route for small boys rushing-the-growler, consisting of a tin lard bucket to be filled with beer for the family or their friends and costing a dime. Greasing the bucket on the inside resulted in fewer suds and more beer.

Here was a place to meet new and old friends, enjoy art displays on the walls, listen to friendly arguments often settled in the back yard and admire the ability of the bouncer as he threw out a bum for grabbing a handful of free lunch.

Free lunch of sliced bread, salted crackers, sausage, cheese, relish and onions was for those who bought a large schooner of Old Joe's steam beer for a nickel or a glass of bourbon or rye for a dime, including a chaser of water for those having use for it.

Experienced drinkers deftly raised their walrus mustache to keep from straining the suds as the brew was hoisted into place and poured down the hatch to its destiny. Pleasure was completed with a satisfying belch of contentment.

* * *

POST OFFICE NOTES

Henry Calloway

The question is often asked, "Where was the first Post Office in the state of California?" Official records indicate that the first Post Office under American rule in California was organized in San Francisco on November 9, 1848. Monterey was close behind on November 21, 1848.

By 1851, 34 Post Offices were thriving throughout the State. The throngs rolling in demanded this rapid expansion. The San Jose Post Office was established

November 8, 1849.

As official sign painter for the San Jose office, I recently finished work on a sign for the Almaden Post Office, now located in the old Casa Grande, where Mr. Norman Pope presides as Postmaster. The sign reads, "U. S. Post Office, Estab. July 5, 1861."

In July 1867, the San Jose City Council appointed a Mr. J. W. Cary to "Mark the street names at the corners thereof."

Mail delivery to homes came to San Jose in 1883 when Mr. Daniel Copps Bailey, the Postmaster, started a street and house numbering system that brought this about. At that time the Post Office was located on the northwest corner of Santa Clara and Market streets.

Mt. Hamilton, California was established as an office on December 1, 1884. It operated until 1886, when it was closed and remained so until reopened on January 7, 1890. Mt. Hamilton a rural contract station, has been in operation ever since.

We all know the Wednesday, April 18, 1906 morning when San Francisco was rocked by a violent earthquake and then razed by fire. The San Francisco Post Office staff, though thoroughly wearied from Wednesday's long battle against the fire, began to collect mail again on Thursday. Everything was makeshift. There simply were no normal channels for mail collection or distribution.

Notes of all descriptions went out from San Francisco on bits and scraps of cardboard, newspapers, old envelopes and even on shingles. Anything which carried a message and an address was handled without charge for postage and given extra care to boot. It is remarkable that not one piece of mail was lost in the disaster. Some years ago, a long-since-retired postal employee explained that the closest call came when a street car, carrying mail at the time of the quake, caught fire and burned. Nevertheless, the record remained simon-pure when the sacks were dragged off in time.

For the final item, let's pick a date somewhat more recent, like 1920, and see who was in charge of operations at the Old San Jose Post Office located in what is now the city Public Library. The roster reads like this: Byron Millard, Postmaster; I. A. Ball, Asst. Postmaster; S. L. Worden, Supt. of Mails; Frank L. Hughs, Asst. Supt.; George Hines, Foreman-Money Orders and Miss Fannie Montgomery, Foreman-Registry.

THOMAS SHANNON-JAYHAWKER

Arthur M. Fisk

Thomas Shannon was born in Ohio, January 25, 1825. During the Mexican War he enlisted with the Ohio volunteers and served one year under General Taylor. After his discharge from the service he settled in Illinois, but soon decided he needed a milder climate, and joined a party in Galesburg, Illinois of about 50 men who called themselves the "Jayhawkers." They left Galesburg April 5, 1849 and followed the overland trail to Salt Lake City. It was so late in the season by that time they were afraid to try to cross the Sierra Nevada, so hired a Mormon guide, Captain Jefferson Hunt to take them to Los Angeles. About 300 miles south of Salt Lake, 34 of the party decided to take a short cut to California, without a guide or maps and soon found themselves hopelessly lost, without food in a trackless desert, now known as Death Valley. They could not find a pass through the mountains and four died of exposure and starvation. After months of suffering the party traveling southwest found a settlement at what is now Newhall. From this point they worked their way northward through the San Joaquin Valley. It was now February 1850.

Shannon enlisted in the Seventh California Company B, during the Civil War. He was honorably discharged at San Francisco in April 1866. He then returned to San Jose and homesteaded 160 acres in the Union District. Shannon Road leading from San Jose-Los Gatos Road into the foothills, southeast of Los Gatos was named for him.

In 1851 Shannon married Amanda Blackford. There were seven children from this marriage, four boys and three girls. The oldest son Cassius became a locomotive engineer, and also his grandson Arleigh C. Shannon. His great grandson Arleigh C. Shannon Jr. is a locomotive engineer with the Southern Pacific Company and residing in San Jose at the present time. Tom Shannon died in 1903. Other members of the "Jayhawker Party" to settle in Santa Clara Valley were: William L. Manly, Lorenzo D. Stephens and Henry Wade.

A reunion of the Jayhawkers in Kansas City, February 4, 1897 Tom Shannon wrote the following letter: "The forty-seven years since our delivery from the valley of death seems long, but the day is still green in the minds of the survivors. I have crossed some death valleys since, and some green ranges, also, but I am now at the foot of the last range, which must be crossed by all the

boys. Most of them have already gone, but they send no tidings back of the prospects of water. If, when I have crossed the last range, I should find a Jayhawker camping by pure water, I shall be happy."

* * *

SAN JOSE 1849

(From the diary of George H. Baker, by courtesy of Dr. Earl E. Rhoads.)

"Pueblo San Jose - August 10th 1849. Arrived here this last evening, having performed the journey from San Francisco since yesterday noon. I rode yesterday as far as Sanchez Ranch - 15 miles - where I put up for the night. It was an adobe building, fast verging to ruin.

It was a dreary ride yesterday, and quite cold, the clouds lying above the tops of the high mountains and overshadowing the whole landscape.

Saw great quantities of stock grazing on the road. The old Mission of San Francisco, or Dolores, was an object of attraction, though there was little about it of interest for it was nearly fallen to ruin and is almost deserted.

This morning I found the road of the same uninteresting character, except I remarked a greater quantity of horses, which were really fine in appearance. The air was quite clear, but the high hills on the west were still covered with clouds. At noon the road entered a beautiful country covered with yellow fields of wild oats ten to twelve inches in height, and spotted over with beautiful green oaks.

At the Mission of Santa Clara, one league from here, (3 miles) I arrived about an hour before sunset, and there was something so peculiarly Mexican about it I determined on making a sketch, which I did in the Plaza over the saddle of my horse. A fine causeway lined with trees runs all the way from the Mission to the Pueblo, a fine evidence, with many other things seen, of the fostering spirit of the earlier Padres. The road is now obstructed with fallen trees, and some have been very lately cut down. It would be a lasting pity to have it destroyed now.

There is little of interest in San Jose though some progress is being made in building, etc., in anticipation that it may yet have the distinguished appellation of the first Seat of Government in California."

(Left the next day for Livermore's Ranch)

By-lines from the President
Jessie E. Black

Another year has passed. I want to take advantage of this opportunity to thank you all for coming to our luncheons, getting new members and for just being you. I especially want to thank the Board of Directors of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County for the support given me as President during this past year. With a present membership of almost one thousand, proper guidance throughout the past months, meant much to me.

Much assistance was also given by Effie Hawkins and Helen Arbuckle in regard to the historical trips by bus during Miss Bernhardt's recent illness. Mr. and Mrs. Olin Lake have faithfully addressed all copies of the Trailblazer and quarterly notices. This work takes time and devotion. As for the editors, Arthur and Marjorie Fisk, their efforts with the Trailblazer have kept all members informed with the accomplishments of our Pioneer group. Incidentally, isn't the new cover attractive? The editor is still looking for articles from members, and I am sure many of you have some interesting facts about early Santa Clara County. Get them in!

Attendance at our quarterly meetings has been large. Our speakers on these occasions are carefully selected. The next quarterly meeting and luncheon will be Saturday, September 2nd. Do plan to attend. Again, thank you for your splendid support during this past year.

* * *

LOOK FOR IT HERE

Following up on Leo Sullivan's article on Medicine Shows, I ran across the following item in the San Jose Herald dated March 6, 1910: "Dr. Kergan is known as "Kamama" on account of his wonderful cures with Kamama Remedies, he has created a sensation here by the introduction of his wonderful Nerve Tonic and Oil of Life. He has revolutionized the manner of treating and healing the sick. The Unique Theatre has been the scene of operations. He brings with him his big vaudeville company. One thing that makes Kamama so popular is that his concerts and demonstrations are absolutely free." ***

We have received a request from Louis C. Lassabatere for old time recipes, something simple but tasty, like the usual categories of beef, venison, fish, fowl, bread, muffins, biscuits, etc. Ladies, how about this challenge for Pioneer recipes? Send them to the editor. ***

Your officers elected for the ensuing year, were duly installed at the Board of Directors Meeting July 10.

The beautiful new City of Santa Clara Central Library at 2635 Homestead Road was dedicated Sunday April 2nd. Patrons had their first chance to check out books on April 4th. An article on the history of the Santa Clara library will appear in a later issue of the Trailblazer. ***

A toast was raised high for John Gilroy (real name Cameron) by members of Monterey Viejo Chapter of the ancient and honorable order of E. Clampus Vitus on April 22nd at Gilroy. John Gilroy was the first English-speaking man to settle permanently in California and the town of Gilroy was named for him. Clyde Arbuckle, San Jose city historian addressed the Clampers at their meeting. The organization has ordered a marble headstone for John Gilroy's grave in the old Catholic Cemetery. ***

Ralph Rambo's new book "Lady of Mystery" is now on sale at Books Inc. and other stores. Ralph says, "the key to the front door of the Mystery House was made of solid gold and the keys for the other 2000 doors filled two water buckets. The Winchester Mansion cost five million dollars. It contained 160 rooms, 10,000 windows, nine kitchens and 47 fireplaces." You should read this book to appreciate the true story of Sarah Winchester.

A letter from Dr. A. C. Todd, University of Exeter, Cornwall informs us that his new book, "The Cornish Miner in America" is being printed in Glendale, California and will be on the market this fall. There is a chapter on New Almaden and many San Jose people are mentioned.

The new home of the Mercury and News just off Schallenberger Road is located on very historic farming land. The land was first owned by Dr. John Townsend, whose name is perpetuated in the history of California by the Murphy-Townsend-Stevens party which brought the first wagons over the Sierra Nevada and opened up a route that thousands would follow. Moses Schallenberger was Dr. Townsend's brother-in-law, and later owned the land. Near Donner Lake in the shadow of a ridge which the government has since named for him, Schallenberger observed his 17th birthday alone in his snowbound cabin. ***

The old John E. Auzerais home built in 1890 and since 1956 used as a fraternity house by Pi Kappa Alpha, was recently razed. ***

The speaker at our next quarterly meeting will be Col. Waddell Smith, his subject "Stagecoach Days."

WELCOME

Congratulations to our new members: Ann Allison, Ralph R. Allison, Ben J. Andries, Alice A. Cahill, Edythe M. Caldwell, Genevieve Catania, Betty Haynes Cox, Lela Edwards, Genevieve Ferrel, Louise Girdler, Lucille Hardy Haag, Willis A. Laine, Yolanda Laine, Georgia M. Lawrence, Anabel M. Madsen, Ruth E. Malech, Pierce R. Mayne, Raymond McClintic, Roberta McClintic, Aleen B. Merritt, Cleo Pacheco, Peter J. Patron, Teresa Patron, Elizabeth H. Porter, Grace A. Runcie, John W. Runcie, Norma Hogg Stafford, Clara H. Staunton, Mary S. Taylor, Lucylle A. Walsh and Alma L. Wooldridge.

* * *

UNDER THE WEATHER

Miss Ethel Douglas, Mrs. Johanna Haynes, Mrs. Esther Ibanez, Mrs. Ada Morehouse, Mrs. Beulah Schmitt and Mrs. Mabel Snyder have been reported ill. Our very best wishes 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

Time brings us change, and leaves us fretting,
We weep when every member goes.
Perhaps too much, perhaps forgetting,
That over yonder, there are those,
To whom he comes, and he knows.

Mildred L. Overfelt

June 12, 1872 - March 23, 1967

Cassie L. Roehr

February 27, 1887 - May 4, 1967

Marie J. Veverka

April 19, 1882 - June 2, 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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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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