The Westerners BRAND BOOK 22

Los Angeles Corral

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BRAND BOOK 22

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Preface

Southern California has a rich and culturally diverse heritage. This heritage has been kept alive by such history-minded institutions as the Henry E. Huntington Library, the Historical Society of Southern California, the numerous local historical societies from Santa Barbara to San Diego, and—no less important than the aforementioned—the Los Angeles Corral of the Westerners.

When the Los Angeles Corral was organized in 1946, our founding members made the commitment to "enable men with common interests to meet with reasonable frequency and to exchange information and knowledge relative to the cultural and historical background of what is commonly called 'The West.'" This editor would heartily agree with our founding pledge with one very important caveat: "men *and women* with common interests." Throughout more than half a century, the Los Angeles Corral has continued to abide with this commitment—through knowledgeable speakers at our monthly dinner meetings, through our quarterly *Branding Iron* and occasional keepsakes, and, with this publication, now totaling twenty-two Brand Books. Through the years, we have been blessed with a rich stable of Western-minded speakers, writers, and publishers: names such as Glen Dawson, Paul Bailey, Arthur H. Clark Jr., E. I. Edwards, Arthur Woodward, Ray Allen Billington, Doyce Nunis, Msgr. Francis Weber, and Abraham Hoffman. Few other organizations possess such a distinguished list of scholarly contributors.

There is a need for each generation to study and sometimes reinterpret the past. Over the many decades, Southern California has changed, is

changing, and will continue to change. Los Angeles, once a dusty cow town, then a small city ruled by a white oligarchy, is now one of the world's great multi-cultural communities, an industrial giant, and a leading center of Pacific Ocean trade. The pastoral way of life that once dominated much of the landscape has given way to sprawling suburbia. Along with progress have come problems—pollution, clogged freeways, overcrowded ethnic neighborhoods, and gang violence. In a sense, Los Angeles represents a dichotomy, unique in some ways but in other respects a mirror image of other great world cities.

Our focus in Brand Book 22 is on changing Southern California. Our earnest hope is that these selections, encompassing two centuries of our history, will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of our region, and prove that the Corral's present stable of writers remain stalwart to our founding commitment.

The chapters are arranged in rough chronological order, covering Southern California from the mountains to the seacoast, with emphasis on the Los Angeles basin. All of the contributions are based on painstaking and thorough research. However, the editor has opted to allow a certain degree of informality in documentation; some are thoroughly footnoted, others simply have a bibliography or a note on sources. Our own artist, Paul Showalter, has created the chapter vignettes and designed the dust cover. Corral member Bill Warren helped with digital formatting and text editing.

It is with pride that our Los Angeles Corral presents to our members and friends this sampling of our region's eventful saga.

John W. Robinson
Editor

The California Missions

by Msgr. Francis J. Weber

Surely the most distinctive feature of California is its chain of twenty-one missions established along El Camino Real from San Diego to San Francisco Solano. Those who keep records report that the missions still are the most visited by Californians and travelers; the most featured in casual and serious books, magazines, and newspapers; the most honored by awards, citations, and plaques; the most studied about by researchers and historians; the most copied by architects and builders; the most celebrated on postage stamps (five nations) the most written about by historians, novelists, and playwrights; the most photographed of any buildings in the United States; the most toured by private and public school youngsters; and the most adaptive and versatile of all the New World's reduction systems.

The missions in the Golden State or anywhere else in the world can best be understood and appreciated within the context of the times and areas in which they existed, in the values of those who staffed and supported them, and in the reception and response of those who profited from their existence. Like all noble efforts, the missions are not without their detractors. This writer has addressed some of those questions in the pages of the *Branding Iron,* published by the Los Angeles Corral of Westerners. This presentation restricts itself to a basic historical sketch of the twenty-

one foundations arranged in the chronological sequence of their establishment between 1769 and 1823.

Title	Founded	Patented
1. San Diego de Alcalá	1769 (moved 1774)	May 23, 1862
2. San Carlos Borromeo	1770 (moved 1771)	October 19, 1859
3. San Antonio de Padua	1771 (moved 1773)	May 31, 1862
4. San Gabriel Arcángel	1771 (moved 1775)	November 19, 1859
5. San Luis Obispo	1772	September 2, 1859
6. San Francisco de Asís	1776	March 3, 1858
7. San Juan Capistrano	1775 (refound. 1776)	March 18, 1865
8. Santa Clara de Asís	1777 (moved 1779)	March 3, 1858
9. San Buenaventura	1782	May 23, 1862
10. Santa Bárbara	1786	March 18, 1865
11. La Purísima Concepción	1787 (moved 1813)	January 24, 1874
12. Santa Cruz	1791	September 2, 1859
13. Nuestra Señora de la Soledad	1791 (moved 1791)	November 19, 1859
14. San José	1797	March 3, 1858
15. San Juan Bautista	1797	November 19, 1859
16. San Miguel Arcángel	1797	September 2, 1859
17. San Fernando Rey de España	1797	May 13, 1862
18. San Luis Rey de Francia	1798	March 18, 1865
19. Santa Inés	1804	May 23, 1862
20. San Rafael Arcángel	1817	October 19, 1859
21. San Francisco Solano	1823	May 31, 1862

1

On July 1, 1769, Fray Junípero Serra and Gaspar de Portola arrived in San Diego after a journey of forty-six days from the last of the peninsular missions, San Fernando de Velicata. While Portola moved on to search for the elusive Monterey harbor, Serra established the first mission in Alta California, placing it under the patronage of San Diego de Alcalá. By the time of his return, Portola found the tiny settlement dangerously low on provisions. He decided that San Diego would have to be abandoned if supplies did not arrive by the Feast of Saint Joseph. The prayers of Serra and others were answered and the proto-mission was assured of permanence.

Due mostly to the shortage of water and the proximity of the military camp, the mission was moved from Presidio Hill to its present site in 1774. On November 4 of the following year, a group of dissidents attacked the mission, killing Fray Luis Jayme and destroying many of the structures. The intervention of Fray Junípero Serra on behalf of the culprits did much

(above) San Diego Mission in 1846.
(right) San Gabriel Mission.
(below) San Fernando Misison.

to establish lasting peace at San Diego and within a few months, the outpost was once again a functioning and prospering establishment along El Camino Real.

At the peak of its prosperity, before the blight of premature secularization, there were 20,000 sheep and 10,000 head of cattle on the vast acreage of San Diego Mission. Its wines had become famous and its olive trees formed the mother orchard for the area's olive industry. Water for the vineyards and orchards was conveyed by aqueduct from the San Diego River.

On June 14, 1846, Fray Vicente Pasqual Oliva closed the second volume of the Libro de Bautismos with its 7,126th entry, that of José Antonio de la Luz. That same year, Governor Pio Pico sold the mission to Santiago Argüello, and it was not until 1862 that twenty-two acres were restored to the Church.

On September 13, 1931, ceremonies were held at San Diego to mark the rededication of Alta California's proto-mission. In his address for that occasion, Bishop John J. Mitty noted that "this is a holy spot; it has been sanctified by the prayers and labors of heroic people of God."

2

The initial site of the missionary outpost dedicated to San Carlos Borromeo overlooked the beautiful Bay of Monterey. On Pentecost Sunday, June 3, 1770, while bells rang, cannons fired, and muskets saluted, the founding ceremony concluded with the traditional chanting of the Te Deum Laudamus.

A military presidio was also established, but it provided so many challenges to effective evangelization work that the mission was moved some miles inland to its present site on the Carmel River in 1771.

Because of its location, San Carlos is widely known as the Carmel Mission. Fray Junípero Serra made it his headquarters, and from an adjacent hut the great missionary directed the affairs of the growing missionary chain. After secularization, San Carlos fell into disrepair until it was almost completely in ruins.

Although the earthly remains of the saintly friar reposed in the church's sanctuary, the title to the property eventually passed into profane hands. It was restored to the Catholic Church by President James Buchanan in 1859. After extensive repairs had been made, the old church was rededicated on August 28, 1884, one hundred years after Serra's death.

It was not until 1924 that a further series of restorations was undertaken, and eventually the mission became a thriving parish church. Harry W. Downie, an authority on mission architecture and reconstruction, was mainly responsible for transforming San Carlos into an outstanding California landmark.

Today, the numerous visitors to Mission San Carlos are captivated by the spirit of Serra and the early mission days, which pervades the premises. A wide assortment of historical treasures and artistic reproductions provide an authentic setting for the original mission. The use of stone in the construction of the church, built under the direction of Fray Fermín Francisco de Lasuen, was an unusual departure from the adobe used in most of the other contemporary missions.

3

Encircled by the picturesque mountains of the Santa Lucia range, the Valley of the Oaks rests in singular splendor. Near a small stream, Fray Junípero Serra celebrated Mass on July 14, 1771, in the presence of several companions and a lone Indian. On the same day, he established his third mission, which he named San Antonio de Padua. "Here I will build the first shrine of Saint Anthony," he exclaimed as he called upon the gentiles to come and hear the word of God.

The Jolon Indians responded well and within three years some 178 neophytes had been gathered together. By the time Juan de Anza stopped in 1774, a church and many dwellings and workshops had been erected. The present church was completed in 1813, but neglect and vandalism after secularization eventually reduced it to ruins. Happily, its continuance as a spiritual force was never fully thwarted.

The prosperity of the mission was indicated by the use of irrigation, construction of a water mill for grinding flour, and the raising of golden-colored horses known as palominos. Vast orchards and vineyards produced abundant fruit and wine, as well as livestock numbering upwards of 20,000. After secularization, all of this rapidly disintegrated until only the church and a few arches remained. In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln restored the property to the Church, and, in 1929, the Franciscans returned to the mission. Bishop Aloysius Willinger, with the help of the William R. Hearst Foundation, initiated a rebuilding program in 1948.

Today, the mission stands rebuilt along the lines of its ancient beauty as

it looked in its heyday. The bell that rings across the Valley of the Oaks is said to be more than 250 years old and the statue of Saint Anthony, before which Indians prayed, hovers above the church's sanctuary. The mission is located about twenty miles south of King City, near the Hunter Liggett Military Reservation.

4

The founding of San Gabriel Arcángel Mission dates from the determination of Fray Junípero Serra to locate an outpost midway between San Diego and San Carlos Borromeo. Thus the fourth mission had its beginning on September 8, 1771, some four and a half miles southeast of its present location. The selection of a new site was most fortunate, for it enabled San Gabriel to become one of the most prosperous of all the frontier outposts in Alta California, perched at the early crossroads from Mexico and the United States.

The first land link with Sonora was completed when Juan Bautista de Anza arrived on March 22, 1774, with an exploring party, and on January 2, 1776, returned with a group of colonists bound for San Francisco.

In the latter year, the mission was moved to its present site. Fifty years later, the first of the famous mountain men, Jedediah Smith, with a party of trappers, blazed a trail across the desert. Given a generous reception at San Gabriel, Smith called "Old Father Sanchus" (Fray José Sanchez) his "greatest friend." After that, numerous overland parties visited the well-known mission. Within a few years after the arrival of the mountain men, San Gabriel and its entire inventory was turned over to a civil administrator and, within less than ten years, little of value remained.

The relationship of San Gabriel with the city of Los Angeles dates from the arrival of forty-four *pobladores* accompanied by a company of soldiers, who crossed the Rio Portiuncula and founded the Pueblo de Nuestra Señora de Los Angeles de Porciuncula. This historic event took place on September 4, 1781, just a decade after the establishment of the mission.

For years, San Gabriel was the spiritual center of the community. The last Franciscans withdrew in 1852 and five years later, President James Buchanan returned the property to the Church. The Claretian Fathers have administered the mission as a parish since 1908. It remains a scenic spot for visitors who find there interesting Indian art, paintings, statuary, and a hammered copper baptismal font donated by King Carlos of Spain.

5

Almost midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco stands the mission dedicated to San Luis, Obispo de Tolosa. It was founded by Fray Junípero Serra on September 1, 1772, his fifth missionary outpost in Alta California. The picturesque location had favorably impressed him during his first trip from San Diego.

The early diarist, Fray Juan Crespi, described the location as a broad vista known as the Canada de los Osos, or Valley of the Bears. It was in this region that Governor Pedro Fages staged the famous bear hunt that saved the missions from starvation in 1772.

Fray José Cavaller was placed in charge. With only five soldiers and two Indian neophytes, he began the construction of a chapel and other buildings made of poles and roofed with tule grass. The mission was set afire several times by hostile Indians and, on one occasion, everything but the chapel and granary was burned to the ground. Then the friars got the notion of baking clay in the sun and making tile roofs, which became the practice of the other missions. After seventeen years of service, Cavaller died December 9, 1789, and was buried near the sanctuary railing of the church.

Although the mission prospered, it never enjoyed a large population. The last entry in the baptismal register in 1841 was No. 2909. As early as 1830, five years before secularization took place, the neophyte village was almost in ruins and the front of the church, which had been completed in 1793, was in such disrepair it had to be taken down.

In 1844, the neophytes lost their affiliation and the mission was declared a pueblo. Gov. Pío Pico sold the entire property for a paltry $510 in 1845. Fourteen years later, the United States government returned it to the Bishop of Monterey and restoration of the church was commenced. While misguided remodelers altered its historic beauty, later modifications resulted in a somewhat faithful restoration of the original edifice.

6

Immediately after Juan Bautista de Anza arrived at Monterey with 240 colonists from Sonora early in 1776, he proceeded up the peninsula and selected sites for the future presidio and mission of San Francisco. Seven years earlier the first white man had beheld "the great arm of the sea," and only the year before, Capt. Juan Bautista de Ayala brought the first vessel through the Golden Gate.

San Francisco de Asís, founded by Junípero Serra on October 9, 1776, was his sixth mission. When plans for the missions in Alta California were originally made, the Presidente asked, "And for our founder, there is none?" José de Galvez reportedly stated that, "If Saint Francis desires a mission, let him show us his harbor, and he will have one."

Although the mission's official name is San Francisco de Asís, it is more popularly known in the chronicles as Mission Dolores, located as it was on a long, dried-up lake.

When Lieutenant José Moraga led the colonists up a creek called Arroyo de los Dolores, Fray Francisco Palou celebrated the first Mass in a little arbor, just prior to the first Fourth of July. Shortly thereafter, timbers were cut for the initial church, about one-half mile northwest of the present structure. The cornerstone of that church was laid April 25, 1782. The mission became an important center in the Bay Area and was visited by George Vancouver and many other explorers. By the time the American flag was raised at San Francisco in 1846, the mission was partially in ruins.

When secularization began, chroniclers placed the valuation of Mission Dolores at a fraction of its real worth. A fraudulent title to the property by Gov. Pío Pico was voided and the mission was later restored to the Archbishopric of San Francisco, but the records do not show what final disposition was made of the surrounding mission lands.

7

The bells of historic San Juan Capistrano Mission rang out for the first time on All Saints Day in 1776, four months after the signing of the Declaration of Independence by the thirteen American colonies. Today, those same bells still beckon parishioners and visitors to weekday and Sunday Masses.

It was the seventh mission to be founded by the Franciscans, under Fray Junípero Serra, in their devoted crusade for civilizing and Christianizing the native peoples of California. The friars built well. Their aqueducts, storm drains, and cisterns are still usable. Laboratory experiments made on the tile walls of the smelter kilns indicate that temperatures of 2,200º F were obtained in the smelting of metals, a great engineering feat even in modern times.

The brightest facet of San Juan Capistrano, the jewel of the missions,

was its church, begun in 1797 and thought to be the most magnificent in all California. Its arched roof of seven domes had sheltered Indian neophytes for less than a decade, when a tragic earthquake leveled the beautiful structure in 1812, leaving only part of one dome and the sanctuary wall standing. Today, a modern replica church serves the area.

The mission itself has been restored for many years to its early dimensions, a wonderland of quaint and lovely scenes. San Juan Capistrano is located in a thriving town bearing the same name in Orange County, fifty-six miles south of Los Angeles along the old Santa Fe Railway. It serves as the parish church for Catholic families residing in the vicinity.

8

The penultimate mission founded during of Fray Junípero Serra's lifetime, and the last church to be dedicated by him, was that of Santa Clara de Asís. Located immediately south of San Francisco Bay, it was placed under the patronage of the foundress of the Poor Clares on January 12, 1777. During that summer, Lieutenant José Moraga arrived from San Gabriel with a group of colonists to establish a pueblo in the vicinity, the present city of San José.

Like many of the California missions, Santa Clara suffered many changes. Heavy rains necessitated removal from the original site in 1779. The old church, dedicated by Fray Junípero Serra on May 16, 1784, was badly damaged by earthquakes in 1812 and some years later it was replaced by another edifice. The mission was withering away under secularization when it was assigned to the care of the Society of Jesus, who opened Santa Clara University in 1851. After a series of restorations, the present church resembles numerous features of the original structure.

Remains of other buildings of the historic establishment exist in the form of adobe walls, which give a picturesque grandeur to the university grounds. Rich in relics and archival materials from the period of spoliation, historic memorabilia include paintings, furniture, vestments and a crucifix that belonged to the saintly Franciscan, Fray Magin Catala. The Serra Cross in front of the church, made of old rafters, contains an authenticated relic of the original mission cross encased behind a small glass pane. Mounted on a cement pedestal, it bears the inscription: "November 19, 1781. Second site of Mission Santa Clara."

9

Delayed for numerous years, the establishment of San Buenaventura Mission came at last on Easter Sunday, 1782. It was an aging and infirm Fray Junípero Serra who traveled north from San Gabriel to officiate at the founding of the ninth in California's chain of twenty-one missions. Little more than two years later he died, after thirty-four years of missionary labors in New Spain, fourteen of these having been spent in California.

San Buenaventura became one of the most enduring of the missionary establishments. Except for the month of December 1818, when the friars moved the natives to nearby hills because of Argentinean pirates then ravaging the area, the mission afforded its people uninterrupted religious services.

Despite rebuilding and restoration, the church that serves modern-day San Buenaventura is the same as that dedicated September 9, 1809. Fifteen years in the construction, the church's walls are six-and-one-half-feet thick. The earthquake in 1812 rendered the buildings unsafe for almost half a year.

San Buenaventura has a treasure of antique statuary and ecclesial furnishings. In a central niche on the main altar stands a statue of Saint Buenaventura brought there in 1801. From its belfry comes the toll of bells cast between 1781 and 1815. Still in use is the mission's original baptismal font.

To the right of San Buenaventura's main altar is an historic painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe. San Buenaventura was the only mission to have wooden bells, one of which can still be seen in the museum. The scenic beauty of what is now Ventura County, a verdant valley bordered by mountains and ocean, motivated Fray Junípero Serra to establish a mission where today there are a host of parishes and schools.

10

The frontier outpost of Santa Bárbara, the "Queen of the Missions," is one of the most notable shrines of Christianity in the West. Its historic twin towers, ancient stone fountain in front, museum rooms, and cemetery garden are redolent of all that was historic, beautiful, and artistic in early California.

The tenth mission established in the Golden State, it was the first founded by Fray Fermín Francisco de Lasuen in his role as presidente. Founded on the Feast of Santa Bárbara, 1786, this mission is the only one served uninterruptedly by the Friars Minor to the present time.

In 1842, the first Bishop of both Californias, Fray Francisco Garcia Diego, took up residence at the mission. Upon his death, he was entombed in a vault beneath the sanctuary of the church, which houses many of the early day friars, as well as Governor José Figueroa.

Santa Bárbara Mission possesses a vast store of historical material relating to the life and work of Fray Junipero Serra and it is the headquarters of those who direct the cause of his canonization. Second to the nation's Capitol, the Old Mission is among the most photographed buildings in the United States.

The cornerstone plaque at Santa Bárbara Mission commemorates the founding in 1786, its devastation by earthquakes in 1812 and 1925, and its restoration in 1927 and 1953.

11

Although it was part of Fray Junípero Serra's original plan to erect a mission midway between San Luis Obispo and Santa Bárbara, it remained for his successor to establish it. This took place on December 8, 1787, shortly after the United States Constitutional Convention and one year after Santa Bárbara Mission was founded.

Named La Purísima Concepción in honor of Mary's Immaculate Conception, the mission became a center for teaching the industrial arts. In 1803, Fray Mariano Payeras was placed in charge and, during the remaining twenty years of his life, he developed a flourishing mission.

Disaster in the form of a severe earthquake in 1812 leveled the buildings, including the church, which had been completed in 1802. The friars then moved the foundation northeast across the Santa Inés River and erected a long, narrow adobe structure and two other structures.

Although Fray Mariano Payeras was later named Presidente of the California missions, he remained at La Purisima. Following his death in 1823, a serious revolt took place, from which the mission never fully recovered. Ten years later, fewer than 350 neophytes remained and the number of livestock had diminished substantially. After secularization, maladministration resulted in the sale of all the mission property for a paltry financial payment. Restored to the Church by the United States Land Commission, the buildings subsequently passed into private hands and ultimately became heaps of rubble.

In 1935, after the federal government acquired the lands and the ruins, the work of reconstruction began. Painstaking research and skillful crafts-

manship resulted in a faithful reproduction, which incorporated the new building into what was left of the crumbling walls. Exact reproductions of carved mission furniture may now be seen in the State Historical Park near Lompoc.

12

Santa Cruz Mission was founded August 28, 1791, on the seventh anniversary of Fray Junípero Serra's death. Fray Fermín Lasuen raised the cross and offered the first Mass for the twelfth California mission, which was located twenty-five miles directly north of San Carlos Borromeo across the Bay of Monterey. Formal ceremonies took place September 25.

In 1797, Gov. Diego Borica established the town of Branciforte opposite the mission on the San Lorenzo River. The presidente complained bitterly that the mission could not prosper near a pueblo settlement.

The site for Santa Cruz was well chosen. Its soil and climate were excellent and the Indians were exceedingly receptive. Yet, five years after its founding, the mission had reached its zenith. Of the five hundred neophytes in 1796, less than half remained by the end of the century. The town and even its name disappeared, but it lasted long enough to compromise the success of the mission.

The initial church of 1794 was damaged by a violent storm and flood and, five years later, had to be rebuilt. That restored church, the model for the contemporary replica, was completely destroyed by an earthquake on January 9, 1857. Bishop Thaddeus Amat acquired 16.9 acres of the original property two years later. The present parish brick church was completed on the original site in 1891. Some 250 feet away stands the smaller replica built by Gladys Sullivan Doyle.

When the property was secularized in 1835, it was valued at $50,000. Four years later, Inspector William E. P. Hartnell found only seventy Indians and a small portion of the livestock. Of the original buildings, little remains today beyond the original baptismal font, some statues, and paintings.

13

The mission bearing the patronage of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad served as an important link and contributed greatly to the development of the Salinas Valley during the Franciscan era. Fray Fermín de Lasuen decided that a mission was needed midway between San Antonio and Carmel. A

site was chosen in the treeless valley and the establishment was launched on October 9, 1791, only a few weeks after the' foundation of Santa Cruz Mission.

The precedent for the patronage of Our Lady of Solitude stems from the historic expedition of Gaspar de Portola in 1769. During an encampment at this spot, Fray Juan Crespi opined that it would be a good place for a mission. An Indian who visited the camp uttered a word sounding like "soledad," the Spanish term for loneliness.

Soledad was never an imposing structure, as were some of the other missions. The brushwood shelter, dedicated in 1791, was not replaced by adobe until several years later. There was little need for a large church because the number of Indian neophytes never exceeded seven hundred. Even with little rain, scarcity of food, and much sickness, the lonely mission survived until secularization in 1835. In May of that year, Fray Vicente de Sarria's emaciated body was found at the door of the church. He was transported over the hills for burial at San Antonio Mission, leaving behind a deserted Soledad, which came to be known as the outpost where a friar starved to death. Gradually, the remaining structures melted into ruins and desolation.

In 1846, the lands were alienated. By the time the United States government returned ownership to the Church, most of the habitations had disappeared. The Native Daughters of the Golden West sponsored rebuilding of the chapel that was dedicated October 9, 1955.

14

Overlooking the southern end of San Francisco Bay, a site fifteen miles north of the pueblo San José was selected by Fray Fermín Francisco de Lasuen for the fourteenth of the California missions in June 1797. Dedicated to San José, the mission at first consisted of small wooden structures roofed with tule and grasses stitched together by Indians. While it was never comparable in size or magnificence with the other missions, it occupies a significant place in California history. During the Gold Rush it was converted into a trading post for miners and was described in glowing terms by visitors.

After a slow start, the mission had nearly two thousand Indian neophytes and tens of thousands of livestock by 1831. Six years later, the properties were evaluated at $155,000. Within two years after secularization its assets had been completely dissipated. The United States government nul-

lified sale of the land by Pío Pico and twenty-eight acres were subsequently returned to the Church.

The name of Fray Narciso Durán will forever be associated with San José Mission. Arriving in 1806, he remained for twenty-seven years during which time an adobe church and workshops were built. An accomplished musician, Durán trained an Indian orchestra with homemade instruments, which they played on festive occasions. There was never a dull moment at the mission, located among occasionally hostile tribes. By the time Durán became Presidente in 1830, an office he held until his death in 1846, the mission system was already doomed.

15

Less than two weeks after founding San José Mission, Fray Fermín de Lasuen moved into a little valley midway between San Carlos and Santa Clara. Here, on June 24, 1797, the feast of St. John the Baptist, he planted the cross for Mission San Juan Bautista. Within six months there were several adobe buildings, which included a church and monastery. In 1800 more than five hundred Indians resided at the mission. The increasing numbers of neophytes caused Fray Felipe Arroyo de la Cuesta to erect the largest church in the province and the only of its kind constructed by the Franciscans in California. Nine bells rang their joyful chimes throughout the peaceful valley. When the church was completed in 1812, the Indian population had greatly dwindled from the peak of eleven hundred. The two sides of the building were walled off, which reduced the interior to a size comparable to the other mission churches.

The Franciscans at San Juan Bautista devoted a great deal of attention to musical activities. Fray Estevan Tapis and later Fray Narciso Durán taught music and organized Indian boys choirs. Notes were printed in black, yellow, green, and red to indicate the various voices. These are still to be seen at the mission, along with an interesting barrel organ, which was reportedly the gift of the English explorer George Vancouver. As the handle was turned, the instrument produced strange music that pleased the Indians. Many a gay fiesta was held at this historic site. But all was not music and singing, for marauding Tulares Indians occasionally threatened destruction of the mission. Once it was saved by playing the barrel organ.

San Juan Bautista shared the sad fate of the other missions when word

came that the orchards and fields and even the fine church had been illegally sold. Although U.S. military authorities ordered priests to remain in charge of the church, the Indian neophytes had already been scattered. During gold rush days, stagecoaches changed horses in the little village by the mission. In 1859, President Buchanan restored the buildings to the Church. Today, the Castro and Zanetta houses nearby as well as the mission itself have become historic monuments for tourists.

16

While the mission named for San Miguel Arcángel is one of the lesser-known foundations along El Camino Real, more people have passed within a stone's throw of the place than of any other mission. It is located adjacent to busy Highway 101 and the Southern Pacific Railroad, midway between Camp Roberts and Paso Robles.

This was the third mission founded by Fray Fermín Lasuen in the year 1797. On July 25, soon after having established San Juan Bautista, he personally erected the cross near the juncture of Salinas River and Estrella Creek. It was a promising fertile valley, with plenty of water from the springs of Santa Isabel.

The mission prospered and, within a few years, over a thousand Indians had been baptized. Vast herds of livestock roamed the area, exceeded only by those at San Juan Capistrano. In addition to a church, numerous structures were erected where the natives engaged in various simple trades. A fire in 1806 destroyed most of them, but new adobes with tile roofs soon took their place. A larger church was started in 1816 and its final decorations were added in 1821. The artistic embellishments are the most interesting features since this mission is the only one where paintings and decorative effects have not been retouched in subsequent years.

San Miguel Mission declined rapidly after secularization in 1834. The population dwindled from twelve hundred to thirty within the following seven years. The last missionary, Fray Ramon Abella, left in 1842 and two years later, Fray Narciso Durán reported that there were no lands or cattle. Although Gov. Pío Pico sold the property, the United States government declared the sale illegal and, in 1878, Bishop Francis Mora appointed a resident priest. The Franciscans returned in 1928 and began restoring the mission structures.

17

Fray Fermín de Lasuen founded San Fernando Mission, Rey de España, September 8, 1797, the seventeenth in the chain of twenty-one missions. Francisco Reyes, an early settler in the San Fernando Valley, furnished temporary shelter. The permanent church, dedicated in December 1806, was severely damaged by an earthquake in 1812.

The church was repaired and operational by 1818. The appeal of Christianity and the opportunity for civilization and a settled culture drew the scattered Indians of the valley. The mission flourished and soon its ranches extended to many adjoining areas.

San Fernando Mission was secularized in 1834. Governor Manuel Micheltorena restored the mission to the Franciscans in 1843 but, after his departure, it again became the victim of despoilers and was sold by Gov. Pío Pico in 1846. General John C. Frémont and Pico signed the treaty whereby California was ceded to the United States.

In 1862, the new nation confirmed ownership of the mission to the Church. Title was issued to Bishop Joseph S. Alemany of Monterey. The quadrangle of the mission was in ruin, and the chapel and convento were without roofs in 1896, when Charles F. Lummis and friends began the long task of restoring San Fernando Mission. The church was rededicated on September 7, 1941.

Today, San Fernando Mission is enjoying new life and fresh interest. Adjacent to its ancient walls are the buildings of Bishop Alemany High School, where 1,600 youngsters are being trained in the classics. Also adjoining the property is the new San Fernando Mission Cemetery, which serves the northern San Fernando Valley.

Before the arched cloister of San Fernando Mission stands a bronze monument of Fray Junípero Serra. He appears to be resting, looking out over the valley, his walking stick in his right hand, his left arm resting on the shoulder of an Indian boy.

18

San Luis Mission, Rey de Francia stands five miles inland from Oceanside in a beautiful sheltered valley in San Diego County. Established June 13, 1798, on a site selected by Fray Fermín de Lasuen, it was the last mission founded by him, the eighteenth in the chain. The permanent church was completed in 1815.

Fray Antonio Peyri was assigned to the mission as its resident priest and served San Luis Rey for thirty-four years. It became one of the most influential of all the missions. Although prosperous, San Luis Rey shared the fate of the other missions in the period of secularization. The Indians withdrew to the hills and secluded valleys, and the mission was reduced to almost complete ruin.

Within the peaceful walls of San Luis, Rey de Francia Mission, as many as three thousand Indians would assemble for instructions in Catholic teachings. The mission was their home, school, and civic center. Soon the Indian settlement began to thrive. Livestock was introduced and crops were sown. Some thirty years after the coming of the friars, large sections of the countryside were under cultivation. The mission owned, in the name of the Indians, some 27,000 cattle and 26,000 sheep.

In the same chapel where soldiers of Spain worshipped in the eighteenth century, United States Marines from nearby Camp Pendleton now occasionally gather and recite the Stations of the Cross.

Points of interest at San Luis Rey are numerous. One feature is the mortuary chapel, a small octagonal-shaped room off the main church. In the courtyard is reportedly the first pepper tree planted in the West.

One of the largest collections of provincial vestments in the United States is housed inside the mission. Also exhibited are early chalices, furnishings, and vellum-bound books once used by the friars. In the museum is a facsimile of the original deed signed by President Abraham Lincoln restoring the mission property to the Church, following the period of secularization.

19

When founded on September 17, 1804, Santa Inés Mission showed more promise than any of the frontier outposts that preceded it. Densely populated with Chumash Indians, the area was well adapted for agriculture and grazing. And it afforded an excellent buffer to the Tulares tribes to the north and east.

After its establishment by Presidente Estevan Tapis, an extensive building program was launched. This included an adobe church, an adjacent convento building, and the characteristic quadrangle of workshops, storerooms, guardhouse, and living quarters. Disasters and misfortunes that dotted its brief but colorful history did not permit it to live up to early expectations.

Peaceful mission life was interrupted by the Hidalgo revolt in Mexico in 1810, followed two years later by a devastating earthquake. The church and other buildings were either completely destroyed or seriously damaged. Rebuilding under direction of Frays Estevan Tapis and Francisco Uria restored most of the mission, and on July 4, 1817, the present church was dedicated.

Then came the independence of Mexico in 1821 and, shortly after, a destructive attack of rebel Indians upon the mission itself. The "secularization laws" in 1834 provided the concluding chapter in the turbulent history of Santa Inés.

Today, in the town of Solvang, about forty miles northwest of Santa Bárbara, Santa Inés still stands as a prominent monument of the Spanish period. Outstanding among those who helped to preserve the church and the adjoining convento from lapsing into complete ruins was Father Alexander Buckler, who for more than twenty years supervised a program of restoration. The museum contains a wide assortment of provincial treasures, including vestments, artifacts, and Indian art.

20

The mission dedicated to San Rafael Arcángel began as a sanitarium for Indians who were wasting away from disease at Mission Dolores. Governor Pablo Sola suggested that the sickly neophytes be removed to a milder climate.

The sunny oak-studded slopes north of the Bay, about twenty miles from Mission Dolores, were selected. Here Presidente Vicente Sarria raised the cross and celebrated the first Mass on December 14, 1817. Fray Luis Gil, who had considerable medical knowledge, volunteered to take charge of San Rafael.

The new establishment was intended to be only an asistencia of Mission Dolores, where all of its records were kept. However, the prospects for new conversions as well as material prosperity were so promising that in 1822, it became a mission in its own right. At the end of the first year, 382 neophytes resided there, and that number soon doubled.

San Rafael was less imposing than other missions. A composite adobe structure with a tule-covered corridor along the side served as monastery, hospital and chapel which had no tower or campanile. Bells were suspended from crossbeams in front of the L-shaped buildings.

Although coming late in the missionary period, San Rafael made remarkable progress, principally because of Fray Juan Aimoros, who labored there for thirteen years. It was the first of the chain to be secularized. Tiles and bells, orchards and buildings vanished, until nothing remained but a lone pear tree. In 1909, a singular mission bell marked the site. Today, a replica church reminds visitors of California's twentieth mission.

21

San Francisco de Sonoma has the distinction of being last of the mission chain founded along California's El Camino Real, the farthest north, and the only one established during the Mexican period. It existed only a brief while as a mission, because secularization was decreed just a decade after Fray José Altimira raised a cross on the site, July 4, 1823.

There appears to have been no special reason why this historic date in American history was chosen, but it augured events soon to follow. By terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, San Francisco de Solano was now situated on United States soil. More than that, it became the scene of the American revolt against Mexican authority in 1846, when the California Bear Flag was raised at Sonoma, within the shadow of the mission. The Mexican general, Mariano Vallejo, was staying at Sonoma, where the Americans captured him. By this time, mission activities had been discontinued and the entire chain reduced to desolation. Heartbroken, Altimira had long since returned to his native Spain.

As a young friar, he was among the last of the Franciscans to come to California. At Mission Dolores, his missionary zeal impelled him to plan a new establishment in the hinterland beyond San Rafael. Without the customary material assistance from other missions, he plunged ahead and by the following year had erected a wooden church. Unfortunately, he was forced to leave within two years. After the mission was founded, until 1881 when it passed into private ownership, the building served as a parish church. In 1903 it was purchased by the California Historic Landmark League and the mission site served as a museum. Since 1961, the carefully preserved historic buildings have been a national monument.

El Caminito Real

Closely akin and related to the missions were the asistencias, presidios, and estancias scattered along the Pacific Rim. The asistencias were set up

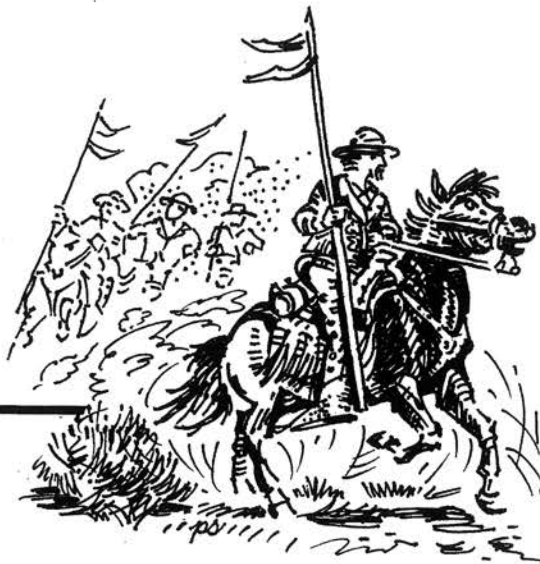
as branches or extensions of fully established and flourishing missionary foundations. By definition, an asistencia was a mission on a small scale with all the requisites for a mission, and with religious services held regularly, except that it lacked a resident priest. Of the five asistencias functioning in provincial California, only one, that of San Rafael, ever achieved full mission status. There were also chapels at the military presidios and in many of the ranch outstations or estancias.

The missions stand on their own merit. They need little apologies by onlookers. Yet, one does recall the remarks of Thomas Jefferson Farnham who came to California in 1840. In his *Travels in the Californias*, the Maine-born author said:

> I could not forbear a degree of veneration for those ancient closets of devotion; those resting-places of the wayfarer from the desert; those temples of hospitality and prayer, erected by that band of excellent and daring men who founded the California missions, and engraved on the heart of that remote wilderness, the features of civilization and the name of God.

Sources

Msgr. Francis Weber, archivist for the Los Angeles Archdiocese of the Roman Catholic Church, is a recognized authority on the California Missions. This article is based on his many writings about the mission era, including documentary histories of each mission.



Death in a Comic Opera
The Alta California Rebellion against Governor Manuel Victoria, 1831

by Patricia Adler-Ingram

Juan Ávila was nineteen years old when he rode out beside the men of San Diego and Los Angeles, as they headed for a confrontation with the unpopular Mexican governor of Alta California, Lt. Col. Manuel Victoria. His account, titled *Notas Californianas*, is in the Bancroft Library manuscript collection in Berkeley. It appears to be the only actual eyewitness description of a brief clash, in 1831, between the citizens of Alta California and the government of Mexico, which later historians called the "comic opera battle."[1] His recollections were recorded by one of the interviewers employed in the late 1870s by historian Hubert H. Bancroft to gather historical reminiscences and documents from men and women who participated in affairs during the years when California was going from Spanish to Mexican to American control.[2]

By the time Juan Ávila gave the interview he was looking back across thirty-seven years of an eventful life. He had become a *ranchero*, running cattle in the San Juan Capistrano area. He had acquired title to Rancho San

Miguel, served as *juez del campo* at Los Angeles, earned a reputation for fair-dealing in business, and had come to be called *"El Rico,"* at least within the Ávila family. He told the story without partisan bias. Rather surprisingly, he seemed to have assigned no great significance to the clash, although it was the first time that blood had been shed in opposition to rule by Mexico, and one of the two lives lost had been that of his uncle, José Maria Ávila. The impersonal tone of the recounting may reflect only the blurring of his memory over time. It may, however, reveal that the interviewer, Thomas Savage, framed his questions from the perspective of an American researcher for whom this was but one of a number of local conflicts that seemed to flash like summer lightning across California in the decades before the Bear Flag Revolt.

Savage and his fellow interviewers collected a number of other personal narratives in which the battle was recalled. Bancroft drew upon these as well as Juan Ávila's description in writing his chapter on the uprising.[3] He also made use throughout his history of this period of an account written by a California native, Antonio Maria Osio, who was serving as a member of the territorial *diputación* during the governorship of Manuel Victoria. Osio had ties of kinship and political sympathy with the participants in the rebellion.[4]

For Osio, the uprising of 1831 was a failed gesture towards independence, badly thought out and lacking in philosophical preparation. The death of José Maria Ávila was ultimately of little consequence. The compelling grievances of the *Californios* remained un-addressed. The battle, as Osio feared, gave rise to the impression that the Californios did not compare very well with the colonists of the East Coast in fighting for their independence. It was a sad rather than comic affair.

Life in California had been strongly influenced in the twenty years before the rebellion by the struggle taking place in Mexico to break away from Spanish domination. One perceptive student of Mexican history characterized affairs in Mexico City as being "as complicated as chaos."[5] The celebrated *Grito de Dolores* of 1810, the impassioned protest of a country priest that triggered the first violent uprising of the creoles, was scarcely noticed in the Californias. The subsequent failure of the supply ships to arrive from Mexico did, however, immediately become a central fact of life. The ships had always brought the *memorias* that supplied the missions and paid the soldiers. However meager these had seemed to be in the past, there was dire hardship without the money and supplies.

Over the next decade the Californios were left to survive as best they could. The presidios turned to the missions for the necessary food, while the missions ignored the long-standing official prohibitions against trading with foreign vessels, bringing out their cowhides and produce to barter with the ships' agents for flour, sugar, and cloth. The people of the presidios and pueblos expanded their herds and traded hides and tallow at the water's edge. The far-off viceroy was cursed for his neglect, yet there was no indication of popular feeling in favor of independence nor a break in the allegiance to Spain. The soldiers, for the most part, continued at their posts without pay. Mexico finally gained its independence from Spain in 1821.

California Governor Pablo Vicente de Sola, an appointee of Spain, continued in his position for a time after Mexico achieved its independence. He found the distress so unremitting that, in 1817, he "parted with needed clothing of his own to cover the nakedness of troops compelled to pursue Gentile Indians in their wild retreats."[6] Conditions were not improved as Mexico began to exercise its independence. In California, Luis Antonio Argüello replaced de Sola as governor [1822–25]. Argüello received his authority at first from the newly formed Constitutional Congress in Mexico City and, later, from the ambitious leader, Colonel Augustin de Iturbide, who had accepted the crown of Mexico from his own hand shortly after taking office, to become Emperor Augustin I.

The men who participated in the rebellion against Governor Victoria had experienced all the hardships of the transition years. José María Ávila and his brothers ran their ever-larger herds of cattle on the dry hills, frequently coming into conflict with the mission administrators, who were seeking to safeguard the loosely defined boundaries of the mission rancho lands. Their father was one of the old soldiers without pay or pension. In the absence of governmental oversight, the family appropriated tracts of grazing lands, learned to barter with the shipmasters, and, in general, took advantage, whenever possible, of the prolonged muddle in Mexico City.[7]

After the fall of Emperor Augustin I and a long season of military coups, a liberal Congress produced, in 1824, the first Constitution of Mexico. It was a federalist document incorporating features of the United States Constitution and providing for complete decentralization. It proved to be one more invitation to anarchy, in that it imposed a democratic pattern upon a far-flung population innocent of any idea of self-government. The majority of people lived in small farming communities and had experienced heretofore only governmental rule imposed from above.

For the Californias it brought a new governor, José María Echeandía. He arrived in San Diego in 1825 with instructions to establish the authority of the new republican regime. Like the earlier governors he was a military commander, but unlike the usual appointees he had risen in a relatively progressive branch of the service, the Corps of Engineers. He was expected to re-organize the civil government along republican lines and also to make a study of the condition of the mission system.[8]

Echeandía brought several young engineers as his aides, among them Alférez Romualdo Pacheco and Alférez Agustín Zamorano, who later played roles in the rebellion of 1831. A document has survived in the hand of Zamorano, in his capacity as Secretary of Provincial Affairs, that sets forth the names and functions of the officers and members of the *diputacións* of the separate territories of Alta and Baja California, each man with the new title of "Citizen." It is dated September 22, 1829, and carries the signature of the Chief of Government, Lieutenant Colonel of Engineers, Citizen José María de Echeandía.[9] Among the seven members of the *diputacion* of the Territory of Upper California are Citizen Juan Bandini, Citizen Carlos Antonio Carrillo and Citizen Pío Pico, all of them later participants in the uprising against Governor Victoria. Victoria himself is named in the document as "Lieutenant Colonel Citizen Manuel Victoria, Principal Commander and Assistant Inspector of the Territory of Lower California," his posting at the time.[10]

Echeandía held his position for more than five years, a period of welcome stability, during which the *diputación* met and representatives were chosen as *diputados* to the National Congress in Mexico City. Alférez Augustín Zamorano became the local member of the *diputación* for San Diego. Echeandía's report on the condition of the missions was duly submitted but the central government was preoccupied with the growing political turmoil and could spare no attention for affairs in California. Echeandía's continuance in office appears to have been something of an oversight, since the republican ideas that prevailed when he was appointed had changed within the year as the more conservative, centralist leaders gained power.

In 1830 the central government got around to appointing a new governor for the territory, ordering Manuel Victoria up from his subordinate position at Loreto to replace Echeandía. He made his way north rather slowly and, after catching up with Echeandía at Monterey, took over officially on January 31, 1831. He had visited the missions along his route and

arrived firmly convinced that affairs in California had fallen into chaos as a result of the policies of his predecessor, especially those threatening the mission system.

He made it clear that he intended to follow the pro-church line now in favor in Mexico City. He abruptly reversed the action to secularize the missions that had been set in motion by Echeandía rather hurriedly in the last days of his tenure. Victoria gave warning that he was prepared to deal summarily with anyone daring to question his policies, particularly anyone demanding that he convoke the Territorial Diputación, which had consistently favored the break-up of the mission holdings.

As Bancroft viewed Victoria's harsh manner in taking over power, Echeandía's attempt to effect an abrupt secularization of the missions was actually "wholly illegal, uncalled for and unwise. It was simply a trick, and an absurd one. The opponents of Victoria were thus in the wrong at the beginning of the quarrel."[11]

Victoria ordered the expulsion from the territory of Echeandía's Adjutant Inspector, Lieut. Col. José María Padres. Victoria considered Padres an all-too-persuasive advocate of radical republican ideas and probably the real influence behind Echeandía's move against the mission system. The prominent merchant, Abel Stearns, a naturalized Mexican citizen, was then accused of pernicious conduct and plotting with Padres and ordered to leave the country. Victoria also jailed and then sentenced to expulsion José Antonio Carrillo, a leader of the *diputacion*.

A niece of Carrillo's, Augustias de la Guerra Ord, who was among those interviewed by Bancroft's staff, recalled that her uncle feared forcible removal from the territory and fled into Baja California. Mrs. Ord's reminiscences are also among those preserved in the Bancroft manuscript collection in Berkeley.[12] She recalled that, late in the month of November 1831, a group consisting of Pío Pico, the senior member of the *diputacion*, Juan Bandini, sub-comisario of revenues at San Diego and a strong supporter of the *diputacion*, Pío Pico's brother Andrés, and four or five other citizens of San Diego summoned Carrillo to return to take part in planning the overthrow of Victoria. Carrillo had become depressed in exile and consumed with a desire for revenge against Victoria. He had sought to overcome his depression by envisioning a plan for revolution. Although, according to reports from Monterey, he could expect to face Victoria's hangman if he were apprehended, Carrillo accepted the call and rode by night to San Diego to reveal his plan. Together the would-be revolutionists

A Californio horseman as he appeared in the 1830s.
Painting by James Walker.

persuaded, or intimidated, the Commandante of the Port of San Diego and Capt. Pablo Portilla, leader of the Mazateca squadron of soldiers stationed there, to join them.[13] Portilla agreed to participate on the condition that his old commander, José María Echeandía, would agree to assume military and political leadership. Echeandía accepted but seems to have taken almost no part in the planning. The conspirators immediately dispatched young Andrés Pico north to enlist the support of the men of Los Angeles. He was able to persuade them to join the uprising and seize power as soon as the group of insurgents arrived from San Diego, bringing with them Portilla's Mexican troops. How the combined groups were to proceed after

that was apparently left for events to determine. Meanwhile, in Los Angeles, Alcalde Sanchez became suspicious and thought it prudent to throw young Pico into the Los Angeles lockup.

Another of the Californios to incur the wrath of Governor Victoria was José María Ávila, uncle of Juan Ávila, the eyewitness to the battle, and the youngest of the family of six sons and three daughters. The entire Ávila family had come north from the Rio Fuerte outposts in Sonora with the soldier father, Cornelio Ávila, and his wife, María Isabel Urquidez, walking the length of Baja California from Loreto to Los Angeles in 1792–93.

Like his brothers, José María ran cattle on the open hillsides around Los Angeles and took his turn doing his civic duty as *alcalde* of the pueblo. There is nothing to suggest he was a very popular figure. Bancroft relates two anecdotes of his conduct in office that would indicate otherwise.[14] In 1825 Ávila had a citizen put into irons because he had refused to copy some public documents without pay. Ávila claimed that, "as no official clerk was provided it was the duty of any citizen to perform such duties." Ávila then, according to Bancroft, "was said to have been suspended from office by the people."

On another occasion a citizen complained to the governor that he had been arbitrarily imprisoned by the *alcalde*. Ávila was called upon to explain. He replied, according to Bancroft,

> My motive for putting this person in jail was that I thought it proper to do so; and because, besides that motive, I had other grounds, in the stating of which a good deal of time would be consumed; and since the man's complaint is only intended to take up your worship's time and mine, I close by stating that this is all I have to say, repeating myself obedient to your superior orders.[15]

An account of Ávila's own experience with arbitrary justice as it was being practiced by Governor Victoria, and the bitter resentment he felt, is to be found in the reminiscences of Dona María Inocenta Pico de Ávila, the wife of another of his nephews, Miguel. She recounted to one of Bancroft's interviewers a description of the events she observed in Monterey shortly before the uprising.[16] She recalled:

> In November of 1831 Don José Maria Ávila arrived from Los Angeles at my home in Monterey. The object of his coming was to present a complaint to the jefe politico Don Manuel Victoria, because charges had been brought against him by a certain Sr. Nieto as a result of duel they had had with swords, Nieto being very badly wounded in the head. In the case

> against Ávila which followed, Victoria passed sentence imposing a $2,000.00 fine and ten years banishment to San Francisco at labour on public works. At this time San Francisco was a barren waste. Ávila came to appeal from the sentence or, at least, to see if he could not have the banishment commuted through a money payment, since he was a very wealthy man. He himself imparted to us the object of his coming. His petition was denied. He was very downcast and remained at our house for three days without going outdoors. Then he told us he was going back to Los Angeles and that he would rather die than go upon public works at the presidio of San Francisco. He almost gave us to understand that upon his arrival in Los Angeles there would be a revolution.

Ávila was, in fact, arrested upon his return, restrained in leg irons, and locked up by the current *alcalde*, Vicente Sanchez, who sent urgent messages to Victoria in Monterey warning of the dangerous mood in the southern towns. Very shortly news was carried back to Los Angeles and San Diego that Victoria had left for the south with the intention of having Bandini and Pío Pico hanged for disturbing the public peace.

The angry governor made his way by forced marches down the coast. Augustias de la Guerra Ord described in her interview his passage through Santa Barbara on his way to Los Angeles:

> By now, Victoria had received news of the movements of the revolutionists in the south. He came racing from Monterey to Santa Barbara with a handful of men (probably on the 2nd of December) and ordered Capt. Romualdo Pacheco, Commandante of the presidio, to follow him with some Mazatecas [men of the Mazatlan Squadron of 1829] who were in garrison.
>
> Victoria did not believe that he would have battle with the rebels of the south, but rather that on facing them with his handful of men they would disband. I remember that my father asked Pacheco with how many men he was going, and on being told, it seemed to my father that it was madness. Pacheco further replied that he had presented this to Victoria who had responded that against those men it was enough. Then my father told him, "Look out. Those are stubborn men. José Antonio Carrillo is with them."[17]

Pío Pico, coming from San Diego to reinforce his brother's solicitation of support for the rebellion, found José María Ávila among the Los Angeles men being held in chains. Pico, as the senior deputy of the territorial *diputacion*, had tried from the first to persuade Victoria to convene the assembly but had received no answer other than Victoria's customary threat of hanging all troublemakers. Pico expected Ávila, as a fellow victim

of Victoria's wrath, to be receptive to arguments for curbing the power of the governor. He recounts his visit to Ávila as follows:

> Having great confidence in José Maria Ávila for his determination and courage I decided to talk to him and reveal the scheme we were planning. I got close to the door of the cell in which he was confined and with much caution, I made known to him our plans. He was of the opinion that the ones from here should not revolt until Victoria had passed through to San Diego because he and his fellow prisoners believed that Victoria upon his arrival in Los Angeles, would disapprove of the alcalde's action and would order them liberated and when Victoria should set out for San Diego to pursue me and the others, they would attack him from the rear.
>
> I returned to San Diego and informed Carrillo and Bandini of it but we held to the idea of carrying out our plan. For the second time we tried out the Los Angeles group by sending an uncle of mine, José Lopez, to persuade them to support us. His mission had no better results than mine because Ávila remained firm in his view.[18]

Juan Ávila, in his *Notas Calfornianas*, relates that the men coming up from San Diego

> were to seize the mayor and put him in jail. Sanchez had a pair of handcuffs clamped onto the said Pico, but around midnight the insurgents arrived and removed the handcuffs from Pico and put them on Sanchez.
>
> At dawn the insurgents were in possession of the town. A brother of the mayor . . . succeeded in escaping and went to warn Victoria who had spent the night in Cahuenga.[19]

The historian, H. H. Bancroft, drawing upon these and other narrative histories gathered from people who had been close observers of the uprising, estimates that the rebels numbered 150, including the 30 or so Mazatecan soldiers from San Diego commanded by Portilla. As they rode toward Cahuenga, the citizen-rebels were led by José Antonio Carrillo. There is no record that either Juan Bandini or Pío Pico were among the riders. Certainly Echeandía was not present.

According to the narrative of Juan Ávila, the encounter occurred "on the ridges of La Breita (a ravine)" somewhere between Los Angeles and Victoria's overnight camp, which he placed somewhat vaguely at Cahuenga. Bancroft concluded, based on all the contemporary records he had at hand, that the camp actually had been at San Fernando.[20] He estimated that the two unequal groups of horsemen, both setting out in the December dawn, would have met at Cahuenga. All accounts agree that the insurgents were on the high ground. Young Ávila's vantage point was about 400 yards away

from the leaders, watching from that distance, he said, "because my uncle [Juan María Ávila] had cautioned me very particularly not to meddle in the fracas unless our countrymen asked me to do so."[21]

He described Victoria as slim, swarthy of complexion, arrogant and despotic, advancing toward Los Angeles with about twenty-five soldiers led by Romualdo Pacheco, commandant of Santa Barbara, who was "mounted on a beautiful black horse, a tall, slender man with a fine build, extremely good-looking, and of excellent bearing." Pacheco was known and admired by young Ávila who said of him, "In his manners he was very refined and chivalrous, and in his conduct moral. Never did a gentleman so perfect in every sense come out of Mexico." This was by way of being a memorial tribute. Pacheco was the other man killed that day as Ávila watched.

The rebels came to a halt on high ground to await the approach of Victoria. The two forces met there, according to Ávila, and Captain Portilla suggested to Victoria that he halt, to which the latter replied that he was not accustomed to being ordered to halt. Portilla repeated his order twice again, but received the same reply from Victoria on each occasion. Portilla ordered his men to fire on Victoria's troop. Victoria's soldiers answered the fire and charged the insurgents. The latter awaited the charge, but soon began to flee.

Bancroft believed it was Victoria who ordered the first volley. As he described it,

> Victoria, approaching with his thirty soldiers, was urged by Pacheco not to risk an attack without reinforcements and additional preparations; but he promptly, perhaps insultingly, disregarded the captain's counsels. He was brave and hot-headed; he did not believe Portilla's Mazatecos would fight against their comrades, and he attached little importance to citizen rebels.[22]

Another historian, Theodore H. Hittell, whose *History of California* was published about twelve years after Bancroft's volume on this time period, points out that both parties of soldiers, those under Portilla and those now under Pacheco, had been part of a single company brought over from Mazatlan some years earlier under the command of Portilla. Hittell believes Portilla was "desirous of avoiding conflict and, made no motion to attack. He knew that, with his overwhelming numbers, the result of a fight could hardly be doubtful but that under any circumstances it would be fatal to many of his friends."[23]

Hittell drew almost exclusively upon documents in the old California archives for his information. He managed, nevertheless, to inject a bit of melodrama into the scene, writing,

> Upon reaching the foot of the hill, where Portilla was posted, Victoria cried to him to leave *"aquel hato de bribones"*—that pack of scoundrels. Portilla replied by ordering Victoria to halt. Victoria rejoined that it was insolence in Portilla to challenge his superior. At this, Pacheco ordered a charge and dashing forward met José Maria Ávila of the opposing party. Both were mounted on good horses. Pacheco made a stroke at Ávila with his sword. Ávila carried a pike with a bayonet fastened to the end, with which he warded off the blow and then, drawing his pistol shot Pacheco in the heart and killed him.[24]

According to Juan Ávila, the sequence of events was somewhat different. He said that the rebels fled after the first volley,

> leaving an uncle of mine, Don José Maria Ávila, alone. Pacheco rode down upon him and struck at him with his saber but missed. He rode past him and then Ávila shot Pacheco with a pistol, the bullet entering his back. Pacheco fell from his horse.
>
> Ávila mingled with the soldiers, searching for Victoria, and on finding him gave him a lance thrust which caught him between skin and flesh in the side. The wound was not deep, but the blow was sufficient to unhorse Victoria. Just as he was about to hit him a second blow, a Mazatecan soldier named Leandro Morales shot Ávila at close range with his carbine, the shot lodging in the lower part of his spine and knocking him off his horse. The shot was so close that it burned his jacket. Ávila fell with a loaded pistol in his hand. A certain Guerrero of Victoria's party came up to finish killing him, but Ávila discharged the pistol at him and the bullet struck him in the knee. Then Victoria approached with his sword to kill him. Victoria came so near that Ávila was able to seize him by the legs and throw him to the ground; but Victoria succeeded in getting to his feet again, and he dealt him several blows with his sword until he finally killed him.[25]

Theodore Hittell adds in his account that, as Victoria and Ávila were struggling on the ground, Ávila's nephew, Tómas Talamantes, one of the men that had been imprisoned with Ávila in Los Angeles, rushed up. "He aimed a blow with his saber at Victoria, but as he did so a soldier on the other side interposed his carbine. Such, however, was the force of Talamantes' stroke that the carbine was split up nearly to the breech and a small part of the saber's point breaking off cut Victoria a terrible gash in the face."[26]

In the opinion of Bancroft, Victoria, if it had not been for his wounds, would have re-taken Los Angeles without difficulty and would probably have crushed the rebellion. As it was, "Ávila and Talamantes had deposed the governor of California, and others had contributed nothing more potent than words."[27]

Juan Ávila says Pacheco's body was taken to Los Angeles, to the home of Don José Antonio Carrillo, one of his wife's relatives, while the body of his uncle was taken to his own house. This sad homecoming was described in detail by Bess Garner Adams, based on her extended interviews with members of the Palomares family for her book *Windows in an Old Adobe*.

Josefa, youngest daughter of the family, had married "dashing, gallant José Maria Ávila" when she was fifteen, shortly before the battle. Adams writes,

> Josefa's José Maria was the first one to rush into battle with his long lance. He wounded the Governor and the Governor's men killed him. His friends carried his body home to Josefa. Cristobal, Josefa's aged father, was standing by his daughter in the doorway. Suddenly, as he looked upon his daughter in her sorrow, Cristobal dropped dead. So little fifteen-year-old Josefa was left fatherless and husbandless with José Maria's child not to be born for four or five months.[28]

Victoria was taken to San Gabriel Mission, where he was thought to be near death. His men, with two or three exceptions, drifted away to join the rebels in town. According to Bancroft, it was apparent that no further action against the Californios was possible. Victoria sent messengers to former governor José María Echeandía, making a formal statement of surrender and asking to be sent home to Mexico. He left San Gabriel about December 20, making his way to San Diego to board the American ship *Pocahontas*. In the meantime, the rebels had been canvassing to take up a collection for the money to pay his passage to Mazatlan. The supercargo of the vessel insisted that the exorbitant sum of $1,500 in silver had to be paid before the ship set sail.

While the *Pocahontas* was still in port, and the wounds suffered by Victoria were slowly healing, Captain José De La Guerra, who had tried to dissuade Victoria as he dashed through Santa Barbara on his way to his near-fatal encounter, received a long letter from him. Addressing De La Guerra as "My esteemed Sir and Friend," Victoria expressed the opinion that "There can be no doubt regarding the sad state of affairs in which this

country finds itself, though I am sure that its remedy will not be long delayed."[29]

As Victoria viewed his governorship, he should not be expected to bear responsibility for what had happened. He fully expected to be reinstated as governor. He wrote,

> I feel that in my person and authority I am the victim of illegal designs (*me encuentro bastante atentado*). And I am yet very calm and at ease, which is common to men who have the satisfaction that they have acted uprightly. In no way did the honor and authority vested in me make me haughty, and by the mercy of God my conscience is at peace.[30]

The only battle of this particular revolution was in reality a clash between two individuals with passionately-held personal convictions—Victoria, convinced that his was the sole and unassailable authority, and Ávila, equally convinced that no earthly authority extended over his personal freedom and rights. Seen in this light, it did exhibit the classic elements of a comic opera, with Ávila cast as the proud, swashbuckling hero. He was not, however, playing the part of a champion of the revolutionary cause, but rather sought out Victoria on the battlefield as his hated personal enemy.

The planners, Pico, Bandini, and Carrillo, meant to stop Victoria's march not to precipitate a battle but to bargain with him for a return to the old civility. Things went very wrong. By some mischance, the chief rebels were not present in Los Angeles to speak for the limited objectives they had set forth in their initial "*grito*." The text of this manifesto was preserved by Bancroft, although he consigned it to a long footnote: "*Pronunciamento de San Diego contra Géfe Politico y Commandante General de California, Don Manuel Victoria*."[31]

In the opinion of Bancroft, the author of the *Pronunciamento* was Juan Bandini. Regarding this document, which stands as the only direct evidence of the objectives held by the rebels, he comments only that "the reader who may have the patience to examine it will find in it a great many words." Another historian of the grand style, Fr. Zephyrin Engelhardt, O.F.M., writing some years after Bancroft and Hittell, called it "bombast, worthy of the overgrown boys who concocted it," and is particularly exercised over the opening phrases, which assure the people of California that "the Supreme Being, who possesses our hearts, knows the pure sentiments with which we set out." Engelhardt declared, "this expression alone stamps the leaders as disciples of the French infidel notions fathered by the unspeakable Voltaire."[32]

Although the *Pronunciamento* of 1831 refers to the individual rebel leaders as "Citizens" and has the phraseology quoted by Engelhardt, it is scarcely a declaration of the ideas of Voltaire, at least as they gave impetus to the French Revolution. It cites the policies of Victoria as their reason for rebellion and states clearly that:

> We proceed not against the supreme government or its magistrates, but as we are deeply convinced, against an individual who violates the fundamental bases of our system, or in truth against a tyrant who has hypocritically deceived the supreme powers so as to reach the rank to which, without deserving it, he has been raised.[33]

The later historians are in general agreement with Engelhardt's main thesis that one of the underlying reasons for the uprising was to secularize the missions. While Echeandía had received his appointment from Mexico City when the government had favored secularization, secularization was not put forth as a specific objective of the uprising by the rebels themselves, nor was Echeandía alluded to as a philosophical mentor for the rebels. As set forth in the their *Pronunciamento*, José María de Echeandía was to re-assume command of both the political and military offices of the territory, but only "until the supreme government may resolve after the proper correspondence or until, the *diputacion* being assembled, distinct persons may in legal form take charge of the two commands."

Pío Pico, one of the chief planners of the rebellion, dictated a *Historical Narrative* in 1877 to one of Bancroft's interviewers, in which there is little evidence that the objectives that drove him to action extended much beyond ousting Victoria.

Antonio María Osio, one of the very few native Californian historians to record an overview of events in the Mexican era, described the uprising against Victoria with ill-concealed sadness, writing at some length of the ignominious end of the battle. Osio wrote approximately twenty years after the event but was able to refer to his own notes taken during his years in various public service positions. His account is tinged with a deep regret that the ideal of nationhood had not been grasped by the Californios. It appeared to him that the rebels

> fled in a cowardly fashion and left the wounded Victoria, who desired confession more than combat, lord of the battlefield. . . . They never had the decency to say later why they had not somehow aided Ávila and Talamantes, the only two men out of more than two hundred in the force, who joined the battle and distinguished themselves courageously. The arro-

gance of Portilla and Carrillo did not permit them to admit their defeat, unlike the thirty insurgent *mazatecos* or Alférez Don Ignacio del Valle, or Don Andrés Pico, who did so openly. . . . Andrés Pico confessed he did what everyone else did. Since he did not believe he would be safe in the town, he spurred his horse and went straight to a vineyard containing some narrow furrows. He placed his tired animal in one furrow and hid himself in another, underneath a very bushy grapevine, until hunger made him come out little by little to discover the outcome of the encounter with Commander General Victoria.[34]

Pico was one of the would-be revolutionaries of 1831 that continued to oppose domination by Mexico. He went on to fight against the Americans in 1846–47, ending with the dubious honor of surrendering, as the "Chief of the National Forces," to John C. Frémont, as "Military Commandant," on the morning of January 13, 1847, at the Feliz adobe north of Cahuenga Pass. The capitulation, known as the Treaty of Cahuenga, effectively ended resistance to American conquest.

Bancroft closes the story of the rebellion by writing, "Of political events in the south in 1831, after Victoria's abdication, there is nothing to be recorded, except that Echeandía held the command, both political and military, and all were waiting for the *diputacion* to assemble."[35]

Notes

[1]C. Alan Hutchinson, *Frontier Settlement in Mexican California: The Hijar-Padrés Colony and Its Origins, 1769–1835*, (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1969) p. 150. Zoeth Skinner Eldredge, ed., in *History of California* (Century History Company, New York) [ca. 1915], calls this "the strangest encounter that had ever occurred since the days when the issues of battles were entrusted to single champions of the opposing armies." II, 212.

[2]Juan Ávila, *Notas Californianas*, dictated to Thomas Savage, 1878. Quotations are taken from a translation of the dictation prepared under a WPA program in 1938–39 and filed with the original Spanish manuscript in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

[3]Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of California*, 7 vols., San Francisco, 1884–1890. See Chapter VII, "The Rule and Overthrow of Victoria," III: 181–215.

[4]Antonio María Osio, *The History of Alta California, A Memoir of Mexican California*, trans. and ed. by Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996).

[5]Leslie Byrd Simpson, *Many Mexicos*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles. University of California Press, Fourth Edition, 1967), p. 206.

[6]Irving Berdine Richman, *California Under Spain and Mexico, 1535–1847* (Boston and New York: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1911), p. 215.

[7]Bancroft, II, 705–6, for biographies of the Ávila family members.

[8]Bancroft, III, 243–45, for an overview of Echeandía's career.

[9]Arnulfo D. Trejo and Roland D. Hussey, trans., *The Hand of Zamorano: a facsimile reproduction of a manuscript on the Californias in 1829, written by Don Augustin Vicente Zamorano, as secretary to Governor José Maria Echeandía* (Los Angeles: The Zamorano Club, 1956).

[10]Bancroft, *Pioneer Register and Index*, appended in alphabetical segments to vols. II through V of *History of California*, for capsule biographies of participants in the uprising.
[11]Bancroft, *History of California*, III, 184–5.
[12]Angustias de la Guerra Ord, *Ocurrencias en California*, was later translated and edited by Francis Price and William H. Ellison and published as *Occurrences in Hispanic California* (Richmond: The William Byrd Press, 1956).
[13]Antonio María Osio, *The History of Alta California*, p. 98. The squadron from Mazatlan, assigned to guard duty in San Diego and Santa Barbara, numbered 11,828 men during the threatened revolt in 1829.
[14]H. H. Bancroft, *History of California*, II, 559, n.
[15]H. H. Bancroft, *History of California*, III, 207, n., citing *Carrillo, (J.), Doc.* , Ms., 17–20.
[16]María Inocenta Pico de Ávila, *Cosas de California*, dictated to Thomas Savage, 1878. Quotation is taken from a translation prepared under a WPA program in 1938–39 and filed with the original manuscript in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
[17]Angustias de la Guerra Ord, *Occurrences. . .* , p. 23
[18]Don Pío Pico, *Don Pio Pico's Historical Narrative*, trans., Arthur P. Botello, ed. Martin Cole and Henry Welcome, (Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1973) p. 43.
[19]Juan Ávila, p. 8.
[20]H. H. Bancroft, *History of California*, III, 206.
[21]Juan Ávila, p.8.
[22]Bancroft, III, 206.
[23]Theodore H. Hittell, *History of California* (San Francisco: N. J. Stone & Co., 1897), II, 140.
[24]Hittell, II, p.140
[25]Juan Ávila, p. 9
[26]Hittell, II, p. 141.
[27]Bancroft, III, p. 208.
[28]Bess Adams Garner, *Windows in an Old Adobe* (Claremont: Bronson Press, 1970), p. 55.
[29]Joseph A. Thomson, O.F.M., *José De La Guerra, El Gran Capitan, A Historical Biographical Study* (Los Angeles: Franciscan Fathers of California Corporation, 1967), p. 109.
[30]De La Guerra, loc. cit.
[31]Bancroft, III, 202–204.
[32]Fr. Zephyrin Engelhardt, O.F.M., *Missions and Missionaries of California*, 4 vols. (San Francisco: 1980–1916) III, 362.
[33]Bancroft, III, n. 202–204. The manifesto was signed by José María Echeandía, Pío Pico, Juan Bandini, José Antonio Carrillo, Pablo de la Portilla, Santiago Argüello, José María Ramirez, Ignacio del Valle, Juan José Rocha, and as commandante of the artillery detachment, Sgt. Andrés Cervantes.
[34]Osio, p. 111
[35]Bancroft, III, 212.

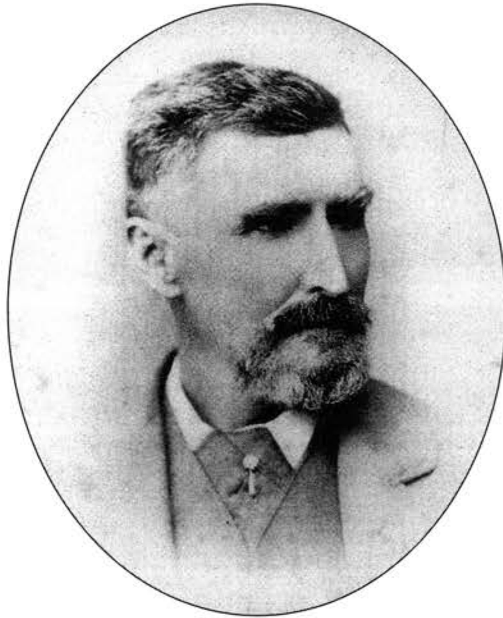
Some Early Angelinos

by Christie Miles Bourdet

On June 23, 1849, the ship *Oxnard* left Boston on the long journey around Cape Horn to California. Among her few passengers were the twin brothers Cyrus and Sanford Lyon, younger sons of Henry Lyon of Machias, Maine. The young men would reach their nineteenth birthday on November 20, two days before the ship entered San Francisco harbor with her consignment of goods. The *Alta California* of November 29, 1849, carried the following advertisement:

> CARGO OF SHIP OXNARD—Crushed and granulated sugar, lard, sperm candles, Baltimore oysters, lobsters, clams, hams, preserved meats, wines, liquors, ale, cider, and a general assortment of groceries, tobacco and segars, carpenters tools and other hardware, tinware, a large lot of crockery and glass-ware, dry goods, consisting in part as follows, viz: blankets, shawls, cloths, coatings, cassimeres, sartinets, hosiery, etc.; boots and shoes, bedsteads, etc., etc. for sale by
> MELLUS, HOWORD [*sic*] & Co., Central wharf.

Henry Mellus was from Boston, the son of William Mellus and his wife, Amelia Lyon (aunt of the Lyon twins). He had first come to California aboard the *Pilgrim*, working his passage before the mast with Richard Henry Dana. He returned east in 1837–38, and in 1839 worked his way back to California as supercargo. In 1845 he became the partner of D. M. Howard, and their firm soon became one of San Francisco's most promi-



Cyrus Lyon.
Christie Bourdet collection.

nent. In 1846 they purchased the property of the Hudson Bay Co. in that city. They built the first brick store in town, and established branches in San Jose, Sacramento, and Los Angeles. Henry Mellus is said to have been noted for his business acumen, and for his exemplary character. In 1846 he married Anita, daughter of the Englishman James Johnson and his Sonoran wife, Maria del Carmen Guirado. Mellus settled in Los Angeles, and was elected mayor in 1860; he died in office a few months later, leaving his widow with seven children.

The Boston traders brought all manner of manufactured goods to California, and received in return the hides and tallow that the merchants procured from the *rancheros*. William Heath Davis, another San Francisco merchant, wrote of business in those early days:

> The merchant who reached the rancho first, generally had the best bargain, though in the course of time the others usually got their share.
>
> In 1841 a ranchero had promised to deliver to me a quantity of hides and tallow on a certain day. I went at the time specified to me ranch landing with the schooner *Isabella*, expecting a full load, but I found that Henry Mellus had preceded me the day before with one of his schooners and had secured nearly the entire stock . . . the ranchero and his sons

Sanford Lyon.
Christie Bourdet collection.

> expressed a good deal of concern and many regrets. They went to work and collected all the dry hides they could find on the place, had a lot of bulls slaughtered immediately, and the hides taken off, and some of the matanza tallow tried out, so that before I left I made up nearly a schooner load. This cutting under and getting the first grab, was common, and well understood among the merchants, but it never caused any ill feeling, as it was considered perfectly fait. They joked and laughed about it among themselves. . . . (*Seventy-five Years in California*, p. 247)

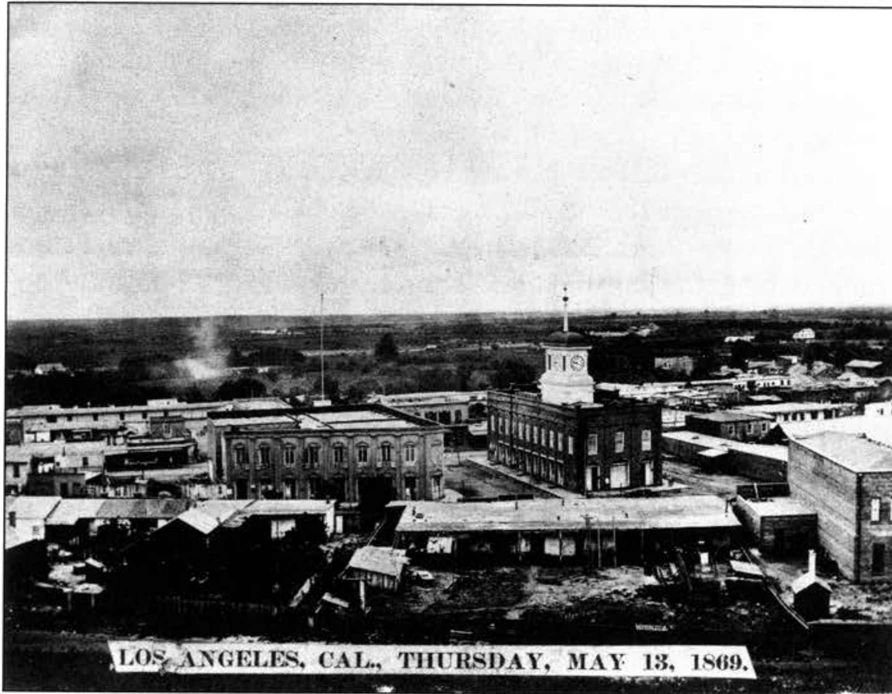
In 1839 Francis Mellus came to California, and at fifteen years of age worked as a clerk for A. B. Thompson of Santa Barbara. He later joined his brother Henry's firm; it was about this time that he received the nickname *Fulminante* (percussion cap) because of his boyish impulsiveness and excitability. He later married Adelaida Johnson, sister of Henry's wife Anita. His partnership with David W. Alexander formed the general merchandising firm of Alexander & Mellus, which also served as the Los Angeles agent for Mellus, Howard & Co. It was to employment as clerks for Alexander & Mellus that the Lyon brothers came in 1849. The 1950 census shows them living in the same household as their cousin Francis Mellus, his wife and infant son, and his bachelor partner.

David Alexander was active in the early Los Angeles community and his business interests were to have some influence on the futures of Cyrus and Sanford Lyon. Alexander came to Los Angeles in the early 1840s, had a store with John Temple in San Pedro from 1844 to 1845, and was associated with Phineas Banning in a staging and forwarding business until 1855. He was elected to the Los Angeles Common Council (city council), and appointed president of that body. In 1851 he became a member of the Volunteer Police, the *pueblo*'s first such force, and in 1853 a member of the original Los Angeles Rangers. In 1851, with Alexander Bell, Francis Mellus, and others, he purchased the 4,064-acre *Providencia rancho* for $1,500, less than 35 cents an acre; they were the first Americans to hold title to real estate in the San Fernando Valley. In 1867 the property was sold to Dr. David Burbank who developed the town of Burbank on part of the *rancho*. Alexander was elected Sheriff of Los Angeles County in 1855. In 1864 he married Adelaida Johnson de Mellus, widow of his former partner.

Alexander & Mellus located in a two-story adobe at the corner of what are now Spring and Temple streets. Boyle Workman's father was once an employee, but left to become a messenger for Phineas Banning; among his duties as messenger was a monthly ride to Fort Tejón, 300 miles north. Business occupied a long day, the time customarily regulated by the bells of Our Lady Queen of Angels church on the *plaza*; they rang each morning for six o'clock Mass and again at eight in the evening to announce vespers, marking the working hours of the *pueblo*. The credit system was on "farm time," not unlike that found in agricultural communities to this day; the vintner would pay his score when the grape crop was sold, the *ranchero* when he disposed of his cattle. Business prospered, at least for a time. In the fall of 1852 the bark *Eureka*, chartered to Alexander & Mellus, landed at San Pedro with the first cargo consigned directly to Los Angeles.

In 1853 Francis Mellus purchased from Alexander Bell the property on the southwest corner of Aliso and Los Angeles streets, known as "Bell's Row." Henry D. Barrow described that area of the town as he remembered it:

> The two-story portion of the building only extended along the Aliso street front, and a part of the Los Angeles street front. The balance of the latter to the south consisted of a one-story row of stores, which were occupied by small dealers for many years.
>
> The upper story on the corner and fronting Aliso street was the residence of . . . Mr. Francis Mellus. . . .



Los Angeles in 1869. Temple Block on left, courthouse with clock tower on right. *Courtesy Henry E. Huntington Library.*

> There was a spacious area back of the block which included a small flower garden, orangery, etc., near the zanja. . . .
>
> The wide space between the Bell Block on the east and the Sterns property on the west side of Los Angeles street, and the Coronel Block.., between Sanchez street and Negro alley on the north, formed quite a large public square. . . . For many years the city scales were located on this square where the farmers and teamsters used to come to weigh heir hay, grain, brea (asphaltum), etc. (*Alexander Bell and the "Bell Block,"* pp. 11–12)

This was prime rental property; the storekeepers on the first floor were more than satisfied with their location, as Aliso Street was the principal route from the city to the east where most county development was taking place in the areas of San Gabriel, "the Monte" (El Monte), and San Bernardino. Being one of only three two-story buildings in Los Angeles, it had a prominence that was an advertisement in itself. It played an important role in the development of Los Angeles; for in January 1851 all eight

Jews living in the city, who were among the community's earliest merchants, occupied stores in this building. Upon purchase by Francis Mellus the property became known as "Mellus' Row," later Bell bought it back and it was again called "Bell's Row."

Capt. Alexander Bell was born in Pennsylvania in 1801. He engaged in trade in Mexico from 1823 to about 1842 when he arrived in Los Angeles; he remained there until his death in 1871. In 1844 he married Nieves Guirado, sister of the wife of James Johnson and aunt of Anita and Adelaida Johnson de Mellus. Bell was a captain in the California Battalion. The Bells were childless; after the death of Henry Mellus they adopted his youngest son, James. Bell was the uncle of Maj. Horace Bell of the Los Angeles Rangers.

Francis Mellus became a respected member of the community; elected trustee of the city school in May 1854, he was instrumental in the construction of the city's first schoolhouse on the northwest corner of Spring and Second streets. The two-story brick building cost $6,000; the location was considered rather out in the country at that time. About 1856 David Alexander sold out his share in their joint firm: Mellus kept the business for a few more years, but more frequent service between San Francisco and the Los Angeles area and the influx of more people, increased the number of stores bringing merchandise from the San Francisco market. Northern buyers were beginning to outbid Mellus for local supplies of hides and tallow. The firm was forced out of business; the mortgage sale was advertised in the June 1, 1861, *Star*. By October of that year, Francis Mellus was operating a quartz-crushing mill in the Holcomb Valley mining area of San Bernardino County. He died in 1863.

In 1852 the total white population of the county (excluding Indians and "foreign," but including those of Spanish and Mexican descent) was 4,093. In September of that year the total recorded vote of the town (limited to adult male citizens) was only 386. Los Angeles was a small adobe pueblo. Emigrants, primarily single men, were drawn to the mines or because they had relatives living in the area; once in Los Angeles, settlers tended to marry daughters of local residents. Those who were not already related by blood or marriage were often linked by that delicate and uniquely Latin institution of *compadres* and *comadres* that makes the connection between parents and godparents, and between godparents and their godchildren, quite as binding as any connection by marriage. Perhaps the best picture of Los Angeles in the early 1850s was given by Harris Newmark:

> Graded streets and sidewalks were unknown; hence, after heavy winter rains mud was from six inches to two feet deep, while during the summer, dust piled up to about the same extent. . . . Into the roadway was thrown all the rubbish. . . . on hot days roads and sidewalks were devoid of shade . . . thoroughfares were altogether unlighted. . . . (*Sixty Years in Southern California*, p. 34)

> Many of the houses . . . were clustered around the north of the Plaza Church, while the hills surrounding the pueblo to the West were almost bare. . . . Main and Spring streets were laid out beyond First, but they were very sparsely settled; while to the east of Main and extending up to that street, there were many large vineyards without a single break as far south as the Ninth Street of today. . . . From Spring Street, west and as far as the coast, there was one huge field, practically unimproved and undeveloped, the swamp lands of which were covered with tules. . . . most of he houses were built of adobe. . . . the walls were generally three or four feet thick . . . , the roofs . . . were generally covered with asphalt and were usually flat in order to keep the tar from running off. (*Sixty Years*, pp. 112–114)

> It is fortunate indeed that the adobe construction . . . rendered houses practically fireproof. . . . a bucket brigade was all there was to fight a fire. . . . Francis Mellus had a little hand-cart, but for lack of water it was generally useless. Instead of fire bells . . . the discharging of pistols in rapid succession gave the alarm and was the signal for a general fusillade throughout the neighboring streets. (*Sixty Years*, p. 117)

Los Angeles was not yet a truly American town. Feast days were marked by elaborate church processions winding through the streets. Bullfights and cockfights were popular, as were bear- and bull-baiting. The former continued at least until legally banned in the 1860s. All this gave Los Angeles a distinctly Mexican flavor.

The bullfights took place, as they do in Mexico today, on Sundays and holidays. At first they were held in the *plaza*, but the noise and commotion in such proximity to the church was annoying so the events were moved to the *Calle de Toros*. This street ended in a canyon, which made it relatively easy to confine the animals and provided a natural slope for the tier of seats on one side. The arena was surrounded with a fence of green willow and a platform was provided for the necessary string band. Music was stirring and the costumes were lavish, but the bravery of the *torero* and the ferocity of the *toro* seldom lived up to their billing on the placards. Horace Bell gives an account of one bullfight attended by a group of young American men. Somewhat disgusted by the cruelty of the sport, and by the cow-

ardice of the "champion" bullfighter "from *La Capitol de Mexico*" (who turned out to be a local cook), their sympathies were with the bull. They agreed that at the first opportunity they would come to its aid. The bull charged, the bullfighter ran for the fence, and:

> Cy Lyon, who was seated thereon gave the . . . champion toreador a well-directed push with his foot . . . which landed him fair and square on the . . . horns. . . . (*Reminiscences of a Ranger*, p. 252)

Communication with the outside world was limited and slow, relying on stagecoach and small steamer from San Francisco. No modern means of transport were known; travel was by covered wagon, stagecoach, and the wooden-wheeled *carretas* drawn by oxen. The men took pride in their spirited mounts and efforts to control these horses caused no small traffic problem in the small community.

The inhabitants were noted for their heavy betting, particularly on the fiercely contested horse races. There were four or five gambling houses, the largest on the *plaza* and the others between these and the Los Angeles Street corner at *Calle de los Negros*. Although called by the Americans "Negro Alley" or even "Nigger Alley," the correct translation would be "Street of the Dark Ones," alluding rather to the reputation than to the complexion of its residents who were almost entirely Chinese.

Horace Bell claimed that in the years 1851–1853 there were more desperados in Los Angeles than anywhere else on the Pacific coast; in the latter year there was an average of one death per day from fights and murders in the town. Prior to the organization of the Los Angeles Rangers, a volunteer company had been raised when needed. In May 1853 a band of Owens River Indians came down through Soledad Pass, over the San Fernando mountains and across the valley, through Cahuenga Pass, across the *Brea* and *Rodeo de los Aguas ranchos*, and stole a considerable number of horses from *Don* Benito Wilson. The Indians departed on a Sunday night; on Monday morning the news was brought to the *pueblo* of Los Angeles. It took until early afternoon for the volunteers to assemble and set off in pursuit:

> We marched out in *column of fours*, the brave author [Horace Bell] forming a column with the lamented Billy Reader, Bill Jenkins and Cy. Lyon. A more gallant quartette, judging from our respective opinion of ourselves, never rode forth to uphold civilization or cut down an infidel. Cy wanted to know if we thought we could scalp an Indian without dismounting. He said he could, and his red head looked redder. (*Reminiscences*, p. 115)

The brave company arrived at Wilson's ranch, where they were fed on

the inevitable beef, tortillas and coffee. After enjoying Don Benito's hospitality for the night, and a substantial breakfast, the volunteers finally moved out mid-morning, eventually reaching the crest of the Cahuenga range overlooking the San Fernando Valley, and proceeding for some six miles along the ridge. Stopping at the *Rancho del Encino* of Don Vicente de la Ora, the company was supplied with liberal refreshment and a hearty meal. Upon discovering that the Indians were some forty hours ahead, the chase was abandoned. It was decided that honor was satisfied, and that undoubtedly the raiders suffered a great scare; perhaps they had, as this was the last Indian raid into the Los Angeles basin.

Obviously, a more efficient permanent military organization was needed to protect the greater community. On August 6 of that same year the original Los Angeles Rangers was established, with a barracks at the corner of Los Angeles and Requena streets. The Rangers were a mounted force to protect the town and county from rustlers, robbers and assassins; the services of the company were in frequent demand. David Alexander was a member, as were Horace Bell and Cyrus Lyon; at this time Cyrus Lyon was just twenty-one years old. The legislature of 1854 appropriated $4,000 for the Rangers' equipment. The *Los Angeles Star* of September 17, 1853, admonished those *rancheros* who charged a small group of Rangers high prices for food and lodging while they were in pursuit of a band of rustlers:

> When it is recollected that the Rangers are a volunteer corps, who hold themselves in readiness, by night or day, to start at a moment's notice, for the rescue of property, not their own, without fee or reward, it would seem but a small thing for those whose property is exposed, to freely supply the few necessities of this company. Every expedition which the Rangers have undertaken has been successful. The whole community are under obligation to them; and if properly sustained, it will not be long before horse thieves, and other scamps, will prefer to select their animals, and perpetuate their outrages, in some other county.

Cyrus Lyon was an active and enthusiastic member of the Rangers. The same issue of the *Star*, under the headline, Recovery of Stolen Horses —Arrest of one of the Thieves, names him as one of a detail of five men who spent two and a half days in pursuit without a change of horses.

Horace Bell tells of Juan Flores, who was sent to San Quentin prison for horse-stealing in May 1855. Flores managed to escape in October, along with Pancho Daniel, and they fled to San Luis Obispo. The two were determined to lead a patriotic revolution, expecting other native *Californios* to follow, to oust the hated *gringos*. They were joined by another convict,

Andres Fuentes, on condition they help him kill Jim Barton, sheriff of Los Angeles County. Fuentes claimed that Barton had perjured himself in the accusation that had resulted in his conviction, a claim that may have some justification. The band moved to San Juan Capistrano, and increased to some fifty men. There, Flores attempted to extract money from the local *gringos;* when one citizen refused, he was taken to the *plaza* and shot. Flores then sent a false report of this shooting to lure Sheriff Barton down from Los Angeles.

> Cyrus Lyon inquired as to the number of men he proposed taking, and on being informed that ten would be enough, refused to go. Cy Lyon was one of our most efficient Rangers, and was better informed as to the magnitude of the danger than any other person, and told Barton that if he went with a less number than fifty or sixty men, it would be at the peril of being cut off and slaughtered. (*Reminiscences*, p. 404)

But the sheriff ignored this advice and set out as planned. He likewise rejected the admonition of Don Jose Sepulveda at whose *rancho* the posse rested north of Capistrano. The party was ambushed; Barton and ten of his twelve followers were killed.

Bell recounted one tale in which a "notorious up-country gambler" had the better of a group of Rangers. The fellow was down on his luck, and struck upon the scheme of posing as a preacher. He was exceptionally eloquent. Following the public sermon the crowd, made up primarily of Rangers, gave freely when he passed his hat, "into which the ever generous Cy Lyon tossed a slug" (*Reminiscences*, p. 139). Generous indeed, a slug was the slang term for a $50 gold ingot. Perhaps Cy had in mind his paternal grandfather's efforts to support a wife and ten children on a pastor's salary.

Horace Bell and Cyrus Lyon were friends, Bell being the elder by only four or five years. He was the Lyon family lawyer, and in later years assisted Cyrus' widow, Rita Cota de Lyon, with funds, telling her that the money was from a reward that Cyrus had earned for his part in the capture of a notorious outlaw, but had refused at the time. Bell wrote,

> Of our gallant comrade, Cyrus Lyon, the language of the immortal Byron can well be applied:
> "Of all our band,
> Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
> In skirmish, march, or forage, none
> Can less have said or more have done."(*Reminiscences*, p. 410)

Bell was proud of all those men, asserting that ". . . if the City of Los Angeles ever had anything to be proud of, it was her heroic Ranger defenders. . . ." (*Reminiscences*, p. 102). The *Centennial History* of 1876 asserted that, "they had proved always efficient" (p. 84).

September 5, 1881 saw the lavish celebration of the city's centennial. It should have been the fourth, but a local news editor persuaded the city fathers otherwise. Festoons of greenery decorated the streets, bright Mexican costumes were much in evidence, and the *plaza* church of *Nuestra Señora Reina de los Angeles* displayed the papal flag flanked by those of Mexico and the United States. The *Herald* estimated a crowd of 30,000, more than twice the resident population. The parade began at two o'clock and wound through the principal streets to the *plaza*; it is said to have been so grand that it took twenty minutes to pass the courthouse. It was led by the mounted police and their chief, followed by the grand marshal and his aides. Following these proudly rode six surviving members of the original Los Angeles Rangers, among them Horace Bell, David Alexander and Cyrus Lyon.

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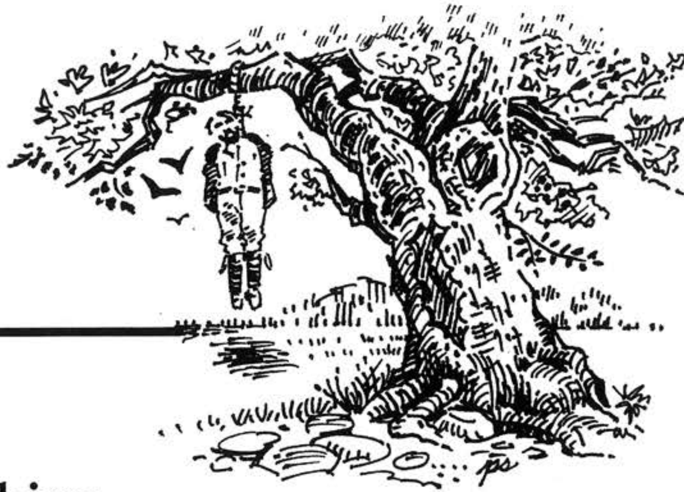


The Last Lynching in Los Angeles County

The Incident at Workman Mill

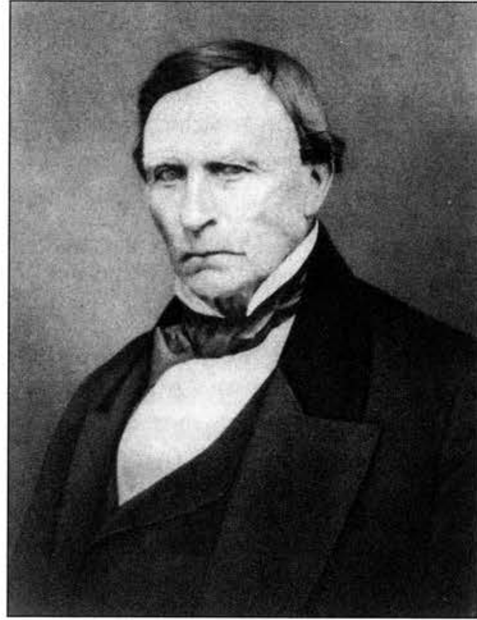
by Paul R. Spitzzeri

In the spring of 1874, Los Angeles County was the scene of great excitement, as the famed *bandido*, Tiburcio Vasquez, and his gang rode into the area from the northern part of the state and engaged in a series of depredations on locals. After robbing sheep rancher Alessandro Repetto in what is now Monterey Park; eluding capture by a posse led by County Sheriff William R. Rowland, during which Vasquez stopped to rob a surveying crew for the new Indiana Colony (today's Pasadena) and relieve them of valuables; and leading the sheriff on a long, thrilling game of hide-and-seek through the San Gabriel Mountains and elsewhere, Vasquez was finally captured in May. Only days after his extradition to the north to face trial, and with the buzz caused by Vasquez' swan song still evident in the minds of many, a seemingly minor event in southern California annals took place, but which has the notable distinction as being the last lynching in regional history and is something akin to a footnote in the Vasquez story.

On June 5, 1874, the Los Angeles *Evening Express* reported that "[o]ur city was thrilled this morning by a report which reached it of a horrible outrage committed at the Puente last night."[1] This was the Rancho La

Puente, some twenty miles east of Los Angeles, and co-owned by William Workman and the heirs of his recently deceased partner John Rowland, including Sheriff Rowland. On the western border of the ranch, near Workman's mill, William Francis Turner and Frederick Lambourn, respectively, Workman's miller and ranch foreman, had recently opened a general store on the mill property.[2] According to the autobiography of Turner's wife, Rebecca, the idea to open the establishment came from a decision by Workman to not pay Turner his monthly salary, but instead to offer him whatever money would be earned on the business at the facility, essentially a commission. Consequently, Turner turned to Lambourn for advice and the latter suggested the former "take on some additional work," while he tended to the bookkeeping. According to Lambourn, "[t]here are many Mexicans along the [San Gabriel] river and they are compelled to go to El Monte to trade. It would be a great convenience for them."[3]

Indeed, according to Mrs. Turner, "[t]he store was a success from the very beginning. . . . The Mexicans were attracted, as Mr. Lambourn predicted, and their trade was large. My husband was acceptable and pleasing to them, for he spoke their language fluently and he treated them with kindly courtesy." Yet, Mrs. Turner, a native of the South, was wary of her neighbors and once stood at the kitchen door "musing the while on my husband's strange fondness for the Mexicans. Well, not fondness perhaps, yet it was more than a mere liking. There was an affinity, an accord in temperament, that was inexplicable to me. . . . His back turned, anybody would have thought he was one of them." She went on to describe his laughter and bodily gestures as identical to that of *the other*. In the meantime, Mrs. Turner articulated her fear of the "Mexican" and recent events preyed on this concern. "I was afraid of them," she wrote, "they were alien to me, and looking on their swarthy faces, I thought of Vasquez—Vasquez the notorious. . . . And the robberies and murders of the lesser bandits occurred far too frequently for one's peace of mind. I distrusted the whole race." The link to Vasquez is significant, because this statement made it sound as if her fears only began, or were, at least, greatly enhanced, by the *bandido*'s recent raid on Repetto, who lived just a few miles west of the Workman Mill, and his capture. Yet Mrs. Turner settled with her family in El Monte years before and it seems that her concerns would have been established well before Vasquez was known to her. Elsewhere, she told of a visit of five Mexicans while her husband was away and their "glancing in a way that was at once furtive and insolent. There was something sinis-



William "Don Julian" Workman (1799–1876) was half-owner of the Rancho La Puente and the owner of the Workman Mill, where the attack occurred. *Courtesy of the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum.*

ter about them—I felt trapped and helpless." When one of them asked for Turner and was told he wasn't at home, he rejoined his compatriots and left. Mrs. Turner told her husband when he returned that she felt the men intended to harm her husband and pointed out "you are entirely at the mercy of those Greasers."

On Monday, June 2, 1874, "near closing time," Mrs. Turner remembered, " I saw a young Mexican ride up to the store" and he remained a half-hour in the store, "looking at top boots when I entered." According to her account, the man stated that he couldn't find what he wanted and would return. "Right then I was suspicious," Mrs. Turner wrote. The next day, Tuesday the 3rd, the same man returned to the store and Mrs. Turner remarked to her visiting sister, "I don't like the looks of that Greaser." Before heading to the store, she took a pistol from a bureau, saying, "I'll take this with me . . . I may need it."

When she arrived, she sat on a sack of grain against the wall and watched while her husband showed the visitor some boots, while that latter "surveyed me with hostile eyes." As Turner reached down for a pair of boots, according to his wife, "the Mexican, without warning, drew a curved pruning knife and before my horrified gaze threw an arm around

my husband's neck and started to cut his throat." Unable to speak in the swiftness of the attack, Mrs. Turner heard her husband "utter an unearthly groan as the razor edge sank into his flesh" and he cut his hands badly trying to pry the knife from his neck. Running to her husband's aid, Mrs. Turner drew the pistol and "jammed it against the bandit's back, over his heart, and pulled on the trigger." She had forgotten to cock the gun, however, and she dropped the weapon to grab the man and pull him away from her husband, who then ran, followed by the attacker. Calling Mrs. Turner's sister at the house to give him a gun, Turner received the answer that his wife had the pistol and Rebecca Turner exited the store, firing once at the bandit, but missing. "As I neared the gate he was coming back and met me face to face. Instantly he pointed his pistol at my breast. I whirled and caught the bullet through my shoulders. I fell to the ground crying, 'Oh, I'm killed!'" The assassin then fled and Mr. Turner carried his gravely injured wife into the house. Mrs. Turner's recollection in the aftermath was that she reported to her sister that she was not afraid to die and asked her to raise her daughter, Maud, as a Christian. Among Mrs. Turner's injuries were four broken ribs from the fall after she was shot. Pregnant at the time of the shooting, she gave birth the day after the attack, but the boy died after a few hours.

Turner, meantime, ran to a sheepherder's shelter "[h]alf a mile down the Puente [San Jose] creek" for help. According to Mrs. Turner, "[n]ews of the outrage spread and the whole countryside [was] aroused. Armed men began to gather. Among them were some of our Mexican friends," including a man named Francisco Bustamente, the man who spoke to her when the five "Greasers" were looking for her husband a few days before the attack.[4]

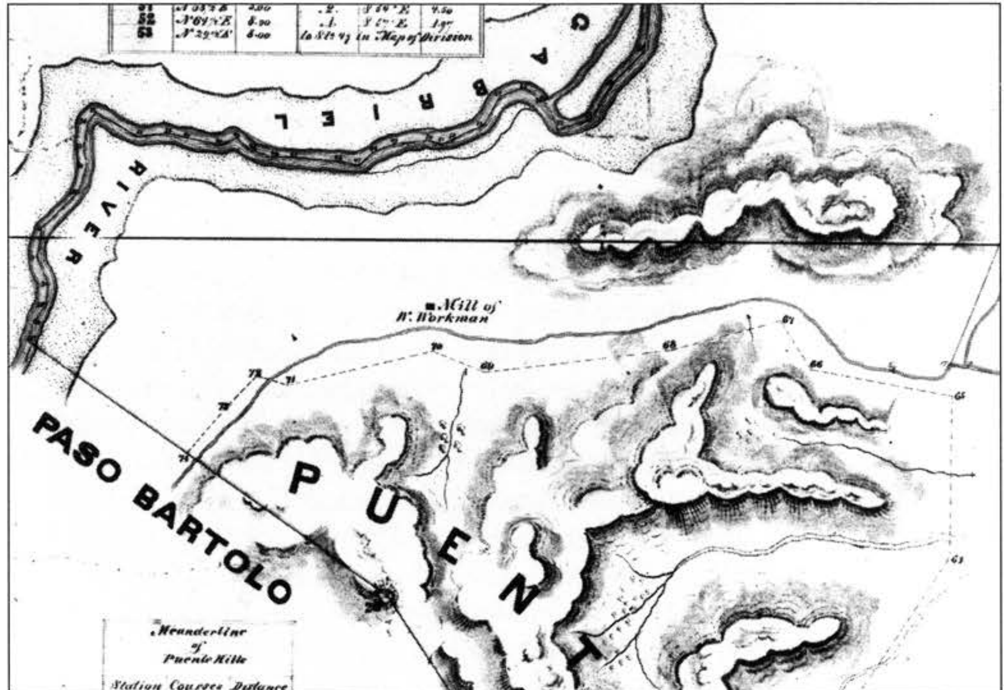
"In the meantime," Mrs. Turner wrote, "excitement ran high as the hunt for the outlaw began. Bustamente was first in the field, proving his friendship by actively organizing and leading the main searching party." Frederick Lambourn and Walter Drown, son of the late Ezra Drown, a Los Angeles County district attorney and Los Angeles city councilman and adopted son of William Workman's daughter, Margarita Temple, and her husband, prominent banker and businessman F. P. F. Temple, went on their own search, rousing "Mexican" laborers in the area to ascertain the whereabouts of the criminal. Finally, Mrs. Turner referred to a party led by William R. Dodson, a blacksmith from nearby El Monte, which scoured the banks of the San Gabriel River. Finding no success and ready to quit the

area, Dodson noticed a hidden space under a fallen tree, which he climbed over to find that "the Mexican raised up and fired in his face." Dodging, Dodson avoided the bullet and fired as the fugitive ran. Dodson's shot hit its mark, but the man continued to run. "The hunt continued unabated throughout the night and the next day the bandit was captured." According to Mrs. Turner's account, the individual was "turned over to the sheriff" and taken to the Turners for a positive identification, where he "impudently asked to see the woman he had shot." William Turner evidently verified the identity of the captured attacker and "the sheriff [William R. Rowland], with his captive, immediately set off for the jail in Los Angeles. He had gone but a short distance—half a mile perhaps—when three men, each with a handkerchief tied across his face, barred the way. . . . They demanded the prisoner, and *in defiance of law*, dragged him to the nearest tree and hung him." One of them, this account stated, "gripped the legs of the swinging bandit, and jerked them with all his might," calling out, "I want him to die and die damned quick!" After ensuring the death of the attacker "[t]hey then notified the bandit's people, telling them they could have the body." Mrs. Turner reported that "[t]he sheriff proceeded to Los Angeles and reported he had yielded up his prisoner to 'superior force.'"

William Workman, the account continued, wished to reward Bustamente, who had "distinguished himself in the hunt for the bandit," but the latter declined the money, saying, "All I want is a pistol. You see, Mr. Workman, I am now out of favor with my countrymen and I wish to defend myself if necessary." According to Mrs. Turner, "Mr. Workman presented him with the finest revolver it was possible to procure in the pueblo of Los Angeles."

In analyzing Mrs. Turner's account, it is reasonable to assume that the account of the attack and the events preceding it are accurate, at least in so far as she recalled or chose to recall. Yet, because of her grave injuries and convalescence, the relating of the capture of the attacker and his execution must have been given to her by others. Undoubtedly, portions of it are true, but an examination of the newspaper accounts is interesting for comparison with Mrs. Turner's version.

To a press just through with the thrilling chase and capture of Tiburcio Vasquez, the events at Workman Mill provided another exciting event which generated plenty of fodder for sensationalized reporting of death, violence, pathos, and community controversy. As the first to report the news, the Los Angeles *Express* took the opportunity to add, with no appar-



The Workman Mill (center), location of the attack on William and Rebecca Turner, allegedly by Jesus Romo, was the southwestern corner of Rancho La Puente, a 48,790-acre Mexican-era land grant. Romo was seized and lynched near the San Gabriel River (top left). *Courtesy of the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum.*

ent authority, that the case showed "that our country is infested by men who will stop at no crime, however horrible, for the purpose of robbery." Variances with the story related by Rebecca Turner immediately are apparent. The *Express* stated that the attacker went to the store "after they [the Turners] had retired to bed" and initially asked for flour, but was refused by Turner because it was late. It was then that Mrs. Turner followed, after a few minutes, because she was suspicious. The paper stated that Mrs. Turner found "the Mexican standing over him [Turner], and with a large knife hacking away at his throat." Moreover, the report was that she fired a shot at the attacker in the store, upon which he released Turner and ran after the fleeing Mrs. Turner, while Turner staggered after the two toward the house. After this point, the account largely squared with Mrs.

Turner's regarding the attack. Yet, it was reported that Mrs. Turner was shot in the back, with the bullet exiting through the back, while she recalled in her reminiscences that the bullet entered her chest and remained in her body until removed by a doctor.[5] Strangely, though it was the first to report the attack, the *Express* seems to have avoided mention of the matter for three days, until Saturday the 6th, while its competitors issued fairly extensive articles on the 4th.

The Los Angeles *Star*, along with the Los Angeles *Herald*, first provided a partial identity of the criminal, reporting that Constable M. D. Hare of Los Angeles stated the man was called *Gordo*, (Spanish for "fat") and was to be married on the Monday after the attack. Yet, this report was that Gordo visited the store on Monday and purchased some goods before returning the following day. On this second visit, he returned with two other men to have a drink, after which the others left and Gordo and William Turner remained alone in the store. The former presented, it was said, a bill of goods for forty dollars and paid for the merchandise. The *Star* then closely matched Mrs. Turner's account of her entering the store and sitting down to watch, because of her concern, while her husband showed the customer some boots, adding that in the chaos following the attack, the criminal left his purse, containing twenty dollars, behind.[6]

The *Herald* carried the most comprehensive coverage of the incident at Workman Mill. Rather than rely on the report of someone at Puente, the paper sent a reporter out with Los Angeles constable T. J. Bedford to investigate. Referring to the criminal as "El Gordo," the paper reported much as the *Star* had, with the exception that it stated Mrs. Turner appeared on the scene as her husband was being attacked, instead of being present when it began, and that she was shot in the back. Further, this account added that Mrs. Turner grabbed the criminal and threw him outdoors,"at the same time firing upon him" as he chased her husband toward the house.

Hereafter is a significant variance, in that the report was that El Gordo "was then joined by two confederates, an American and a Mexican, who had previously remained in the background, and the three proceeded to rifle the store" including clothing and forty-four dollars. While the Turners did not recall any others with the attacker, an unidentified person claimed to see the others.

According to the reporter, he interviewed William Turner, who "conversed quite freely and recounted many of the particulars of the affair as we have given them." While the other papers noted the bravery of Mrs.

Turner in running to the aid of her husband, the *Herald* added much praise to her as rendering assistance such as "would do credit to a Joan of Arc."

Another curiosity in the report is the description of El Gordo, said to be "a short, heavy-set man . . . probably forty years of age, has a broad, flat face, small eyes, resembling those of a Chinaman. . . ." He was said to have lived with a "Senor Lugo at the Ranchito," this latter place being the ranch of ex-Governor Pío Pico, a few miles south of the Workman Mill. According to a "native" the reporter met on the road back to Los Angeles who claimed to know El Gordo, his name was Tres Piños and "owns quite an extensive ranch, and has lived in the county for a long time." It is interesting that this supposed name of Tres Piños was given, because this was the location at which Tiburcio Vasquez and his men committed the murders in late 1873 for which Vasquez was executed. One wonders if the "native" threw this sardonic surname out in derision. As for the hunt for the attacker and the alleged accomplices, constables Hare of Los Angeles and Bryant of El Monte were reportedly "with a posse of men, [and] are out after the robbers."

Under the subheading of "SOME IMPORTANT POINTS," the reporter alluded to El Gordo's impending marriage "to a young woman living near the Monte [El Monte]" and wondered if the robbery was to obtain the funds for the wedding or "owing to his natural depravity" and "the effects of bad whisky." Further, while it was stated that officers had placed a watch on the house of the fiancée, it was not reported how that information was obtained and yet no one at that time knew the true identity of El Gordo.[7]

Because of the search for the accused and the inability of search parties to find him right away, Friday's reports in the *Star* and the *Herald* were limited to the hope that a capture would be imminent.[8]

On Saturday the press reported on the exciting events of the previous day. Curiously, the *Star* limited its report to the matter-of-fact news that "'El Gordo,' the Mexican who committed the robbery and attempted the murder of Mr. Turner and wife on Tuesday night last, was captured by the citizens of the Monte and Puente yesterday and hung." Though stating that "[a]nother report says that the robber hung himself," the report was verified "that the fellow has been sent to his last account." As if it were the 1850s and the heyday of the lynch mob again in southern California, the paper stated that "[w]e are glad to know that such is the fact. Such an infernal rascal ought to be dealt with according to his desserts." "Besides," the journal laconically added, "it will save the county expense."[9]

The simple headline "THE ROPE" headed the account of the *Express* in its Saturday edition. Revealing that "El Gordo" was the nickname of Jesus Romo, the paper reported that information was delivered to "a large number of people living in and near the Monte" that Romo was hiding in the river. Prominent Los Angeles merchant Harris Newmark, in his memoir *Sixty Years in Southern California*, wrote that "Fred Lambourn . . . rushed in on Jake Schlessinger [a merchant in El Monte], shouting excitedly, 'By God, Jake, I know where the fellow is!' and Jake and others responded by . . . hurrying to a rendezvous at [George] Durfee's farm [on the west bank of the river south of El Monte]."[10] According to the *Express*, which matched well the account of Mrs. Turner, it was William Dodson, who noticed movement in an area along the bank of the San Gabriel. The paper, though, stated that when Dodson sighted the crouching figure of Romo on a log, he fired first, hitting Romo, who was not said to have returned fire. It was another shot, which Newmark indicated was fired by Jacob Schlessinger, which brought Romo to surrender.[11] According to the *Express*, "[a]s soon as he was taken in captivity, he confessed his crime and told his captors where he had hidden his plunder. They proceeded to the place designated, and unearthed the sum of seventy-three dollars which he had stolen from Turner's store."

Although Mrs. Turner had reported that Romo wished to see her and that this was not allowed, the *Express* reported that she and her husband identified him as the attacker when Romo was brought before them after his capture. Describing the swelling crowd gathered around as some one hundred persons, the paper was sure to note that "[t]he man was severely wounded, and doubtless under the impression that he had received his quietus [a release from life], anyway, he volunteered to make a confession." Romo, it was said, not only admitted his culpability in the Turner attack, but also "confessed to other acts which showed him to be a great criminal." Among these, one El Monte resident reported, was a brutal murder of the Overend family in San Diego, from which Romo had allegedly just come. If this were true, opined the writer, "it was a great mistake in the crowd to hang him," because Romo could have helped solve the mystery of that killing. The hanging was rather plainly described:

> After making his confession, the crowd proceeded with him to a clump of willows on the creek near the Puente [this being San Jose Creek to the east of the river], and hanged him. There was no undue excitement, but the whole business was concluded quietly and determinedly.

Once more, the *Express* carefully noted "it is said that 'El Gordo' could not have survived his wounds very long, but whether this was the considered opinion of a doctor or that of a vigilante is not known." Added to this was the justificatory statement that "[t]hus has a fiendish outrage met with summary retribution at the hands of a people whose patience has been severely tried by the rifeness and boldness of crime in their midst." Again, statements like this hearkened back to the 1850s as justification for summary justice in the face of criminal brutality.[12]

The description from the *Herald* merits coverage because of its absurdist conclusion to the lynching of Jesus Romo. Using the time-honored phrase of "JUDGE LYNCH" as its headline, the paper acknowledged that the hunt for El Gordo "seemed to look like business in which Judge Lynch had something to do, and we were not greatly surprised to find that such was the case." The rest of the report then came from a letter dated June 5 from El Monte, in which the following description of the lynching was given. First, the letter stated, a report, likely from Lambourn, reached them of Romo's whereabouts, though it was never explained how he knew where the fugitive was hidden.[13] From there "the news spread like wild-fire through the town, and all hands rallied," so that a party of thirty men left El Monte in search of Romo. The account then followed much of what has been mentioned before, including Dodson's discovery of the wanted man. "[B]eing an old Confederate soldier and not to be surprised in such matters, [Dodson] saluted the man with a double-barreled shot-gun loaded with buckshot." A second shot by Dodson, continued the letter, brought Romo "on his knees, [at which he] threw up his hands and asked for mercy." After the confession and discovery of the money, except for $6.50, the captured man was taken to the Turners and identified by them both. Other than stating that he wanted money, Romo made no other statement and, the writer noted, "By this time he was becoming quite weak from the two loads of buckshot which he received, and we think it doubtful if he could have lived more than twenty-four hours." Undoubtedly, this was the considered opinion of the capturers, who then turned over Romo to R. S. Bryant, El Monte constable, who "took him in charge and started for Los Angeles." Yet, Bryant had only gotten a short distance toward the city, when "the Constable was overtaken by several masked men who took possession of the prisoner and wagon. The party drove beneath a large oak-tree and while passing under, *the prisoner's neck-tie caught upon a limb and he was choked severely* [author's italics] (N. B. He still hangs there). The scene of the accident is

near Mr. Workman's mill, about three miles east of Mr. [F. P. F.] Temple's residence." To add a final flourish to this account, the missive ended with the statement, "*No cost to the State or county* [original italics]." The letter was signed "MONTE BOYS."[14]

Enjoying the metaphor of the wayward necktie, the paper added a little editorial comment about "the capture and accidental death of Jesus Romo alias 'El Gordo'" and noted that "[t]he account contains two warnings. One that deeds of rapine and murder in this part of the State are liable to cause the offenders trouble, and the other that while riding beneath the branches of trees one should not wear strong neckties."[15]

Newmark's autobiography, it should be noted, contains some additional information to add to the tale. First, he stated that Romo was told by the captors "that, as soon as Turner should identify him, he would be hung." The criminal then allegedly stated that he needed the money in order to be married, "that his immediate need was a cigar," and that he wished his body released to his friends for burial.

> Jake [Schlessinger] handed the doomed man his only weed; and soon after, five or six masked rode up and announced that they would care for the criminal. Then they drove under a tree on the bank of the river and there, in short, order, the cutthroat was hanged.[16]

Interestingly, while none of the three papers knew or chose not to release the identities of the vigilantes who seized Romo from Constable Bryant, Mrs. Turner did and her memoir explained that the three men who "barred the way . . . were Mr. Lambourn, Walter Drown, and Schlessinger." Further, she stated, "[t]he masks were an absurdity, as the three were well known. Mr. Lambourn, short and stout, would have been unmistakable in any disguise." It was Lambourn, moreover, who tugged on Romo's legs so that he would "die damned quick!"[17]

Sunday's *Herald* brought another report on the lynching by an unknown correspondent who observed that "some very important facts . . . [were] very incorrectly given." In giving his version of the story, the tale, unlike the others presented in the press previously, corresponded nearly exactly with that of Mrs. Turner's, with the exception that the letter in the paper stated she had gone to bed when Romo came to the store, while her account stated she had put her daughter to bed and, as remarked above, told her sister of her suspicions about the "Greaser" in the store with her husband. The difference in the immediate aftermath is that the correspondent stated that Romo seized "five packages of silver, twenty dollars of half-dollar pieces

and four dollars in dimes," leaving seventy-eight dollars loose in the till, and also took an unknown quantity of goods. The writer also took time to correct the assumption made in the June 4 report of the *Herald* that there were any accomplices with Romo. Other minor corrections to earlier accounts by the paper were that Romo was in the neighborhood of twenty-five years of age, not forty; was not known as Tres Piños (the likelihood of a Vasquez allusion aside); and had worked for Pedro Verdugo, and not for the Lugo family, who resided at Rancho San Antonio, nor at Pío Pico's Ranchito. Further, when caught, he was intending to leave the area "at midnight," presumably meaning the cover of darkness, and that Constable Bryant was inferred as the leader of the posse that hunted him down. When discovered by Dodson, Romo hoped to flee for a thicker thicket on the west side of the river. An exact accounting of the stolen money, in half-dollars and dimes, as well as the dry goods (both stolen and purchased) found in the hiding place was given. The article recounted the confession, his identification by the Turners, and the arrest by Bryant, who began to take the captured man to Lexington, a settlement adjacent to the west of El Monte. In the account, the correspondent avoided the absurdity of accident and stated directly that Romo was seized and taken "to the road leading to the Old Mission [in Whittier Narrows just west of the Workman Mill and near the Temple ranch]," where the lynching party found an oak-tree with "a limb hanging very invitingly out," and from which "the prisoner was relieved of all future troubles in this world at 12 o'clock M[idnight]." The postscript was that the body hung until 5:00 P.M., seventeen hours later, when it was cut down for burial by some twenty of Romo's friends. The missive was signed, "By One Who Knows."[18] Given this nom-de-plume, the preciseness of the detail regarding money and other facts, and the ubiquitousness of Frederick Lambourn and Walter Drown in the affair, it may be supposed that "By One Who Knows," was one of the two men. There was one additional reason, however, why this supposition is made and it concerns an interesting and important follow-up to the death of Jesus Romo.

The *Star,* which published such a blasé account of the lynching, took the opportunity to offer the sentiment, on the 7th, that "The Community Acquiesce in the Hanging of 'El Gordo.'" It claimed that "[s]wift and terrible as was the retribution meted out to this miscreant, we have yet to hear of a single person by whom the act is disapproved." This was soon to change, but the editorial continued by stating "we feel certain that if irregular and extra judicial punishment for crime was ever warranted in any

instance, it was in this." Moreover, "[s]ome of the worthiest and most respected citizens of Los Angeles county, we have reason to believe, were among his executioners." Claiming that Romo's death "was a foregone conclusion," the paper reminded its readers that its coverage of the capture of Tiburcio Vasquez showed that "the people of this section would suffer no brigandige [*sic*] to go unpunished, and the sequel, as illustrated in the events of Friday, proves the correctness of the assertion." After all, the article continued, it was known that Romo "was no novice in crime, but on the contrary a hardened and blood-stained desperado, who deserved richly the fate which over took him." It was "upon good authority," namely the unidentified El Monte resident, who reported on Romo's confession that he was involved in the murder of the Overend family in San Diego County. Certainly, information obtained from Romo would have been useful in this case "but his captors were wroth, and were not disposed to parley or hesitate." The consequences of the Romo lynching was the lesson that "[t]he terrible example ought not to be without effect upon those who feel disposed to emulate such deeds of outlawry as brought 'El Gordo's' fate upon him.[19] Indeed, Newmark later wrote that the Workman Mill affair "was contemporaneous with the Vasquez excitement, and Romo was probably bent on imitating the outlaw," though why the Los Angeles merchant thought this so was not explained.[20]

Despite the *Star*'s disclaimer, there was protest over the hanging of Jesus Romo. A letter to the *Express* by "Lex" stated that he or she "was surprised to see that the *Herald* of this morning gives its approval to the unlawful act committed yesterday." To Lex, the actions of the vigilantes were "in violation of the laws and constitution of the land without any excuse whatever, for, according to their own showing, the proofs were so perfect" that Romo would have been unable to escape the punishment of law. As "a pretended advocate of the progress, moral and material, of the country," the *Herald*, Lex continued "instead of reprobating the act glories in and flippantly approves of it." Crucial to this argument is the fact that Los Angeles' prosperity could only be secured by the knowledge "that the law will be upheld therein, and that the citizens thereof are law-abiding." Instead, the lynching of Romo "will have a baneful effect on the reputation of the county, and it should be denounced by the press and punished, if possible, by the arm of the law."[21] As we shall see, Lex was not the only voice of protest and responses to this letter and others were to come.

The protest of Lex was three columns over on the same page as the

Express editorial column, which featured an exposition on "Lynch Law." Here, the view was expressed that "[w]e are not generally partial to extra-judicial proceedings, and do not believe we should have favored the summary punishment of the wretch who was executed by the populace near the Puente yesterday; but we don't believe the majesty of the law was very much hurt by the proceeding." Interestingly, reference was made to "the lionizing of Vasquez" and a softness toward crime, which "requires an offset in the shape of a little rough justice in the country." Therefore, the editorial opined, the Romo lynching really constituted "an informal protest of the rural population to the species of apotheosization which was witnessed here by the capture of the Tres Piños murderer." Romo was one of the "large crop of worthies who will seek fame by the infamous emulation" of Vasquez. Even more curious was the declaration that "If the cities are spreading corrupting influences, it is the duty of the country to step in and check them." Should Los Angeles choose to swoon in the presence of a Vasquez, "it is well that the suburban antidote interposes and swings the 'Gordos.'" A striking metaphor was employed, as "the stubborn detestation of crime in the country holds a sharp sword over the necks of the germinating scoundrels" who prey upon innocent victims like the Turners. Referring to Lex, the paper understood "the logical and legal argument . . . [of he] who eloquently deplores the ills" of the lynching, yet "we have no tears to waste on the event." To the contrary, the death of Romo "will show the embryo scoundrels" of Los Angeles County that "if they seek renown by the bloody road" they may expect the "terrible retribution as an example to all evil-doers."[22]

The day after the lynching, Los Angeles County Coroner N. P. Richardson convened an inquest at the site with a jury of six, one of whom was Los Angeles constable T. J. Bedford, mentioned earlier, and five witnesses. These included Constable Bryant, William Dodson, and Refugio Romo, presumably a relative of the deceased, though his link was not explained in the press. Bryant's statement, from both the *Herald* and the *Express*, evidently did not have much to say that wasn't previously reported, and that "the man was taken from his custody. He knew nothing more of the affair. Had heard in the evening that a man was hung near the place [where he was seized]." The only other witness whose testimony was reported in the *Express* was that of a man named Moreno. He identified Romo as twenty-one or twenty-two years old, a native of the Mexican state of Sonora, and testified that he had seen him the Monday previous to the attack at Workman Mill, and again when he was escorted by twenty-five men near

Moreno's house. The witness, though, could not identify any of those who were with the captured man. His brief statement concluded, "I know nothing about who done it" in regard to the lynching, though he saw Romo's body on the ground and the rope burned next to the tree.

One other matter, seen seemingly as insignificant by the press and, presumably, by the coroner and other officials, was only stated in the *Herald* account. "It is said," the paper reported, "that Romo disclaimed having any hand in the Overend massacre" in San Diego County. The *Express*, though, in a separate news item from the report on the inquest, tucked away in the "Local Items" column, reported "W. R. Dodson told an attaché of this paper that 'El Gordo' emphatically denied having anything to do with the Overend family massacre in San Diego county." This, it was stated, was a question posed to him by one of his captors. Yet, previously, it was emphatically reported from a "reliable source" that he had admitted to complicity in the murders and this "fact" was used as a reason for justifying Romo's execution.[23]

More significant to the *Herald*, however, were two items. The first was a new letter signed "Monte Boys" which referred to a report of a reward offered for the capture of Romo. The author was intent on stating that "[n]ot one of the Monte boys or men have received, nor would they take, once cent of reward; nor was it offered them." Moreover, the correspondent stated, "They captured the assassin, found the money and stolen goods and delivered the prisoner to the officer, the goods and money to Mr. Lomfaum [Lambourn] . . . and went home and had no hand whatever with Judge Lynch." It was "the reward of satisfaction" which the Monte Boys "fully realized in the capture of El Gordo, and his judgment and execution. We captured and delivered the man up, and there were enough without us[,] to execute the law of Judge Lynch."[24]

Next, there was a lengthy editorial, sententiously titled "Law and Protection." Responding to the aforementioned criticism by Lex in the *Express* of the *Herald*'s coverage of the Romo lynching, the paper replied that "[w]hen the law is powerless to maintain the peace and to preserve the lives and property of citizens, then we believe in assisting the law to the attainment of those ends." The oft-reported history of vigilante justice in the state was proof enough that the lynching of Romo was merited. Though the paper pretended to "deprecate mob law as sincerely as 'Lex'" it followed this disingenuous declaration with the statement that "we recognize the principle of self-preservation as the first law of nature—a principle underlying all law." Here was the typical recourse to the idea of nat-

ural law as over and above or undergirding, as expressed here, common law. While this argument has some semblance to reason with its references to nineteenth-century legal philosophy, the editorial also contained statements like "[w]hen a community realizes that they must hang somebody or be murdered, hanging is very apt to commence." Further it claimed that all admonitions about law and order are meaningless "when the people find the law will not protect them;" therefore "they will protect themselves. We must protect ourselves—legally if possible; but we must protect ourselves." Declaiming that "We are not an advocate of capital punishment" and that "we are sorry he [Romo] was hanged," the *Herald* was, all the same, "glad to know that 'El Gordo' was hanged . . . as he could not be lawfully hanged, we do not regret that he was hanged."[25]

The case took on a more marked ethnic component when it was reported in the *Herald* that F. V. Cazaux de Mondran, secretary to ex-Governor Pío Pico, a neighbor of William Workman and whose Rancho Paso de Bartolo or Ranchito, where Romo was reported to have lived and worked, lay to the south of the Workman Mill, brought a letter to the paper's office. "Written in bad Spanish and addressed to 'Senor Don Pio Pico'," the missive was postmarked from El Monte and "is most probably the production of one man, and was written and forwarded without the knowledge of the citizens who captured El Gordo." Because of its insinuations, the letter bears repeating in full:

> El Monte, June 8, 1874
>
> Sr. Don Pio Pico: We have heard that you intend to spend your money and use your influence in order to punish the Vigilantes in behalf of the murderer 'Gordo.' If it be so, you have not the principles of a man and in morality you are worse than he was, because you ought to know better.
>
> El Gordo is not, nor shall be the only one meriting such a condign punishment. It is necessary that you have your eyes wide open, because we are still ready to correct the atrocities that day after day are happening.
>
> If, by chance, some one of the Vigilantes has a bad end by your hand or your influence or the friends of the late Jesus Romo, may God forgive you and the friends and relations of the dead man for the consequences.
>
> Neither one nor two will pay the debt. As soon as we begin, God alone can see the end.
>
> These who have until now been your friends,
> MONTE VIGILANTES

Choosing not to add any editorial comment, the paper noted that "The name 'Monte Vigilantes' is new, and is the first intimation we have received

that a Vigilance Committee exists in the county," but quickly added that "[i]t does not exist, except in the imagination of the author of the letter."[26]

That evening's edition of the *Express* referred to the "foolish letter" by "Monte Vigilantes" that implicated Governor Pico in meddling in the Romo affair and stated that "unless it was done by some one to create mischief," the missive "has betrayed a reprehensible desire to stir up bad blood in this county." While stating that Romo certainly had no sympathizers for his brutal crime, "[t]he fact, however, that the law was violated in his summary and extra-judicial punishment may raise a party of sticklers for 'law and order,' who may try to pursue his executioners to the extent of the violated statute." To the writer, this was an issue to which "nobody could object" and that the vigilantes "knew they were liable to the effects of a judicial inquiry, and were willing to stand the legal consequences." It was reported that the grand jury was looking into the incident and was employed in "the only 'regular' way of getting at the legal aspect of the responsibility involved." Yet, the editorial concluded, "[T]o embitter class prejudices on a subject so utterly devoid of all the elements of worthy sympathy had better be left severely alone."[27] The use of the term "class" is interesting and the question is, did the writer literally mean social class or did he mean ethnicity (or "race," as was typically used)? The *Express*, in fact, expounded upon the theme of ethnic tension the following day in reporting that it was said "a large number of Spanish Americans held meetings last night and the night before, at the Mission of San Gabriel to consider the lynching of 'El Gordo.' Great indignation was expressed." It was further reported that "A party of Mexicans went to the Monte last night armed and 'sloshed around' for a while." Evidently, the response by an unknown number in that largely American settlement was that, if armed conflict were to break out, the fighting, strangely, would "be carried into Africa." If some "indiscreet men" chose to pursue the matter, the paper expressed, "it would require no prophet to predict truthfully how it will end."

Moreover, in its editorial column, the *Express*, noted that "[t]he Mexicans and Native Californians . . . advance the argument that if the latter [Romo] had been an American he would have been handed over to the law." The response from the paper was that "[t]he history of lynch outbursts on this Coast shows that no respect has been paid to nationalities in its dispensation." The people, it continued, paid no regard "to the place of birth, color or previous condition of the offender." An American, the argu-

ment went, would have received the same punishment and would not have received sympathy even "from those who measure crime with tenderness in accordance with the ignorance or lack of opportunity of the persons committing it."[28]

The *Herald,* under the headline "Various Rumors," returned to rumors of the confession Romo was alleged to have made when captured at the river. Not only, it stated, was he said to have participated in the murders in San Diego County, but "also that he had frequently accompanied Vasquez on marauding expeditions." While squashing these assertions by stating that Romo unequivocally denied both under questioning, the paper noted again that "[t]hese asseverations were made after receiving wounds from which he knew he must die in a short time."

Another rumor concerned the news that "that the Mexicans living on the Pico Ranch, about fifty in number, vow vengeance on the men who captured as well as those who hanged El Gordo." While "perhaps a vain and idle threat," it was also, the paper stated, "a foolish one. An attempt at retaliation on the part of El Gordo's friends will be the signal for more hanging." Concluding with the repeated assertion that "no honest man" would sympathize with the fate of Romo, the writer ended with the admonition that "those of his kind" would "avoid a similar end" by abiding the law.[29]

The county grand jury in its report to County Judge H. K. S. O'Melveny, submitted on June 12, stated that "we examined as far as lay in our power" into the Romo lynching but "that we were unable to find any indictment in the case, for want of evidence identifying any of the persons who committed the crime, and hence are compelled to leave the matter for the next Grand Jury, with recommendation to the officers to search for evidence." Interestingly, the *Herald* prefaced the report with the statement that "[w]e repress a small portion of it, which is of a character compelling secrecy." Unfortunately, this "secret" information is not known and no hint of it was given in later editions of the paper.[30]

The final word on the matter from the press came in the form of an editorial by the *Herald* on June 13. Linking the two most notorious criminal cases in recent months, the paper asserted that very few Mexicans and Californians "sympathize with Vasquez or swear vengeance on the captors and executioners of Romo." Many of these, and Americans as well, "regret the exigencies which compelled the people to take the law into their own hands." This was, incidentally, the first time the phrase "The People," a standard phrase used in the 1850s to lend a populist aura to the propensi-

ty for vigilantism, was used in any press description of the Workman Mill affair. Continuing with its argument, the paper claimed that even those who thought the matter "should be investigated before a legal tribunal" did not necessarily "regret his death or believe that he did not richly merit the fate he met." Seeking a literary analog in *Macbeth* and Shakespeare's famed lines "if it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly," the paper continued to claim that only the criminal class, of Mexicans and Americans both, could sympathize with Romo's fate, while "people may approve an act, and yet disapprove of the means by which the end was attained." Yet, it is significant to note that the justification offered by the writer here was that the vigilantes "placed Romo beyond the reach of harm to others by himself, or of harm to himself by others."[31]

Although the public discussion of the affair at Workman Mill seemed to have ceased by mid-June 1874, Rebecca Turner's memoirs, compiled some fifty years later, noted that "Monte Vigilantes" was, indeed, the nom-de-plume of a single person. In Mrs. Turner's words "[t]he hanging of this Mexican aroused considerable protest from members of his race, especially from old Pio Pico." Though not found in the three English-language dailies—and one would think they would have made reference to it if it had existed—she stated that "[i]n an open letter which appeared in the newspaper, he [Pico] declared the youth was an innocent boy who had worked for him, that taking his life was unjustified and called aloud for vengeance."

According to Mrs. Turner it was "Walter Drown, with all the spirit of his dauntless father, [who] accepted the challenge. In his reply he asserted that the man was a cold blooded murderer" and "if through any outbreak on the part of the Mexicans, another American should be killed, God alone knew where it would stop." It is significant, however, that the letter makes no mention of "Americans" at all, only that, if "one of the Vigilantes has a bad end by your hand or your influence or the friends of the late Jesus Romo, may God forgive you and the friends and relations of the dead man for the consequences." According to Mrs. Turner, the letter by Drown "was the end of it" in regard to the affair.[32]

Despite Drown's ominous words about the possibility of further vigilante violence against criminals, the lynching of Jesus Romo was the last reported event of its kind in the Los Angeles region. Why this was so probably lies in changing notions about the nature of criminal justice and punishment. Outside of the South, there was a marked decline in the number

of lynchings in the United States by the 1870s. The professionalization of police, the increase in the number and size of prisons, the growing reliance on the courts, and the continuing development of the science of criminology all are possible factors in the decline of extra-legal punishments. A future study of crime in Los Angeles after the 1870s might well shed some light on the reasons why what happened to Jesus Romo did not happen to others afterward.[33]

As to the particular matter of Romo's lynching, a few key points stand out. First, there seems to be no reasonable evidence that he was not guilty of the attack on the Turners and the consequential death of their unborn son. He was captured in hiding nearby and led his captors to the stolen money, described down to the number of quarters and dimes taken. By the legal standards of the day, Romo would have been sentenced to death and, undoubtedly, hung for that crime. But, when it comes to the justification expressed by the executioners and some of the press for his lynching, some glaring inconsistencies stand out. Foremost among these was the argument that Romo would have died from his wounds anyway. The first problem with this assertion, of course, is that the judgment as to the condition of his gunshot wounds was made by his captors, none of whom was a doctor. Secondly, if the wounds were serious, shouldn't a doctor have been called? After all, three doctors attended the Turners and two of them were in close proximity: one was from Los Nietos to the south and another from El Monte, while the third came from Los Angeles. A doctor's consultation (it was reported, by way of comparison, by Mrs. Turner and the press, that her condition was at first considered hopeless, though she did, obviously, recover), could have been made and, if Romo were truly mortally wounded, he could have died under treatment for his injuries. Third, whether Romo was fatally wounded or not, turning him over to the care of doctors and then to authorities for trial was required by law. Finally, his lynching had nothing to do with his medical condition, because, if he was going to die anyway, he could have been left to do so under the care of doctors and still had his "quietus." Instead, Frederick Lambourn, Walter Drown, and Jacob Schlessinger, all friends of the Turners, executed their revenge upon Romo, to the extent that Lambourn, according to Rebecca Turner, angrily yanked on the unfortunate man's legs to hasten his demise. His condition certainly had nothing to do with the decision to lynch him and it seems irrefutable that, had Romo been uninjured, he would have been hung anyway.

Another dynamic to the case is ethnicity. On first approach, the case appears to have ethnic conflict as a crucial element, because the criminal was Mexican and the victims, pursuers, and executioners were all Euro-American, with the conspicuous exception of Bustamente. Additionally, when ex-Governor Pío Pico and other *Californios* protested the lynching of Romo, it was Walter Drown, under the more encompassing nom-de-plume of "Monte Vigilantes," who responded with language that can be interpreted as ethnically divisive. Moreover, El Monte, which was settled by Americans mainly from the South in 1851, long had a reputation for intolerance of people of color, especially *Californios* and Mexicans.

Certainly, Rebecca Turner's memoirs add to the idea that ethnicity was a central component to the case. Her racist description of fear and loathing toward "Mexicans" was indelible, even the remarkable passage that described the flight of Bustamente, who had been, in her own words, loyal and devoted to her husband. It should be remembered, too, that Mrs. Turner was a native Southerner and came from El Monte and her views on Mexicans and *Californios* were probably shared by many in the area.

There are cogent reasons, however, to question how strong a role ethnicity played in the incident. First, William Turner, by his wife's admission, had a good relationship with *Californios* and Mexicans who lived and worked in the area. His employer, William Workman, married a *Nueva Mexicana* from Taos; in the Mexican-American War, he arranged an amnesty for *Californios* fighting the Americans and shielded two *Californio* soldiers fleeing after the final American conquest of Los Angeles. F. P. F. Temple, Workman's son-in-law, who lived a short distance from the Workman Mill, was another long-time resident of the area, who lived among many *Californios* and Mexicans and often served as a *padrino*, or godfather, for his co-owner in the Rancho La Merced, Juan Matias Sanchez, who was a *genizaro* New Mexican as well as the former ranch foreman for Workman. Finally, Workman and Temple were long-time associates of Pío Pico, to the extent that he enlisted Workman to be the captain of his foreign army in his overthrow of Governor Manuel Micheltorena in 1845, asked Workman to lead his forces against a near-conflict with Jose Castro in the spring of 1846, and, later, in 1868, built the Pico Building in Los Angeles, which housed Temple and Workman's bank enterprise with Isaias W. Hellman. Pico was a neighboring *ranchero* for over twenty years with the two, as well. Even if El Monte was, as has often been stated by historians, a bastion of hostility by Americans, mainly Southerners, towards *Californios* and Mexicans,

there is little or no substantial evidence to suggest that widespread ethnic animosity was a significant factor in the Workman Mill affair. While Mrs. Turner was clearly a racist, there is no evidence that her husband was, nor that Lambourn, Drown, and Schlessinger were either. Drown's "Monte Vigilantes" letter does not address ethnic issues, even if the missive was criticized for possibly stirring up "class prejudices." As to the reports in the *Express* that there was some indignation expressed by "Mexicans" and "Native Americans," these were unsubstantiated reports and we cannot know how representative of the feeling of these groups these protests were.

Instead, it is probable that the lynching of Romo by Lambourn, Drown and Schlessinger was an act of revenge against a criminal, not merely a Mexican criminal, who had seriously wounded close friends and engendered the death of their unborn child. Moreover, there is reason to believe that, if the attacker had been a Euro-American, the result would have been the same. There is, after all, a precedent for Americans and Europeans lynching their fellows for the killing of other Americans and Europeans—including incidents in 1854, 1855, and 1863. Finally, regarding the idea that, if Romo had been white, "he would have been handed over to the law," it is important to remember that Vasquez was also "handed over to the law." The difference is that the latter was accused of murders committed far away from Los Angeles, while Romo was lynched by people who were close to the Turners.

As for the status of the lynching as constituting the last reported act of its type in the Los Angeles region, the assumption would be that law and order finally reached a stage after the summer of 1874 in which such actions were no longer necessary, that Los Angeles achieved a plateau in its development as a true city. Yet, without a study to show whether crime decreased or an analysis of whether general notions of crime-fighting, justice administration and other elements were affecting how southern Californians looked at vigilantism, it is difficult to say if the case marked the end of an era or just happened to be the last activity of its type in Los Angeles County.

Notes

[1]Los Angeles *Evening Express*, June 3, 1874. The sheet was ahead of its contemporaries, the *Herald* and the *Star*, in reporting on the crime; the other papers first reported on the incident on the 4th.

[2]Turner was born in Ohio in 1839 and immigrated to California with his family in the 1850s. His

father, John, was the miller at the pioneer Eagle Mills in Los Angeles from 1855 to 1868. He probably assumed the position of miller for William Workman about 1868 and was married two years later. After the Workman Mill incident, he and Frederick Lambourn, an English native who moved when he was young to Illinois before relocating to southern California in 1859, established the mercantile house of Lambourn and Turner in Los Angeles, which thrived well into the twentieth-century. Lambourn, born in 1837, was a teacher at William Workman's private school for his grandchildren in the Temple family and assumed management of the Workman half of the La Puente ranch, as well. In 1875, Lambourn was elected to the state Assembly, where he served one term. See *An Illustrated History of Los Angeles County California* (Reprinted, The Lewis Publishing Co., 1889, original ed.), 548, 661; Harris Newmark, *Sixty Years in Southern California* (4th ed., Los Angeles: Zeitlin and Ver Brugge, 1970), 87.

[3]The account following is from *My Story* by Rebecca Humphreys Turner (Los Angeles: Typecraft, Inc., 1960), 137–163.

[4]Spelled Bustomente by Turner, he was probably a vaquero for William Workman, as indicated by his presence as a witness in a criminal case involving a stolen cow from Workman, *People v. Rafael Valenzuela (a. k. a. Lugo)*, Case 1176, County Court, January 13, 1873, Los Angeles County court records, Huntington Library. Another witness was J. Walter Drown, who figured prominently in the Romo lynching.

[5]Los Angeles *Evening Express*, June 3, 1874.

[6]Los Angeles *Daily Star*, June 4, 1874.

[7]Los Angeles *Herald*, June 4, 1874. The paper was partly owned by F. P. F. Temple, which may explain why it devoted as much time as it did to the Workman Mill affair.

[8]Los Angeles *Herald* and *Daily Star*, June 5, 1874.

[9]Los Angeles *Daily Star*, June 6, 1874.

[10]Newmark, *Sixty Years in Southern California*, 471.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Los Angeles *Evening Express*, June 4, 1874.

[13]Mrs. Turner's memoirs make no mention of Lambourn alerting Schlessinger of Romo's hiding place and only reported Lambourn and Drown's rousting of Mexicans, not finding success, and Dodson's finding of the criminal. Turner, 161.

[14]Los Angeles *Herald*, June 6, 1874.

[15]Ibid. When the San Francisco *Bulletin* took exception to the accidental hanging explanation, the *Herald* snidely reminded the northern paper "that it owes its very existence to the unlawful shedding of human blood" in the Vigilante Committee of 1856. Ibid. June 9, 1874.

[16]Newmark, 471.

[17]Turner, 162.

[18]Los Angeles *Herald*, June 7, 1874.

[19]Los Angeles *Star*, June 7, 1874.

[20]Newmark, 471.

[21]Los Angeles *Evening Express*, June 6, 1874.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Ibid., June 8, 1874; Los Angeles *Herald*, June 9. 1874.

[24]Los Angeles *Herald*, June 9, 1874.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Los Angeles *Herald*, June 10, 1874. In a nearby column, there is a report of a murder of one Latino by another on Olvera Street in the Plaza area of Los Angeles that aroused "Much Excitement Among the Spanish-Mexican Citizens." When the murderer was captured near the Pelanconi House, where the crime was committed, it was reported "[i]t was feared at first that the man would be lynched by the excited people who crowded around, and doubtless he would have been had he not been hurried off by the officers and placed in jail. As it was he retained his life by the merest chance."

[27]Los Angeles *Evening Express*, June 10, 1874.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Los Angeles *Herald*, June 11, 1874.

[30]Los Angeles *Herald* and Los Angeles *Star*, June 13, 1874.

[31]Los Angeles *Herald*, June 13, 1874.

[32]Mrs. Turner later added that Bustamente soon returned to Mexico, presumably because of his role in the Romo pursuit and capture, "profuse in expression of his regard and in the demonstrative way of his kind, embraced us both." Yet, while he did so Mrs. Turner wrote that "[a]s his big arms enfolded me, the old terror rushed back like a great wave." Even though the Mexican "was loyalty itself," she was "glad when his foot was in the stirrup and he was waving his hand from the bend in the road." Turner, 163, 173.

[33]It should be noted, however, that there were lynchings in Orange and San Bernardino counties, involving Spanish language-surnamed victims, in the 1890s.

The Sonora Road

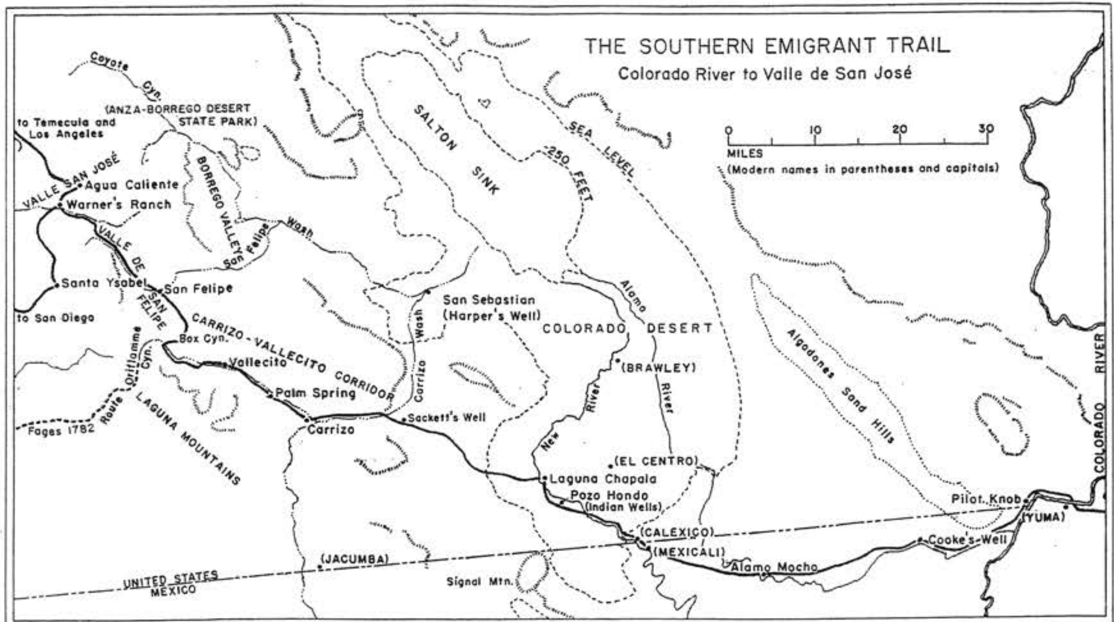
by John W. Robinson

By the 1850s *El Pueblo de Los Angeles*, the largest community in Southern California with some two thousand mostly Spanish-speaking souls, was loosely connected to outlying areas by a number of *caminos*, or "highways," radiating outward from the town's central plaza somewhat like the spokes of a wheel. These early routes of travel were "highways" in name only. Other than the well-traveled wagon road between Los Angeles and San Pedro Bay, they were mostly narrow trails easily negotiable for horses but over which wheeled vehicles often found difficult going.

Los Angeles' first real historian, J. M. Guinn, described them thusly:

> Along these roads there were no milestones to tell the distance; no guide boards to direct the way; no bridges across the rivers; no cuts through hills or fills of the gulches. If a mud hole impeded, it was easier to go around it than to fill it. If the winter rains cut a deeper channel in the arroyo leaving steeper banks on the sides it was more convenient to go up stream or down to find a crossing than to grade an incline to the former one. Even in the narrow canons [*sic*] where travel must follow in the same beaten track three-quarters of a century's use had not cut down a deep road bed like the sunken road of Ohain that was the undoing of Napoleon at Waterloo.[1]

The old route of our interest here was the horse trail, later wagon road, which connected Los Angeles with Sonora via the Yuma Crossing of the Colorado River, known variously as the Sonora Road, the Yuma Trail, the Colorado Road, and the Southern Emigrant Trail.



The first official government description of the route is in an order by the Los Angeles Court of Sessions, May 19, 1851, listing a number of *Caminos Publicos*, or Public Highways, in the County of Los Angeles. At the time, Los Angeles County embraced all of San Bernardino and Orange counties, and parts of Riverside and Kern counties. The court order defined the "Colorado Road," its term for the wagon road from Los Angeles to Yuma Crossing of the Colorado River, as running "from Los Angeles to Mission San Gabriel, thence to the Rancho of Puente, thence to the Rancho of the Ybarras [Walnut], thence to the Rancho Chino, thence to the Rincon, and thence to the Sierra [Corona] and Temascal [Temescal] and thence to the Laguna [Lake Elsinore] and Tamacola [Temecula]."[2] The court order did not define the road beyond Temecula, as that portion from just southeast of Temecula through Valle de San José all the way to the Colorado was part of San Diego County.

Another public highway made official by the court was the San Bernardino-Sonora Road, described as going "From Los Angeles to San Gabriel and Azusa between San Antonio and San José, by the Plain below the Rancho of Cucamonga, thence to the hill of the Aguajita by the Old

Peublo [Pueblo] of the New Mexicans, known as the land of Apolitan [Agua Mansa] by Jumua [Jumuba] and San Bernardino to Yucaypa [Yucaipa] and San Gregorio [San Gorgonio]."[3] At the time, in May 1851, the boundary between Los Angeles and San Diego counties was one mile south of San Gorgonio, so the road was not described beyond the latter. (San Bernardino County did not break off Los Angeles County until 1853.)

Research by San Bernardino historian George W. Beattie indicates that, after leaving San Gorgonio, the San Bernardino-Sonora Road turned south "via the present Lamb Canyon to San Jacinto; thence to what is now Hemet; then through the hills, following approximately the line of the present St. John's Grade [Riverside County Road R3]; and on until near what is now Aguanga," where it joined what the court called the "Colorado Road."[4]

The origins of these "roads" go far back into aboriginal times when footpaths criss-crossed the deserts and mountains to reach the coastal plains. One of the most important aboriginal trade routes was the so-called Yuma Trail, a path that later would be roughly followed by the Sonora Road.[5]

The first non-Indians to travel part of the historic road were members of the Juan Bautista de Anza expedition of 1774. Anza, a thirty-six-year-old frontier soldier from Sonora, was charged with finding a land route to connect northwestern New Spain with the recently established (1769) coastal province of Alta California. From Tubac in northern Sonora, Anza journeyed to the Colorado, forded the river at what became known as Yuma Crossing, and struggled across the arid, sandy wastes of the Colorado Desert to the foot of the coastal mountains, called by the Spanish *La Sierra Madre de California*. They trekked northwest, below the outlying spurs of the mountains, to what Anza called San Sebastian marsh, now known as Harper's Well. Then, instead of turning west up Carrizo Wash, as the later Los Angeles-Sonora Road did, Anza continued northwesterly into Borrego Valley in the heart of today's Anza-Borrego State Park. The historic expedition ascended Coyote Canyon to the Anza Valley, descended Bautista Canyon into the San Jacinto Valley, and continued on to Mission San Gabriel enroute to Monterey. Anza retraced his route with colonists to found San Francisco in 1775–76. The Anza Trail, the much-desired overland connection between Sonora and California, fell into disuse after the Yuma Massacre of 1781.[6]

The overland route between California and Sonora, closed to all but well-armed parties since the Yuma Massacre, was reopened following a

pursuit of horse thieves, who had purloined 140 animals from the San Diego Presidio, in 1824. Alferez (Ensign) Santiago Arguello led twenty-four soldiers from San Diego to the Colorado, but was unable to retrieve the stolen horses. His campaign was a failure, with no results "other than learning the road."[7]

Mexican authorities opened the "Yuma Road" as a mail and dispatch route in 1826, and even built a small adobe fort at a place called Laguna Chapala, on the New River six and a half miles west of the present city of Imperial—the only Mexican-built military post in Alta California. (Its site is now commemorated by California Historical Landmark Number 944.) No full description of the mail route, which went from Tucson to San Diego, has been found, but it seems evident that it utilized the Carrizo-Vallecito Corridor and Valle de San José because of three points—Santa Ysabel, San Felipe, and Laguna Chapala—that were mentioned in official accounts.[8]

The Carrizo-Vallecito Corridor, the fifteen-mile-long funnel through which passed the vast majority of travelers on the southern overland route to California, provided an adequately watered and relatively simple passage through the southern rampart of California's mountainous spine—the final barrier before reaching the coastal settlements. The late desert historian and bibliographer E. I. Edwards called this funnel of travel the Carrizo Corridor. With all due respect to this outstanding desert writer, we prefer to broaden the name to the Carrizo-Vallecito Corridor, for the reason that the trail went west up Carrizo Creek, then northwest up Vallecito Wash. We agree with Edwards that this was "a rich pathway of history."[9]

It remained for American trappers to use and make known the pathway from Yuma Crossing via the Carrizo-Vallecito Corridor, Valle de San José, Temecula, and Rancho Santa Ana del Chino to Los Angeles, which later became the Los Angeles-Sonora Road. As far as is known, the first trappers to follow this route were parties led by David Jackson in 1831 and Ewing Young a year later. With Jackson was a young Connecticut-born trapper named Jonathan Trumbull Warner, who remained in Southern California the remainder of his long life. He became a Mexican citizen and changed his name to Juan José Warner. Señor J. J. Warner, as he was commonly known, became a prominent Los Angeles businessman and ranch owner.

Warner's Ranch, located at the southern end of Valle de San Jose, became an important way station on the Sonora Road. Warner received a

grant of "six square leagues, a little more or less" in 1844 and moved there the following year. He constructed an adobe ranch house on a slight rise near the historic "fork in the road" where the trail from the Colorado diverged into two branches, one to Temecula and Los Angeles, the other to San Diego. It was a place where "the weary travelers could stop and refresh themselves and their animals after crossing the burning sands of the Yuma desert, . . . or where they might stop to take on extra supplies . . . when returning to the East."[10]

Warner had hardly settled on his ranch when war between the United States and Mexico broke out. The year 1846 has been called a year of destiny by some, a year of conquest by others. It was both, and certainly a significant year in American history. The entire Southwest, from Texas to California and north into Utah and Colorado fell into U.S. hands by right of conquest. And through compromise with Great Britain, the 49th parallel became our northern boundary, bringing into the Union the future states of Oregon, Washington, and most of Idaho that same fateful year.

Within the next three years, the Sonora Road was to see first a trickle, then a stream, and finally a flood of traffic on what became known during the Gold Rush years as the Southern Emigrant Trail, one of the major overland routes to California.

The military came first. Brig. Gen. Stephen Watts Kearny led the 1st U.S. Dragoons, what became known as "The Army of the West," from Fort Leavenworth, in what would later become Kansas Territory, via the southern route to San Diego, California, from June to December 1846. Kearny and his little force of 121 men forded the Colorado at Yuma Crossing, struggled across the barren waste of the Colorado Desert into the Carrizo-Vallecito Corridor and on to Warner's Ranch and the fateful encounter with Andrés Pico's Californio lancers at San Pasqual. Enroute, the bedraggled "army," after the terrible desert crossing, rested at Carrizo Spring. "We are now over the desert. I have seen the Elephant and I hope I shall never be compelled to cross it again," wrote Dr. John Griffin.[11] Fifteen miles further they reached the green oasis of Vallecito. Despite salty grass and sulphur-impregnated water, Vallecito was a virtual paradise for man and animal alike. Many a passing emigrant spent a day or more here, recovering from his desert ordeal and grazing his animals.

From Vallecito, the trail climbed the short, steep grade (called Campbell Grade today) to present-day Mason Valley, and turned sharply northeast to negotiate the narrow chasm of Box Canyon. Once through the narrow, the

Southern Emigrant Trail, looking southeast from Campbell Grade ("La Puerta") toward Vallecito.

trail climbed into today's Blair Valley and continued to San Felipe, where there was an Indian village and water. The Army of the West camped near the village, which they found deserted. "The country is in great measure destitute of timber and we were obliged to destroy their lodges for fire wood," wrote Dr. Griffin.[12]

On December 2 Kearny and his men climbed northwestward, up the broad, grassy San Felipe Valley. They reached a low divide in the coast range now known as Teofolio Summit, and descended north into the broad, oak-dotted, rich grassland of Valle de San José to Warner's Ranch.

Warner was not there. Kearny's worn-out, half-starved force encamped a short distance northwest of the ranch, at the junction of the roads to San Diego and Los Angeles, and helped themselves to Warner's plentiful supplies of beef, mutton, grapes, and melons. The surviving horses and mules feasted on the lush grasses of the valley.

The Army of the West left the road to Los Angeles and turned toward San Diego on the cold, rainy morning of December 4, two days later to suffer a stinging defeat in an encounter with a mounted force of *Californios* led by Andres Pico. An account of the Battle of San Pasqual is beyond the scope of this work; let it suffice to say that twenty-one Americans died and

sixteen others were wounded, almost all victims of the murderous lances that had been wielded so skillfully by the *Californio* horsemen.

A month and a half later came the Mormon Battalion, some four hundred volunteers led west by Lieut. Col. Philip St. George Cooke. They essentially followed Kearny's route from Fort Leavenworth via the southern overland trail to Warner's Ranch. They brought with them thirty-seven wagons, eight of which finally made it to San Diego. A noteworthy accomplishment was the hacking of a rough wagon road through Box Canyon. When Cooke met Kearny, he reported that a wagon road "of great value to our country" had been opened from New Mexico to the Pacific Ocean.[13]

Cooke's wagon road was improved a year and a half later by Maj. Lawrence P. Graham's 1st U.S. Dragoons, traveling from Monterrey, Mexico, where they had been on occupation duty, to California in the fall of 1848. Whereas Kearny and Cooke had ended up in San Diego, Major Graham's force took the right fork of the trail from Warner's Ranch and followed the Sonora Road all the way to Los Angeles. Thanks to the journal of Lieut. Cave Johnson Couts, we have the first vivid description of the northern section of the Sonora Road. "The country from [Warner's] to the Pueblo [Los Angeles] is truly magnificent, equal in point of fertility to any land," wrote Couts. "It is full of valleys and smooth round topped ridges, not large enough to call mountains, but remarkably large hills. . . . It is on these hills that the millions of stock get their fine grazing as well as the valleys."[14] They passed by the Luiseño village of Temecula, skirted Laguna Grande [Lake Elsinore] and forded the Santa Ana River to Isaac William's Chino Ranch, where they rested a day or so at this "grand and magnificent place" where cattle by the thousands grazed on the verdant grasslands. After enjoying the hospitality of Williams and his family, the dragoons headed west through the Puente Valley and crossed the San Gabriel River to Los Angeles.

Enroute from the Colorado River to Los Angeles, Major Graham's dragoons passed, or were passed by, hundreds of Sonorans. "Mexicans from Sonora are passing us daily, on their way to the *abundancia*, the gold mines! This is all we hear, the Mines!" exclaimed Couts.[15] James Marshall had discovered gold on the American River in the Sierra Nevada foothills east of Sacramento on or about January 24, 1848, and the great California Gold Rush was getting underway. Men from Sutter's Fort, San Francisco, and San Jose were first to reach the placers. The news soon spread across the

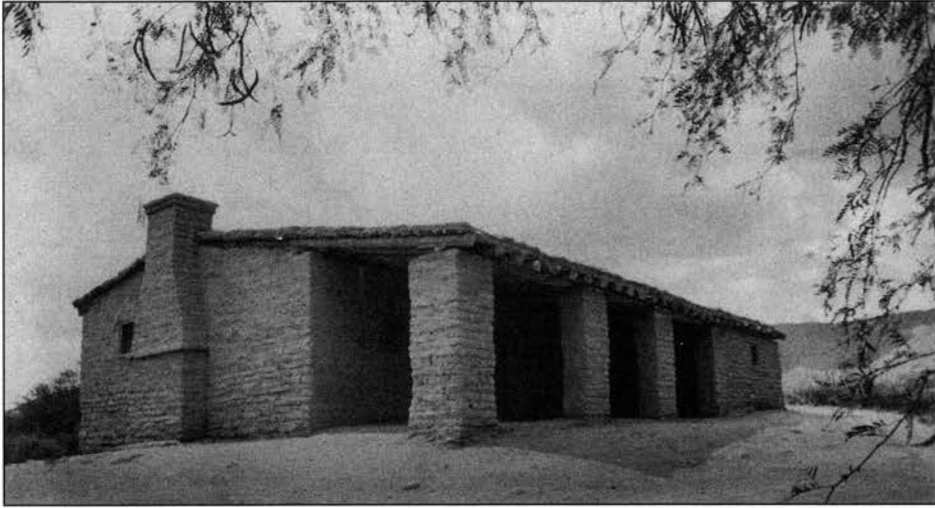
continent and within a year the frenzied rush was in full swing. The first overlanders to arrive in the Mother Lode country were experienced Mexican miners, mostly from the state of Sonora, and most of them followed the Los Angeles-Sonora Road.

Sonorans had prospected and mined in California well before the Gold Rush. Some of them had participated in the 1842 "mini-gold rush" in Placerita Canyon, north of Mission San Fernando, so traveling the overland route was not new to them. No diary or reminiscence written by any of these Sonoran miners has ever come to light, but it appears from the reports of Lieutenant Couts and other gold seekers that they came via the southern overland trail in great numbers. Recent historians of the southern route to the gold fields place the number of Sonoran forty-niners at 8,000 to 10,000, and this is for the year 1849 on1y.[16]

The Sonoran migration was soon followed by a trickle, then a stream, and finally a flood of Anglo-American gold seekers. They came by all conceivable routes, both by sea and by land. A surprisingly large number journeyed via the southern overland route, which became known as the Southern Emigrant Trail. The southern route had several variations from New Mexico and Texas to the Gila River, then funneled down the Gila to the Colorado, forded the river, and essentially followed Cooke's Wagon Road (a road in name only) to Warner's Ranch, and on to Los Angeles—the subject of our interest here. A few crossed Mexico farther south and trekked the dreaded *El Camino del Diablo* (The Devil's Highway) through northwestern Sonora to the Gila-Colorado junction.

How many gold-seekers rushed to California via the southern overland route? The popular perception, fostered by most historians of the western migration and the publication of numerous diaries and reminiscences, is that the northern (really central) route via the Oregon and California Trails was by far the most important and that the so-called "Southwestern trails" were insignificant, followed by only a few scattered parties of forty-niners. Recent research of historians of the southern overland route has put this canard to rest. It appears that the Southern Emigrant Trail—the Los Angeles-Sonora Road—was followed by 8,000 to 9,000 Anglo gold-seekers, plus the before-mentioned 8,000 to 10,000 Mexican miners, accounting for at least 40 percent of the total overland migration that entered California by the close of 1849.[17] And these figures do not include the numbers for 1848 and 1850 to 1854.

Fortunately, several good accounts written by Anglo forty-niners have come to light, the best being the diary of William H. Chamberlin. Here is

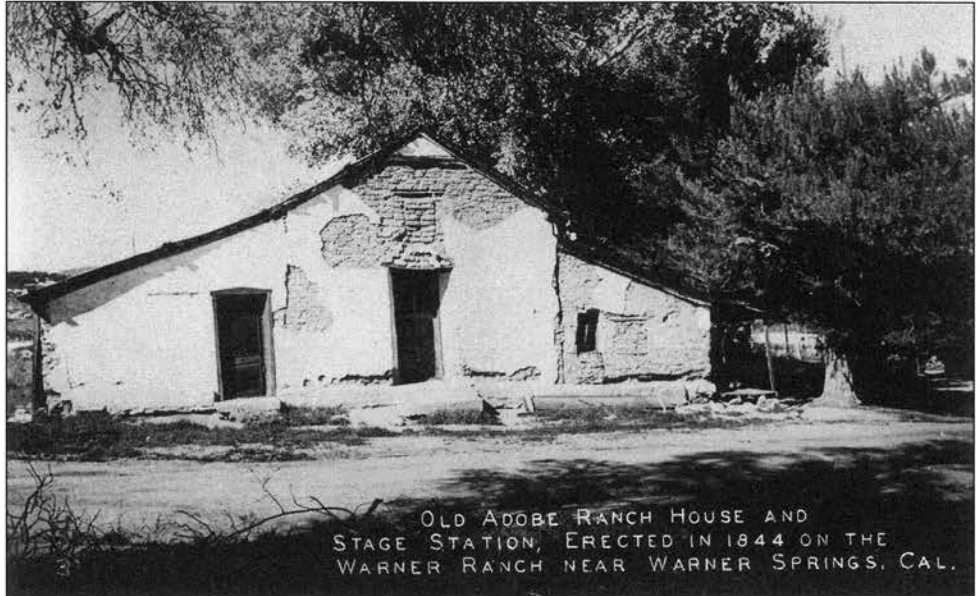


Old Vallecito stage station on the Butterfield Overland Mail route.

how Chamberlin describes the daunting scene his party faced upon leaving the Colorado River: "Nothing but a high and apparently desolate waste, bounded the horizon. A hazy atmosphere hung over the scene, on fire, as it were, by the intense heat of the sun, the rays of which are reflected upward by this immense mirror of sand, all combined to form a picture at once grand, gloomy, and foreboding."[18]

The majority of the forty-niners traveling the southern route were unprepared for the desert crossing. The dry, forced marches over nearly featureless terrain from waterhole to waterhole, the trail marked plainly by dead animals and all sorts of implements abandoned by previous trekkers, was an ordeal never forgotten. Those who came after June of 1849 benefited from the so-called "Miracle of '49," when the usually dry trough of the New River in today's Imperial Valley filled with intermittent ponds, the largest known as "Big Laguna"—*Laguna Chapala* to the Mexicans. Beyond was the most brutal trail segment of all, the twenty-eight miles over a rocky plain from the New River to the life-saving water of Carrizo Creek.

Most of the emigrants camped a day or two at Vallecito, with its abundant grass for the animals and water. Then it was on via Mason Valley, Box Canyon, Blair Valley, and San Felipe to the paradise, as it seemed to many



Warner's Ranch, Valle de San José.

forty-niners, of Warner's Ranch, the hot springs, and verdant Valle de San José.

From Warner's, some of the forty-niners took the road to San Diego, but the vast majority followed the road to Los Angeles, since the latter offered the most direct route to the mines. The pathway headed northwest, closely paralleling today's State Highway 79, over chaparral-coated hills and through oak-shaded valleys. Many of the gold-seekers camped at Oak Grove or Aguanga, where water and grass were particularly abundant.

Turning westward, the road reached Temecula, with its small Luiseño village and herds of cattle tended by the Indians for absentee landowner Felix Valdes. Resuming its northwest course, the road to Los Angeles passed Laguna Grande, described by Chamberlin as "a beautiful lake some 12 miles in circumference covered with wild fowls, and a vast herd of fine cattle grazing on the shore."[19] Today we know it as Lake Elsinore. Beyond, the verdant Temescal Valley was traversed to Rancho la Sierra, owned by grantee Bernardo Yorba, with hundreds of cattle grazing on the rich grasslands—today's city of Corona. The road forded the Santa Ana River and continued to Isaac Williams' Rancho Santa Ana del Chino, where many of the forty-niners paused for a day or two.

Chino Ranch was frequently mentioned in emigrant diaries and letters as the most important stopping place between Warner's Ranch and Los Angeles. Williams, a fur trapper who had come to California in 1831, had acquired the 48,000-acre rancho through his marriage to Maria Lugo, the only daughter of Californio landowner Antonio Maria Lugo. Lugo and Williams were jointly granted 35,000 acres in 1841; Lugo gave his share of the property to his son-in-law, who proceeded to buy adjacent lands, making Santa Ana del Chino one of the largest ranchos in Southern California. Some 35,000 head of cattle and 1,500 horses grazed peacefully on the hilly grasslands. "The almost incredible number of cattle that range these hills and valleys, their size and condition, prove that this portion of California, at least, is one of the finest grazing countries in the world," wrote Chamberlin.[20] Williams was a friendly host to the multitude of forty-niners who paused at his ranch, selling them beef and other staples at moderate prices.

From Chino Ranch the road turned west, passed John Rowland and William Workman's Rancho de la Puente, forded the San Gabriel and Los Angeles rivers, and reached Los Angeles, a dusty pueblo of mostly adobe buildings populated largely by Spanish-speaking people. There were several stores run by transplanted Yankee merchants where the forty-niners could load up on supplies before heading north to the gold country.

Despite trouble with the Quechans, which resulted with the establishment of the Army's Fort Yuma in October 1850, and the Garra Revolt which resulted in the burning of Warner's ranch house in November 1851, gold-seekers and emigrants continued to travel the Southern Emigrant Trail during the l850s. Exceeding the number of human travelers were great herds of livestock, primarily cattle and sheep, driven from as far as Texas and northern Mexico to help satisfy the insatiable demand for beef and mutton by the gold miners. Losses were high, especially over the long dry stretch from the Colorado crossing to Carrizo Creek. The *San Diego Herald* (January 24, 1852) reported "Carisa [*sic*] Creek is literally a 'Golgotha.' The carcasses of over fifteen hundred sheep mingle with the bones of horse, mules, and oxen—these interspaced occasionally with a human skeleton." Still, many tens of thousands made it to the Mother Lode country.

Mail and dispatcher service on the trail began as early as 1850, with Army couriers traveling between San Diego and Fort Yuma. The first regular overland transcontinental mail and passenger service utilizing the southern route began with James Birch's San Antonio and San Diego Mail Line, better known as the "Jackass Mail," in 1857. Birch drowned just before beginning the mail line, and George Giddings took over. It was a

difficult journey for passengers; stage wagons were used from San Antonio, Texas to the Colorado, then by mule-back from Fort Yuma to Vallecito, and wagons again from the latter to San Diego. Service was never really satisfactory. Easterners criticized the line as being too far south, that it led "from no place through nothing to nowhere."

The first overland transcontinental stage and mail service to utilize the entire Los Angeles-Sonora Road was John Butterfield's Overland Mail Company. Butterfield received a government contract to deliver mail between St. Louis, Missouri, and San Francisco in September 1857, with service to begin one year later. The Overland Mail Company worked feverishly to meet the deadline. Some two thousand men were hired, including many of the best "whips," as stage drivers were called, hundreds of horses and mules were purchased, some five hundred wheeled vehicles were ordered and bought—heavy Concord coaches, cheaper but more sturdy celerity coaches, known as "mud wagons," and various auxiliary vans—and some 139 stations (later rising to 165) spaced at ten- to twenty-mile intervals were leased or built. The first eastbound stage left San Francisco on September 15, 1858, and the initial west-bound stage left Tipton, Missouri (terminus of the railroad from St. Louis) a day later.

The 2,800-mile "oxbow" route formed a great southward arc between St. Louis and San Francisco, almost touching the Mexican border at El Paso, Texas, then proceeding west via Tucson to Yuma Crossing of the Colorado. After crossing the river via Louis Jaeger's ferry, the Overland Mail coaches (mud wagons—Concords were used only at both ends of the line) paused at Fort Yuma, the first California station. Once across the Colorado, the road paralleled the river as it elbowed west for ten miles; then where the river resumed its southward course, the stage route angled west-southwest into the inhospitable Colorado Desert, scene of so much tribulation by gold seekers and other travelers on the Southern Emigrant Trail. This hundred-mile stretch of arid terrain, from the Colorado to Vallecito, was an ordeal for animals and passengers alike. The "Jackass Mail," as previously noted, found the going too difficult for wagons and was obliged to transport passengers and mail by mule back. But the Overland Mail Company stayed with its stages. A *San Francisco Bulletin* correspondent wrote: "The horses used over this stretch are mostly mustangs, wild as deer, . . . Six horses are commonly used on the desert, the sand being so deep in some places that the passengers are compelled to walk, the horses being scarcely able to drag the empty vehicle."[21] The Company main-

tained a small adobe station at Alamo Mocho, where the well water was hardly fit to drink. From Alamo Mocho, the stages turned northwest and reached another adobe station at Indian Wells on the usually dry New River. Twenty-eight more grueling miles over rocky terrain brought the stages to Carrizo Creek, described by one passenger as "a solitary station in a scene of desolation not to be surpassed in the Arabian deserts, as the landscape chiefly presents only bare earth and gravel, with an occasional patch of mesquite."[22]

From Carrizo Station the mail line followed the old track through the Carrizo-Vallecito Corridor to the verdant oasis of Vallecito. A substantial adobe building, originally constructed by the Army as a supply depot, was enlarged for use as the Overland Mail Company station. Vallecito Station was the most important stage stop between Fort Yuma and Warner's Ranch. In 1859 the company constructed a blacksmith and wagon repair shop here. From Vallecito the stage road followed the old trail west, climbed over "a steep and stony hill" into Mason Valley, then turned northeast to negotiate the rock-ribbed defile of Box Canyon. This chasm, first widened in 1847 by the Mormon Battalion, was further widened and improved to allow easier passage for Overland Mail stages in 1858. Then it was on to a small adobe station at San Felipe.

After the long, unpleasant desert journey, the Butterfield stages reached the welcome stop at Warner's Ranch. The ranch house was leased by the Overland Mail Company for use as a major way station. Waterman Ormsby, lone passenger on the first westbound stage, described it as "a comfortable house, situated in the valley, in the midst of a beautiful meadow, and with its shingled roof looked more like civilization than anything I had seen for many days. There were hundreds of cattle grazing on the plain, and everything looked as comfortable as every natural advantage could secure."[23] The Butterfield stages usually spent the night here after the all-day jarring ride from Vallecito. There was a bed for the stage drivers, but the weary passenger was obliged to curl up with a blanket outside the station.

Early next morning the driver cracked the whip and the four-horse team jolted the stage forward. The rutted, dust-laden road led northwestward, over chaparral hills and oak-shaded dales, to the next station at Oak Grove, sixteen miles from Warner's. Another jolting ten miles brought the stage to Tejunga station, two miles beyond present-day Aguanga. The mail road kept on a northwest course across more low hills and little valleys to

Temecula station, fourteen miles. An old adobe on the Pauba Rancho, four miles southeast of "Old Town" Temecula, known years ago as the Louis Wolfe store, was long thought to be the site of the Overland Mail station. Recent research indicates that the station was in John Magee's store, close to the Indian village and on the south side of Temecula Creek.[24]

From Temecula, the road continued northwesterly, below the landward foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains, following Murrieta Creek to the next station at Willows, ten miles. From here, it forded Murrieta Creek and took an almost straight course over the level plain to the Laguna Grande [Lake Elsinore] station, located in the Augustin Machado adobe near the northwest corner of the large, shallow body of water, eleven miles from Willows. The road proceeded through Temescal Canyon to Temescal station, fifteen miles, forded the Santa Ana River near today's Corona, and reached Chino Ranch station, twenty miles northwest of Temescal. Here the passengers were served meals and usually spent the night, while the four-horse teams were changed for the run to Los Angeles. Ranch owner Isaac Williams had died in 1856. Son-in-law Robert Carlisle leased the ranch house to the Overland Mail Company and was the station keeper.

From Chino Ranch, the stages took a westerly course through the Puente Valley, the new little community of El Monte, forded the San Gabriel and Los Angeles rivers, and reached Los Angeles, twenty-four miles. The impressive brick buildings of the Overland Mail Company's Los Angeles station, complete with offices, living quarters, blacksmith shop, stage shed, and stables in back, was completed in early 1860. This was the largest and best-equipped company-owned station between St. Louis and San Francisco.

After an overnight stop in Los Angeles—the well-heeled usually stayed at the Bella Union Hotel, others at the station—the stages continued their run to line's end in San Francisco, going via San Fernando Pass, Tejon Pass, the San Joaquin Valley, and San José.

The long, semi-circular route of the Overland Mail Company lasted just two and a half years, victim of the approaching Civil War. The company discontinued its southern route in March 1861 in favor of a more direct central route between Missouri and California.

Most of the Overland Mail stations along the Los Angeles-Sonora Road were abandoned and quickly fell into ruin. Only Vallecito, Warner's Ranch, Temecula, and Chino Ranch continued to be havens for travelers along the long, lonely road.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, several hundred Confederate sympathizers in California headed for the Southern states. Most of them followed the Sonora Road. Alonzo Ridley, former deputy sheriff of Los Angeles County, was first to lead a party of former army officers and civilians bent on reaching the Confederate states. Among Ridley's group was Albert Sidney Johnston, lately brigadier general in the United States Army and commanding officer of the Department of the Pacific. Other small parties of secessionist sympathizers followed, many of them from San Bernardino and the Holcomb Valley mines, utilizing the San Bernardino-Sonora Road. Fortunately, abundant spring rains had replenished the desert waterholes, so the summer journey was not as grueling as it might have been. Most of the men who departed for the Confederacy in June and July 1861 got through. (Albert Sidney Johnston became a general in the Confederate Army and lost his life in the Battle of Shiloh).[25]

To stop this secessionist traffic, Brig. Gen. Edwin V. Sumner, Johnston's successor as commanding officer of the Army's Department of the Pacific, ordered troops to Los Angeles. An added concern of General Sumner and California Unionists was the Confederate invasion of New Mexico, which began in July 1861. In August the "Confederate Territory of Arizona," comprising all of present-day New Mexico and Arizona south of the 34th parallel, was proclaimed. Believing California was on "the eve of rebellion," a small Confederate force began advancing west.

To counter the perceived Confederate threat to California, and to put a halt to continuing secessionist travel on the Los Angeles-Sonora Road, General Sumner ordered Col. George Wright, commanding officer of the new Military District of Southern California, to establish an army post at Warner's Ranch and strengthen the garrison at Fort Yuma. A camp was established a mile north of Warner's Ranch house in October 1861. A few weeks later it was moved sixteen miles northwest to Oak Grove. The new military post was named Camp Wright, in honor of Col. George Wright.

The founding of Camp Wright, the reinforcement of Fort Yuma, and regular patrols along the Los Angeles-Sonora Road made the escape for secession-minded Californians considerably more difficult of passage after October 1861. In November of that year, a patrol of California Volunteers (who had replaced army regulars being shipped to the eastern battlefronts) apprehended a party of fifteen Confederacy-bound men led by Dan Showalter, northern California State Assemblyman. The escapees were escorted under heavy guard to Fort Yuma, where they were held for sev-

eral months. The prisoners claimed they were peaceful miners and were finally released after signing a loyalty oath in April 1862. They all made their way to Texas and joined the Confederate Army.[26]

Federal authorities in California became alarmed when they learned that a Confederate force under Capt. Sherod Hunter occupied Tucson in February 1862. Captain Hunter's mounted soldiers then moved westward to the Pima villages, and a small scouting detachment probed to within fifty miles of the Colorado River. Rumors circulated in Los Angeles that a Confederate force of five thousand (in truth Hunter had about one hundred men) was advancing on Fort Yuma and that California was "in imminent danger of invasion."[27]

In response to Confederate threats, real and imagined, three companies of California Volunteers were sent to reinforce Fort Yuma. Boats on the Colorado River were seized and guarded, and civilians forbidden to cross the river without army authorization. The Los Angeles-Sonora Road through Temecula, Camp Wright, Warner's Ranch, Vallecito, Carrizo, and the Colorado Desert became pockmarked with the imprint of horses' hoofs and rutted from the passage of heavy supply wagons.

Meanwhile, Col. James Henry Carleton was in Los Angeles preparing to embark on an expedition that was destined to bring him fame (at least among historians of the Southwest). His orders from Brig. Gen. George Wright, who had succeeded General Sumner as commanding officer of the Department of the Pacific, directed that he, Carleton, lead a force of two thousand California Volunteers to recapture Arizona for the Union and link up with Union Brig. Gen. E. R. S. Canby in New Mexico.

Carleton put his soldiers through a rigorous training program to prepare them for the long desert march. Troops at Camp Wright and Fort Yuma set to work to improve the southern overland road. The difficult passages through Box Canyon and on the Campbell Grade were widened to allow easier passage for heavy supply wagons. Desert wells were cleaned out, dug deeper, and walled with boards to conserve their meager amounts of water. Contracts were made with local ranchers to supply cattle fit to be herded across the desert, and for others to be slaughtered for jerky and pemmican. Adequate supplies of hay and grain were contracted for. Only with meticulous preparation could a force of two thousand men, both infantry and cavalry, and some 200 six-mule supply wagons—the largest military force to ever travel the Los Angeles-Sonora Road—make the 1,200-mile trip from Los Angeles to the Rio Grande.

At last, in March 1862, Colonel Carleton was ready to begin the epic journey. Company by company, the soldiers in blue departed Camp Latham and Drum Barracks, the two military posts near Los Angeles, the cavalry on their mounts, the infantry on foot, accompanied by the heavy supply wagons, each with a load averaging three tons. The units followed a carefully prepared timetable, one or two days apart, to conserve water in the desert wells. Carleton himself followed with the last contingent, which departed Drum Barracks on April 13.[28]

The first part of the journey, from Los Angeles through Temecula and Oak Grove to Warner's Ranch, was through valleys carpeted with spring grass, shaded here and there with overarching oaks—a pleasant march compared to what lay ahead. Reality set in after men, animals, and wagons left Warner's, climbed over the pass, and began the long descent into the desert. ". . . the perils and hardships confronted every man squarely in the face. Far in the distance they could see the whirling sand, like the simooms of the Sahara. At other times the dust appeared to hang motionless like a lake of sand. Into this waterless land marched the California Column, civilian employees and teamsters, a total of more than two thousand men."[29]

Fortunately for Carleton and his long columns, the road from San Felipe to the Colorado was well marked and, thanks to the spring rains, adequate water flowed at the desert oases of Vallecito, Carrizo, and Indian Wells. Also of benefit were the several desert supply depots that the army had placed between Vallecito and Fort Yuma.

The desert crossing was an ordeal, particularly for the infantrymen, but thanks to Colonel Carleton's careful preparation, not a man was lost on the long march from Los Angeles to Fort Yuma. The last contingent, which included Carleton, reached the fort on May 1. After a two-week stay to replenish his force, Brigadier General Carleton (his new rank, although he did not know it until he reached New Mexico) set out eastward with his California Column, as his force was now dubbed, to successfully reconquer Arizona and reach the Rio Grande. The California Volunteers arrived in New Mexico too late to engage the Confederates in combat. Brig. Gen. Henry Sibley's army of Texans had been defeated in the Battle of Glorietta Pass, northeast of Santa Fe, in March 1862 and had hastily fled down the Rio Grande to El Paso.

The Army continued to use the Los Angeles-Sonora Road for the remainder of the war and afterwards. Government supply wagons made

monthly runs with provisions for the Fort Yuma garrison, and small contingents of California Volunteers traveled back and forth between Drum Barracks and New Mexico Territory.

Military use of the Los Angeles-Sonora Road dwindled considerably after 1866, the year the California Volunteers returned from garrison duty in Arizona and New Mexico. Most of the supplies for Fort Yuma now came by river, hauled up the Colorado by shallow-draft vessels of the Colorado Steam Navigation Company. Also, the 35th Parallel route, known as Beale's Wagon Road, provided a shorter and more direct passage from New Mexico across northern Arizona to Fort Mojave on the Colorado, where it connected with the Mojave Road, which crossed the desert to the Mojave River and on over Cajon Pass to Los Angeles.

As both military and civilian emigrant traffic over the Los Angeles-Sonora Road lessened considerably in the late 1860s, livestock traffic increased in dramatic fashion. The range cattle industry in southern California in the years 1862–64 was devastated by a severe drought from which it never fully recovered. At the same time the demand for beef by California's growing population continued to grow. Cattle from Texas streamed into California to replace the drought-decimated herds and take advantage of rising prices. Tens of thousands of animals, both cattle and sheep, were driven to California from Texas, New Mexico, and Sonora during the late 1860s and early 1870s.[30]

There is no definitive date for the final demise of overland travel over the historic pathway; the completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad from Los Angeles through San Gorgonio Pass to Yuma in 1877 certainly put a huge dent in all but local traffic.

The late desert historian and bibliographer E. I. Edwards composed a fitting epitaph when he wrote that the coming of the railroads "sounded the death rattle . . . and this vital highway of the desert—the highway to conquest, to adventure, to riches, to national expansion—suddenly vanished into the limbo of forgotten glory."[31]

The replacement of the horse-drawn vehicle with the horseless carriage brought renewal to sections of the old Los Angeles-Sonora Road. The segment from Los Angeles through El Monte, Puente, Pomona, and Chino became Valley Boulevard, and later the general route of the 60 freeway. The stretch from Corona through Lake Elsinore, Murietta, and Temecula is now roughly followed by Interstate 15. State Highway 79 follows the chaparral-coated hills and oak-shaded valleys from Temecula through Aguanga, Oak Grove, and Warner Hot Springs. And San Diego County

Road S2 follows most of the old route from Warner's down through the San Felipe Valley, Box Canyon, Vallecito, and Carrizo to Ocotillo, where it intersects the broad asphalt thoroughfare of Interstate 8. I-8 speeds drivers eastward in remarkably short time, passing close to the hilltop site of old Fort Yuma.

Following these highways of today, the history-wise traveler, using some imagination, can relive the days when gold-seekers, emigrants, soldiers, and livestock journeyed over the storied pathway.

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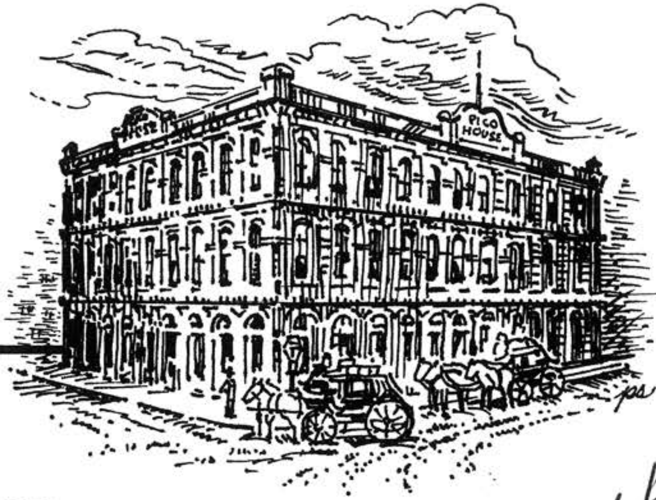


The Pico House
Los Angeles' First Grand Hotel

by Robert W. Blew

Los Angeles in 1869 would not have appeared to be an auspicious place to build a new, expensive hotel. The effects of the financial stagnation in the East were beginning to affect California, and the city had not fully recovered from the economic effects of the Great Drought, 1862–1863, which had destroyed the cattle industry. Not only did a financial pall hang over the city, but the residue of the smallpox epidemic which had struck the city earlier lingered. The city, which was not too far removed from a frontier village, with a population of around 6,000, had an adequate number of hotel rooms, and the largest hotel, the Bella Union, had recently announced an expansion which the proprietor over-generously announced would give it a capacity of 300.[1]

The Plaza site chosen for the new hotel was an eyesore; frequently newspaper articles complained of the trash, debris, and litter there. The *Star* was constantly editorializing not only about the trashy appearance of the Plaza, but frequently recommended that a new plaza be created further to the south. This proposal was an acknowledgement that the business center of the city was rapidly moving south of First Street; thus any edifice built on the Plaza would soon be outside of the main business district. In addition to its slovenly appearance, the Plaza was no longer the finest residential district in the city; in fact, it was the center of the red light

district. At the time of its construction and for years after The Pico House began operation, articles appeared in the newspapers declaring:

> AN UNMITIGATED NUISANCE—On Main street, directly in front of our principal hotel and near the Catholic Church, is a row of small buildings, occupied by a common class of "soiled doves." It forms a sort of miniature "Barbary Coast" in this city. The inmates and the habitués of this "rotten row" are a class of outcasts who have parted with that last spark of humanity, which serves to distinguish our own kind from the lower creation—shame. Their actions and exhibitions have of late become so open and indecent that people residing in the vicinity feel justly outraged at the proximity of so glaring and scandalous an evil. Families on their way to church are outraged by the stare and coarse criticism of these unblushing courtesans. The guests of the hotel opposite are shocked by the sights and sounds of the open bagnios within a few feet of them; and the whole city is disgraced by the toleration of so glowing an iniquity on the very highway where many of our blushing daughters must pass[2]

Problems notwithstanding, the *Star* soon lamented:

> Progress and improvement have this week laid their restless hands upon one of the old and familiar landmarks of this city. The Carrillo house has vanished. Its walls, which have been the silent witness of many a secret conference, and the surroundings of many social and political gatherings, and within which hospitality has often and long presided, have crumbled to dust under the blows of the laborer, and have been removed to make room for a modern structure. We understand that a brick building, to be used as a hotel, will be erected upon the lot, which is large, and fronts upon the Plaza and Main street.[3]

In spite of the difficulties and uncertainties, one man, Pío Pico, the last Mexican governor and one of the last of the great *rancheros*, had decided to lay the foundations for the future growth of the city and to do something to beautify his beloved Plaza. The governor intended to invest part of the $115,000 he had received from the sale of some lands in the San Fernando Valley to build a hotel—the most up-to-date, attractive, and the first to be designed specifically as such, in the city. Contracts were let on September 4, 1869, and on the eighteenth the foundation was laid.[4] There are indications that the building was originally to match the existing Los Angeles skyline, two stories; however, in November the newspapers reported the building had already reached the second floor, and it was being stated on the streets that it was to go to three,[5] a fact that would make it the tallest building in Los Angeles. A change in construction plans would also

explain so much variation in reports of the construction costs. Andrés Pico, in a letter dated September 7, 1869, to his brother Pío, who was at that time in San Francisco, stated that he had let contracts for $32,500,[6] while most accounts give the cost of construction from $48,000 to $85,000.[7]

The construction proceeded rapidly, and in April 1870, the *Star* reported that the building was finished and wanted only the furniture from San Francisco.[8] One reason for the rapid construction was that there were less than nine inches of rain that year;[9] this enabled the construction crews to erect the shell and place the roof before the rains forced the halt of any construction. Not only did the construction go rapidly, but also there was only one tragedy reported during that period. On Tuesday, October 26, 1869, the watchman on the site noticed a man carrying off some boards. When the man failed to heed his orders to stop, the guard fired one shot; the foiled thief died during the day from his wound.[10] There is no indication that the authorities took any action against the guard, who had turned himself in.

The magnificent structure was designed by E. F. Kyser, in conjunction with Antonio Cuyas, the future proprietor, and was contracted primarily by Charles Stoppenbeck and C. P. Switzer, with the masonry under the supervision of Jacob Wexel. It was called "composite or American" but was actually American Romanesque, with deep-set, arched windows and doors. The finished building, which fronted 117 feet on Main Street and 95 feet on the Plaza, was a "three story brick with flat tin roof, heavy cornice and arched entrances, and painted columns on the lower story. Although the building was brick, "its exterior is stuccoed and will be painted in imitation of blue granite." A "commodious observatory" reportedly crowned the structure, but no early picture shows it.[11] It may be like the name on the cornice, which was reported to have read "Pico House—1869;" however, the existing plaque does not have a date, nor do any early pictures show one.

Not only was the structure physically attractive, it was soundly constructed. "Its foundation walls are of stone, thirty inches thick and encloses a large cellar. From this foundation rises the brick walls, . . . commencing with a thickness of about two feet and tapering to twenty inches at the top of the third story."[12] These sturdy walls made the building almost fireproof and, as many commented, make it safer than most buildings from earthquake damage.

The interior was as grand as the exterior.

Pío Pico (1801–1884). *Courtesy Eric Nelson.*

> Its main entrance is from Main Street, through a capacious vestibule, and up a grand staircase with a continuous rail. To the right of this entrance is situated the office, with its bell wires and speaker tubes. Near the center of the building is a private spiral staircase, leading to the court and private dining rooms. In the center of the staircase is located a dumb waiter, for hoisting luggage to the second and third floors. The parlor is situated on the second floor at the corner of Main Street, and commands a fine view of the city.[13]

In addition to the office, the lower floor contained a reading room, a bar facing Main Street, and three dining rooms fronting the Plaza. The kitchen was located on the Sanchez Street side of the building, as were sliding doors to permit wagons to drive inside for convenience in unloading baggage and other goods. The entire building enclosed a court, and a portico extending to the third story surrounded the court. The second floor contained the billiard room. The remainder of the second story and all of the third were given to sleeping rooms. As the author of the above description waxed: "Viewed from the street the building makes a very neat appearance, and would not be ashamed if set down in New York."[14]

The interior furnishings equaled the structure. The carpets were Brussels or velvet on the second floor and the best-ingrained carpets on the

third. The furniture on the second floor was all walnut, while on the third it was of lighter and less costly woods; however, "all are pleasing to the eye and are of good quality."[15]

However, the outstanding feature of the hotel was not that it was lighted throughout by gas, but that "it had a bathroom—in fact, two or more!—a feature in which it was without a competitor among Los Angeles hostelries as late as 1882."[16] The hotel—and the city—were very proud of "its two zinc bathtubs enclosed in wood, one on each of the two upper floors."[17]

Señor Cuyas, experienced in New York hotels, assembled an impressive staff for the projected June 10, 1870, opening. He was assisted by Albert J. Johnson, Esq., business manager; George Pridham, Esq., formerly of the Bella Union, principal clerk; Mr. J. H. Gregory, a popular Los Angeles saloon keeper, would serve as manager of the bar and billiard saloon; and Mr. Charles Langier, whose reputation extended from New Orleans to Los Angeles, would be the caterer and chief cook.[18] A last-minute problem with the installation of the furniture prevented the official opening until June 20, but actually, to accommodate passengers arriving on the boat from San Francisco, the first twenty-five guests registered on Sunday, June 19.[19] Although some accounts of The Pico House mark the official opening with a grand ball, no contemporary newspaper account indicated such an event.

Since newspaper accounts indicate that Señor Cuyas had consulted with Mr. Kyser on the design of the building, Señor Pico seemingly had reached an agreement with him much earlier to operate the facility and leased the operation of the hotel to Cuyas for $570 per month. Unless Pico received rentals from the other occupants of the hotel, this was a ridiculously low return. At that time, money was loaned at 2 to 5 percent per month interest. Assuming the lowest possible cost, $60,000, and the lowest interest, Pico could have earned $1,200 per month on his money. There is no record that he borrowed money to build the hotel, but apparently used the proceeds from the sale of his San Fernando holdings to finance the construction of the hotel; however, if many of his financial transactions were this unfavorable to himself, it is easy to understand why he was soon in the financial difficulties that led to his loss of the hotel.

Whatever the financial arrangements, The Pico House filled a need for the city, and the social elite flocked to it. Its clientele included some of the finest families of the city, and many social events took place within its walls. Most, and not only those from Los Angeles, considered it the

> finest hotel south of San Francisco. For a decade it was the center of the social life of the city and its once beautiful court, with fountain and tropical foliage, was the scene of many a notable entertainment and was familiar to travelers from various parts of the world.[20]

Its guest register includes the names of many of the great *Californio* families—families bearing such names as Ávila, Sepúlveda, del Valle, Carrillo, Domínguez, and Lugo. Early Anglo families including Rowland, Lankershim, Wolfskill, Hellman, Flint, and Bixby made the hotel their headquarters when in Los Angeles. Several famous individuals, notably Gen. George Stoneman, Charles Nordhoff, Gen. Edward F. Beale, Col. R. S. Baker and his wife Arcadia Bandini de Baker, enjoyed the hospitality of the establishment. Other celebrities visited the hotel. Madame Helena Modjeska reputedly was very fond of the place; Helen Hunt Jackson stayed there for a while before she moved to the del Valle home to prepare her novel, *Ramona*; her fellow novelist, Henryk Sienkiewicz stayed at the hotel for an extended period of time, and many, without any supporting evidence, insist that he wrote at least part of *Quo Vadis* in his room there. Probably the most illustrious guest was Archduke Ludwig Louis Salvator of Austria, who stayed there incognito as Count Leundorf.[21]

Not all the guests were as welcomed as the above mentioned. Vincent Collyer, an Indian agent who had defended the Apaches in Arizona, stayed there in the fall of 1871. "Public feeling led one newspaper [*Star*] to suggest that if the citizens wished 'to see a *monster,*' they had 'only to stand before the hotel and watch Collyer pass to and fro!'"[22] A "Professor" Montrose, a magician, used the hotel to encourage attendance at his performance. When he appeared at the Turnverein Hall he was confronted by several persons who demanded he pay the money that he owed them. The group released him upon his promise to pay, but instead of paying, he made himself invisible by leaving town on a freight train.[23]

Another group with whom the hotel was popular was newlyweds. Among others, Harris Newmark comments upon the number of couples who spent their honeymoons in The Pico House. A young married couple was on occasion serenaded by a friend;[24] this, depending upon the frequency and quality of voice, could have caused irritation among the other guests.

From the beginning, The Pico House became famous for its "hops" and other social gatherings. One of the earliest and most lavish welcomed Pío Pico home after he had been forced to stay in San Francisco due to an illness. To honor the governor, "the court yard of the Hotel was wreathed

around with evergreens, hung with wreaths of flowers, and lighted by Chinese lanterns of strange and beautiful design."[25] A month later, the paper reported what was probably a more somber affair; the Teachers' Institute had a social reunion in the parlors after hearing a lecture by the Reverend O. P. Fitzgerald in the Congregational Church.[26] A "social and select hop" was given by "one of the younger members of a banking house of this city." The guest list included almost every important name in early Los Angeles history. To add to the gaiety, the food served made it "useless to attempt a description of it, such genius was deployed by the cook of The Pico House, and such a variety of delectable condiments were brought into requisition."[27] In an effort to keep in the forefront as a social and cultural center, the proprietors sponsored a series of fortnightly musical performances. The names of the performers are unfamiliar to modern readers, but the newspaper articles indicate they were well-known at the time and were at least adequate or better performers.[28]

During most of its existence as The Pico House, the hotel was famed for its food. From the first, the newspapers reported that "the table was supplied with all kinds of wines and every delicacy of the season; and nothing was wanting for the enjoyment of the guest—not even American bread."[29]

The New Year's Eve 1872 dinner was "a grand affair" and "in all respects worthy of the generous hosts who gave it."[30] Organizations that did not utilize the hotel for their meetings had the hotel's kitchen cater refreshments, which were declared, "to be the most sumptuous collation ever spread in Los Angeles."[31] Two sample menus show the sophistication of the hotel's kitchen and that of the guests. The first was a dinner for 250 guests to celebrate the joining of the rails of the Southern Pacific from San Francisco in Soledad Canyon, September 5, 1876.[32]

BILL OF FARE

SOUP
Consommé Royal

FISH
Filet of Salmon

HORS D'OUVRES
Olives, shrimps, anchovies, apple sauce, cranberry sauce, butter, pickles

SALADS
Mayonnaise *de Homards Monte* Mayonnaise *de Chicken a in Italienne*
German Salad

Ornamental Dishes

Noix de veal a Ia Montmorency a la jelly — Turkey galantine *en bell vue*
Pates de Foies au attele belle vue — *Pates de Quail a la jelly*

Roasts

Ham *de Mayence* roast *a la jelly* — Turkey truffles *aux papilettes*
Smoked Tongue *en arcade*
Chicken bards *a la gelee* — Quail *Piques de Cores*
Chaux froids de chicken decorated
Quarter *de* venison veal *a la crème* — Aspic *Financiere belle vue*
Preces de Flanc

Pastry

English plum pudding and maraschino sauce
Fruit cakes, glace *blaue* — Ladies kisses — Mushroom meringue
Cakes a *la genoise*, diverse
Vanilla *souflee*
Macaroons
Almond dessert *de sucre a la plume*
Lemon cream pie, apple pie, peach pie
Pieces Montees
Nougat baked *garnie* with fruit caramel

Dessert

Champagne jelly *a la rese* — *Blanc Mange punache*
Vanilla ice cream
Coffee (cold and warm) — Tea
All kinds of fruits — several wines

Three years later, the Republican Party had a banquet as a campaign kickoff. The meal did not help; the Democrat, George Perkins, won the governorship.[33]

Soup

Chicken, vegetable, consommé

Boiled

Beef, horse-radish, ham, tongue, mutton with caper sauce

Cold Meats

Beef, mutton, veal, pork, tongue, ham

Entrees

Pâté a la Financière
Tenderloin of venison, *sauce Pouvlace*
Chicken sauté, with mushrooms
Pigs' feet, *a la Péricole*
Smoked sheep's tongue, green peas
Beignet soufflé

Roasts
Beef, mutton, pork, veal with apple sauce,
lamb with mint sauce, tame duck

Vegetables
Green corn, string beans, lima beans, green peas
mashed potatoes, baked sweet potatoes,
stewed tomatoes, boiled onions

Relishes
Worcestershire sauce, pickles, tomato catsup,
lettuce, horse-radish, celery,
olives, chowchow, French mustard

Pastry
English plum pudding, brandy sauce
custard and apple meringue pies

Desserts
Vanilla ice cream, grapes,
walnuts, almonds, raisins,
assorted cakes
Coffee Tea

Even during the declining years of The Pico House, occasionally some organization would have a luncheon or banquet there. However, the fare did not receive as much praise or ovation as in the earlier years under the stewardship of Cuyas.[34]

One of the more interesting celebrations held in the hotel marked a step in the growth of the city, one that moved the center of the business district further south, which contributed to the decline of The Pico House. After they completed laying the tracks for the street railroad, the construction crew celebrated in the hotel with a free keg of lager.[35] This is an interesting commentary on both the hotel and the social relationships of 1874; imagine taking a track crew right from work into the watering hole of one of today's first-class hotels for a party. Also, one wonders if this celebration had any connection with the fact that the first streetcar went off the tracks at the curve in front of The Pico House.

Although there is no record of any large-scale activity held in The Pico House during the centennial celebration of 1876, the hotel itself was made part of the expression of patriotism. While almost every business was decorated, The Pico House led "with a large column topped with a flag-staff and a liberty cap. The column bore such patriotic legends as '1776–1876—

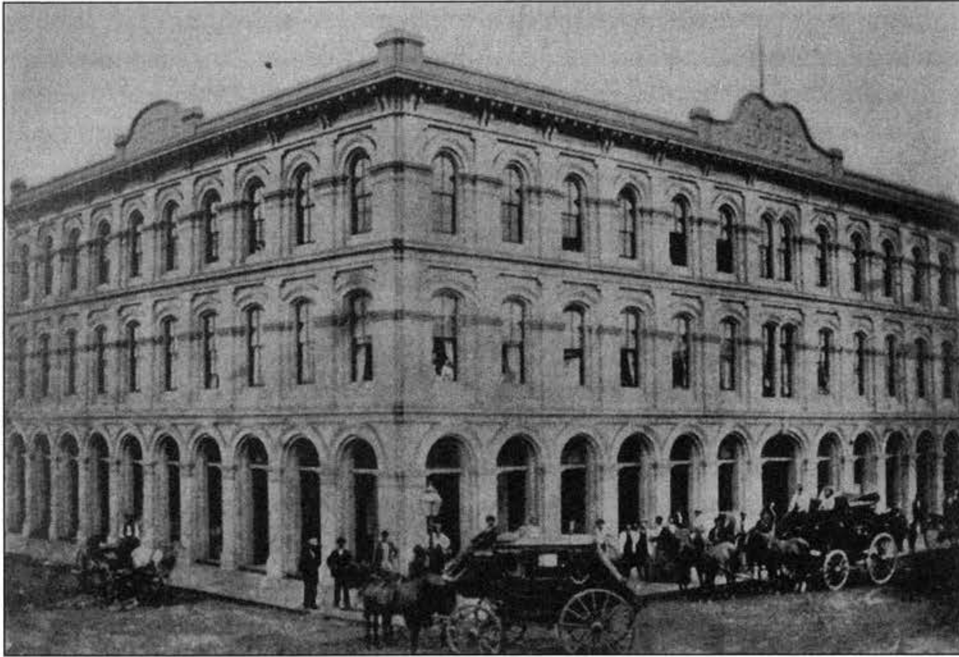
Now for 1976' and 'No North, no South, no East, no West—a Fourth of July for all.'"[36]

Over the years, stories have developed about The Pico House. These stories are mainly apocryphal, but they do reflect certain attitudes and habits of the inhabitants of the city. The most common tale concerns an old *ranchero* who registered one night. Since he had never had anything but a candle for lighting, he blew out the gaslight before retiring. Fortunately, in the multitude of time this yarn has been told, a visitor stopped by in time to rescue the elderly gentleman. According to another story, a gentleman observed a stuffed parrot outside his room. During the night, some noise interfered with his sleep; the next morning, he demanded that his room be changed away from the noisy parrot. When informed that the parrot was dead and that he had heard an ill man coughing in the next room, he still demanded that his room be changed far from the parrot.[37] On another occasion, a Britisher who had a letter of introduction to Hancock M. Johnson, the son of Confederate General Albert S. Johnson, checked into the hotel. The two men met and after an evening of sampling Los Angeles' hospitality, repaired to the Britisher's room for an evening of conversation. Suddenly, Johnson drew a pistol and fired. Johnson explained to the rather indignant and probably frightened Englishman that a cockroach had been crawling up his trouser leg, and "I'm not going to allow any darned cockroach to crawl up the leg of a man with a letter of introduction to me."[38] The world's most fantastic shooting aside, the nonchalant acceptance that a gentleman, probably attired in evening clothes, would be carrying and freely using a side-arm vividly illustrates how close Los Angeles of the 1870s was to its violent frontier heritage.

Considering the neighborhood and that the hotel operated for eighty years, surprisingly little violence marred its existence. A letter to the editor signed DECENCY clearly demonstrated the type of neighborhood of the hotel. As he stated:

> The streets above and about the Plaza, in the immediate vicinity of The Pico House, the Sisters' School, and the Public School, are notoriously infested with shameless bawds. Every house occupied on one side of Bath street is, we believe, in the hands of these people.[39]

Nearly two decades later, "on a detailed map of the land and buildings of Los Angeles, the notation 'Houses of Ill Fame' occurs along Sanchez Street across from The Pico House and for several blocks on nearby Alameda."[40] *Calle de Negros* nearby had, over the years, been the scene of more



Pico House, ca. 1880. *Courtesy Eric Nelson.*

violence than any other street in the city. Also, the mixed racial background of the surrounding area contributed to potential, if not actual violence.

One guest of the hotel was involved in a shooting fracas, but this did not actually occur in the hotel. Harris Newmark's gentle irony better describes the incident than the newspapers:

> Exceeding the limits of animated editorial debate into which the rival journalists had been drawn during the heated campaign of 1879, William A. Spalding, a reporter on the *Evening Express*, waited for Joseph D. Lynch, the editor of the *Herald*, at about eleven o'clock in the morning of August 16th, and peppered away with a bull-dog pistol at his rival, as the latter, who had just left The Pico House, was crossing Spring Street from Temple Block to go to the *Herald* office. Lynch dropped his cane, and fumbled for his shooting-iron; but by the time he could return the fire, A. de Celis and other citizens had thrust themselves forward, making it doubly perilous to shoot at all. Spalding's bullet wounded not his adversary but a by-stander, L.A. Major of Compton.[41]

One night, the guests were rudely awakened by screams of terror from Room 69. Investigation disclosed that Jim Ash, "the notorious saloon keeper," had entered that room just minutes before and had attempted to shoot, and did strike with the barrel of his revolver, its occupant, his estranged wife. According to Ash, it was his wife who had the gun; he was only attempting a reconciliation and to have his beloved return home. Either story is possible; Mr. Ash had been charged "several times before for the brutal abuse of his woman." And only a few weeks previously, Mrs. Ash had appeared with a six-gun on the street in front of the saloon where Ash was employed, planning to shoot him.[42]

A cursory check of the newspapers for the period after The Pico House became the National Hotel did not disclose any violence or criminal activity worthy of publication. From the apparent character of the hotel in its later years, one would assume the police were well-acquainted with the hotel and its habitués, but there does not seem to have been any major crimes committed there.

Although The Pico House became one of the city's major social centers, it never brought the financial return to Pío Pico that he desired. Shortly after the hotel opened, he began to borrow money or at least extend some previous loans. On July 16, 1875, he gave a note to the Savings and Loan Society of San Francisco for $27,345. When neither the interest nor principal were repaid, the Society ordered the security, The Pico House, and one other parcel of land sold at public auction. The Savings and Loan Society, the highest bidder at the San Francisco auction, purchased the hotel for $16,000.[43]

In order to redeem his property before the limit on reconveyance expired, Pico borrowed $62,000 from B. Cohn. The governor, understanding that it was a security mortgage and not a conveyance of title, gave Cohn deeds to all his property, including The Pico House and Rancho Paso de Bartolo at Whittier. At that time, the lands were worth in excess of $200,000. A short time later, Señor Pico tendered Cohn $65,000 and requested a reconveyance of title, only to be informed that the original transaction had not been a loan but an unconditional sale. Pico went to court to recover his properties. The chief witness was Pancho Johnson, who had functioned as interpreter during the original transaction. Johnson perjured himself and stated that it had been clearly stated that the transaction was a sale of property. The lower court found in favor of Cohn, and Pico appealed. In spite of admitting to the probability of perjured testimo-

ny, the Supreme Court allowed the decision to stand.[44] This decision reduced Pico to absolute poverty; a man who at one time had been one of the wealthiest in the state, who had carried pocketfuls of fifty dollar gold slugs, who wagered thousands on a horserace, lived his last three years in abject poverty, completely dependent upon the largess of his friends for survival. When one reads the descriptions of the old man in his last years sitting in front of The Pico House dressed in his worn finery, one realizes that he probably never fully comprehended the calamity that had overwhelmed him.

If one were pressed to pick one word to describe The Pico House, the word would have to be unstable. Granted, it was a hotel, which implies transience—but nothing about The Pico House gave a feeling of continuity or permanence. The proprietors and managers changed frequently; the help seldom, if ever, remained for more than a year; there were few permanent residents, none of whom stayed far more than two years; businesses came and left with only the bar being operated by the same individual for any length of time; and of course, status proved to be the most fleeting of all.

When Antonio Cuyas inaugurated service at The Pico House, he announced that it would be operated on the European Plan and that "accommodations will be given to all classes at prices suitable for each."[45] Two years later, Cuyas apparently attempted to increase business by instituting a boarding house. One of the few ads the hotel submitted to the local press offered: "Board with or without room. By the month, week, day or meal." Board was provided for thirty dollars a month, seven dollars per week, daily for one dollar and fifty cents, or seventy-five cents per meal. The proprietor promised: "Patrons of this house will always find meals served in the best style, by a first class cook. Also attentive waiters." In addition to meals, both ladies and gentlemen could procure baths at fifty cents apiece.[46] Even this rare advertisement failed, and Cuyas was unable to pay his rental fees, so Pico went to court to have him evicted as operator. After the eviction of Cuyas, Pico leased the hotel to Charles Knowlton.

Cuyas, attempting to salvage his business, had closed the kitchen; in the newspaper, the new manager, Knowlton, announced "it will, after the last of the present week, be run as a regular hotel and guests will hereafter get meals in the house, instead of being compelled to search around for a restaurant."[47] In addition to reopening the kitchen, Knowlton undertook physical improvements. Earlier, "the energetic proprietors of The Pico

House have planted in front of the building eight well grown Aliso trees, besides which eight vines, of the grape order are planted, that twine around the trees."[48] The following year major renovation was made to the plant. The billiard room was placed on the first floor, new furniture was installed, and other changes were instituted. The most practical change was the installation of two water tanks to provide running hot water for the kitchen and the famed baths.[49] A new interior failed to overcome a foul exterior; most of the cesspools in the area were defective, and the stench was overpowering. However, the city completed the new sewer line, and The Pico House ad announced, "the unpleasant odor of gas has entirely disappeared."[50]

In 1875, Knowlton declined to renew his lease; Pico, unable to find anyone else, agreed to lease it once again to Cuyas,[51] who had been making a living by offering his services as a professor of Spanish. Cuyas and his partner, Captain Swales, aided by improved economic conditions, were able to restore the kitchen to its former glory, the hotel to its former prestige, and to make a profit.

After a few years, Cuyas once again left the hotel, this time to become the proprietor of the new Plaza House, and there followed a rapid succession of proprietors and managers. In 1879, Francisco Pico became the proprietor, with John Whitney as manager. The new proprietor declared the well-known and popular hotel to be the "BEST APPOINTED AND MOST LUXURIOUS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA." Again the hotel had "just been refurnished and renovated. THE CUISINE IS UNSURPASSED ON THE COAST," and "Every detail of the Service, apartment and table—FIRST CLASS IN EVERY RESPECT."[52]

The next year, N. R. Greswold and Charles Marsh became the proprietors.[53] These new executives stressed that "streetcars to and from the Depot pass the House." Once again, it had "recently reopened. It is furnished throughout in elegant style, and is one of the most comfortable Hotels in the city." The hotel praised its "large and pleasant rooms for families" and the "commodious sample rooms for commercial travelers." In addition to "tables supplied with all the delicacies of the Season," the management provided a coach to deliver passengers from the trains to the hotel at no cost.[54]

In 1881, the new lessees, E. Durham and Richard C. Scheffelin, hired a staff of all Blacks for the restaurant. The city directory designated that Charles Counellor, chief cook, J. H. Green, head waiter, and the eight wait-

ers were colored.[55] This is the only time the directory gave such information, so it is impossible to tell if this were the only time that the hotel had been staffed by Blacks. There are indications that the staff had been Black once before. An inspection of names for the period after this gives no clues. The names seem to be French, Italian, and Basque in origin, which in reality tells one nothing except they seem to be French, Italian, and Basque in origin. The directory for 1881 also lists bellhops at the hotel; usually none were listed. Either previously the hotel had none, or they were hired as casual labor. To support the concept of casual labor, only once is a chambermaid listed, and there are never any dishwashers or other kitchen help listed. Also, there are only two housekeepers listed in the twenty-five directories before 1900.

The following year, the directory listed no proprietor for The Pico House, and Durham and Scheffelin are listed as the proprietors of the St. Elmo Hotel. Of the employees, only the chef and second cook, the headwaiter, and the assistant clerk resided in the hotel; the rest lived elsewhere, some at the St. Elmo. The night clerk of the St. Elmo Hotel resided in The Pico House. All of the above indicates that the two men were the proprietors of both hotels.[56]

After 1886, there was a series of proprietors. First, S. D. Savage and O. H. Mosely were the proprietors. The following year, a Woodbury had replaced Mosely; the next year, both were gone and S. Slusher was listed. There was no city directory in 1889, but in 1890, J. Price is shown as the proprietor of the hotel. That year, The Pico House Saloon is shown located at the corner of Main and Plaza instead of in the hotel. In 1891, the last year the hotel was The Pico House, P. Ballade and Company, which was Pascal Ballade, John Pascale, and Emil Shumacher, was listed as the proprietor; they were also the proprietors of the Ballade House. In 1892, Paul Roques and Jean Delbastz were the proprietors of the newly named National Hotel. They remained partners for two years, when Scipio Vial replaced Delbastz. For three years, they were the proprietors of both the hotel and the bar; then in 1898, Roques became the sole proprietor. The next year, Mr. Roques became the proprietor of the Acacia Saloon, located further south on Main Street, and Charles Boldetti became the proprietor of the hotel.[57] After 1897, G. Pagliano and G. Borniatico, the proprietors of the Market Saloon located in the hotel became the lessees of the property; in 1930, Mr. Pagliano purchased the property from the Farmers and Merchant Bank for a reputed $120,000,[58] but the pattern of changing managers continued.

Pico House, 2003. *Courtesy Eric Nelson.*

The permanent residents give a clue to the status of the hotel. The first city directory in 1872 did not list any occupations, but one Madame Soposti is listed "under The Pico House," which creates some questions.[59] Most of the permanent guests in 1875 who listed their occupations were either in transportation or were capitalists. One, Peter Smith, a stage driver for the Coast Line, later returned to The Pico House as its driver.[60]

Except for 1881, when no permanent residents are listed, a pattern of professional businessmen and other highly skilled or trained occupations are listed until 1883, when several clerks or salespersons in department stores made their homes in the hotel. In 1884, along with a messenger from Wells Fargo and several stage drivers, one laborer is listed. From then on, The Pico House rapidly became a working-class hotel, with laborers, laundresses, ranchers, and clerks in residence. In 1891, William I. Cottier recorded himself as an inventor, the only one who ever lived there.[61] After

it became the National Hotel, usually no occupation was given except for employees of the hotel; those who were listed were usually laborer, cook, butcher, dishwasher, or other unskilled or low-paying occupations. After 1894, not even employees were listed as living in the National Hotel, but at 430 North Main; residents of other hotels were listed as living in that hotel. Either people had not accepted the new name, there was notoriety about the hotel with which no one wished to be connected, or the hotel was being treated as a lodging house whose residents were listed by street number.

Although the hotel was designed for stores and other businesses, it never did too well enticing business to locate within its walls. One of its first businesses was a very impressive customer; Wells Fargo moved from the Bella Union to quarters in the new hostelry.[62] Mr. C. Norton opened a dry goods and clothing store on the Main Street corner of The Pico House. He displayed a "large stock of first-class dry goods, clothing, etc. His goods are brought expressly for this market. . . ."[63] Dr. Max J. Weider, "an eminent homeopathic physician and surgeon . . . [with] the reputation . . . of being one of the most educated and scientific physicians," announced he would dispense services and medicines, by the case, for families from his office in The Pico House.[64]

In September, another early business began operating from the hotel. A Professor Andrews from New York offered to teach his new method of mathematics, which apparently was a new system of bookkeeping and billing. Those who saw a demonstration "found his method to be much shorter, more simple, rapid and practical than any other that have [*sic*] ever came within scope of our investigation."[65]

Taking advantage of the Southern Pacific Railroad coming into Los Angeles, Senator John P. Jones decided to advance the welfare of his own railroad by developing Santa Monica. After a very successful opening day auction at the site, Thomas Fitch, the auctioneer, opened shop in The Pico House to continue sales. While many considered this an attempt to destroy the commercial primacy of Los Angeles, most regarded the sales as beneficial to the developing city.[66]

Overall, business had a checkered career in the hotel. The only business that was consistent was a bar. With the possible exception of the Prohibition period, there was always a dispenser of liquid refreshments there. Not only was a saloon continuous, it was the only business that remained for any length of time under the same person. Mr. E. T. McGinnis, the original proprietor of The Pico House Saloon, operated it until 1880. No proprietor

was listed until 1884, when Michael Honohan became the operator. For several years after that, it was again a house bar; then in 1887, Samuel J. Shane leased and maintained the establishment for the next three years. During his last year there, a cigar counter was added. No separate proprietor was listed for the bar until 1896, when G. Borniatico and G. Pagliano became the proprietors of the National Saloon, later the Market Saloon. They seemed to have operated the bar as well as the hotel for the rest of its existence. Except for an off-and-on barber shop, an occasional separate restaurant, and a newsstand for one year, the only businesses that can definitely be assigned to the hotel before 1900 are a furniture store, a real estate agency, a watchmaker and jeweler, and W. I. Cottier, ventilators.

In 1890, another establishment, whether or not one wishes to classify it as a business, Sub-Station C, United States Post Office was located in the hotel. In 1893, instead of giving its address as the National Hotel, used The Pico House as its address, the directory listed it on the south east corner of Main and Plaza,[67] which was the address used until the office relocated further south on Main Street two years later. Fire alarm box #27 was handled in the same manner. Until 1894, its location was given at The Pico House; thereafter it was said to be located on the corner of Main and Plaza.

After becoming the National Hotel its decline, already begun, accelerated. The hotel again degenerated into a working-class hotel; some say even into a flop house. In 1914, under the title "Palace Then; Barrack Now," the local press noted that the Housing Commission had ordered the National Hotel to be vacated by December 5. The article noted that a giant mahogany bed supposedly having belonged to Pío Pico was the most popular resting place in the hostelry; the competition for the bed was so fierce that the lodgers frequently paid "three or four times the price of an ordinary cot or bed" to sleep in it.[68]

In spite of the order to close, the hotel "still affords lodging though hardly in the class enjoyed in the 70s and 80s." In 1931, during a search for heritage in celebration of La Fiesta de Los Angeles—the city's sesquicentennial—the building was acknowledged to exist.[69] At this time, the upper floor of the building had been declared unsuitable for occupancy, and because of the cost to restore it, utilized only the lower floors. On February 4, 1934, partly because of the awareness created by the celebration of the city's 150th anniversary and the 1932 Olympic Games, the building was marked by the Native Daughters of the Golden West, Los Angeles Parlor, Number 124, as California Registered Historical Landmark number 159.[70]

In 1941, the WPA *Guide* to the city, noted that while The Pico House (the original name had been restored in the 1930s) contained stores on the ground floor, a hotel was still maintained. Historical status or no, "Civic Center plans call for the building's demolition."[71]

The war, or something, saved the old building, but in 1950 it was once again condemned; the owner, realizing the prohibitive cost of renovation, closed the doors of the hotel. The establishment of El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historic Park in 1953 renewed interest in salvaging the building. Over the years, plans have been developed to restore The Pico House and once again to make it a viable commercial building containing stores, restaurant, and professional offices. The final plan was developed in 1976, and it was estimated that the interior restoration of the building would cost $692,000.[72] In 1979, bids were accepted for the work; of the two received, the lower one was for $1,600,000 and the higher was over $2 million.[73] The work slowly progresses, and someday when all the problems—political, financial, architectural, and social—are solved, The Pico House will once again stand in its former glory as one of the social centers of the city.

Notes

[1]Los Angeles *Semi-Weekly News*, July 31, 1868, p. 2. Los Angeles *Daily News*, June 5, 1869, p. 2.
[2]Los Angeles *Star*, October 2, 1871, p. 3.
[3]Ibid., September 11, 1869, p. 2.
[4]Ibid., April 23, 1870, p. 2.
[5]Ibid., November 20, 1869, p. 2.
[6]Los Angeles *Times*, July 5, 1931, Pt. 5, p. 2.
[7]The $48,000 figure is in Ludwig Louis Salvator, *Los Angeles in the Sunny Seventies: A Flower from the Golden Land*, translated by Marguerite Eyer Wilbur (Los Angeles: Bruse McCallister–Jake Zeitlin, 1937), p. 134. He also states that the furnishings cost $34,000. Interestingly, this account, which is generally considered one of the best descriptions, states that the hotel was two stories.
[8]*Star*, April 23, 1870, p. 2.
[9]J. J. Warner, Benjamin Hayes, and J. P. Whitney, *An Historical Sketch of Los Angeles County, California: From the Spanish Occupancy by the Founding of the Mission San Gabriel Archangel, September 8, 1777, to July 4, 1876* (Los Angeles: O. W. Smith, Publisher, 1937), p. 127. The authors apparently were not as impressed with The Pico House as others; they state that the years 1869 and 1870 were of no marked events. The Pico House is not even mentioned.
[10]*Star*, October 30, 1869, p. 2.
[11]Ibid., April 23, 1870, p. 2. This article, one in the Los Angeles *Republican*, May 26, 1870, and one in the Los Angeles *Daily News*, May 25, 1870, contain rather complete descriptions of the hotel as it opened. Comparing these three articles to one in the Los Angeles *Herald*, November 22, 1873, after the hotel was renovated, helps one deduce other details.
[12]Ibid.
[13]Ibid.
[14]Los Angeles *Republican*, May 26, 1879, p. 3.

[15]Ibid.

[16]J[ohn] H. D. F[rancis], "Pío Pico Mansion," in *California History Nugget*, 3 (October–November 1929), p. 19.

[17]Works Progress Administration, Writers Project, *Los Angeles: A Guide to the City and Its Environs*, (New York: Hastings House, 1941), p. 11.

[18]*Star*, May 28, 1870, p. 2.

[19]See register June 19, 1870–May 20, 1872, in Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History Library. Also *Star*, June 18 and 23, 1870, p. 2.

[20]Horace Bell, *On the Old West Coast; Being Further Reminiscences of a Ranger*, edited by Lanier Bartlett, (New York: W. Morrow & Co., 1930), pp. 320–21.

[21]See Maymie R. Krythe, "Pico House: The Finest Hotel South of San Francisco," in Historical Society of Southern California *Quarterly*, 38 (June 1955), pp. 139–60, for more detailed discussion of the various guests.

[22] Harris Newmark, *Sixty Years in Southern California, 1853–1913*, edited by Maurice H. and Marco R. Newmark (4th ed.; Los Angeles: Zeitlin & Brugge, 1970), p. 431.

[23]Krythe, "Pico House," p. 157.

[24]*Star*, September 28, 1870, p. 3.

[25]Ibid., September 6, 1870, p. 2.

[26]Ibid., October 27, 1870, p. 2.

[27]Ibid., June 7, 1872, p. 2.

[28]Los Angeles *Express*, January 16, 17, and 22, and February 17, 1877.

[29]*Star*, November 16, 1870, p. 3.

[30]Ibid., January 3, 1872, p. 2.

[31]Ibid., January 8, 1872, p. 3.

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[43]Walter E. Rothman, "The Pico House," Los Angeles Museum *Quarterly*, 8 (Summer 1950), pp. 8–9. The record of ownership of the parcels of land on which The Pico House stands is in Los Angeles County, Hall of Records, *Book of Deeds*, 75, p. 76. In his article, Mr. Rothman traces the ownership from the first grant until purchased by G. Pagliano in 1930.

[44]All the details of the case and the court's reasoning are included in *Pío Pico, Appellant vs. Julius B. Cohn, et al., Respondents* [No. 13892. In Bank—September 10, 1891], reprinted in Martin Cole, *Pío Pico Miscellany* (Whittier, Ca.: Governor Pico Mansion Society, 1978), pp. 99–104.

[45]*Star*, May 28, 1870, p. 2.

[46]Ibid., January 3, 1872, p. 1.

[47]Ibid., April 8, 1872, p. 3.

[48]Ibid., January 6, 1872, p. 3.

[49]Los Angeles *Herald*, November 22, 1873. This article states the hotel reopened, but the New

Arrivals column in the *Star* shows people registering in the hotel the entire time it should have been closed. The renovation must have been accomplished without closing.
[50]Newmark, *Sixty Years in Southern California*, p. 469.
[51]*Directory of Los Angeles for 1875* (Los Angeles: Morrow Book and Job Printing Office, 1875), p. 73.
[52]Ibid., p. 228
[53]*Los Angeles City and County Directory for 1881–82* (San Francisco: Southern California Directories, n.d.), pp. 71 and 100.
[54]Ibid., p. 64
[55]*Los Angeles City and County Directory for 1883–84* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Publishers, n.d.), pp. 187, 69, 105, 130, 172, 182, 184, 210, 225, 235, and 237.
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[57]The county directories appeared with the exceptions of years 1889 and 1919 until 1942. The pattern established earlier existed throughout the entire period.
[58]Rothman, "Pico House, " p. 9.
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[64]Ibid., June 15, 1870, p. 3.
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[67]*Corran's Los Angeles Directory* (Los Angeles, [1893?]), p. 628
[68]Los Angeles *Daily Times*, November 7, 1914, Pt. 2, p. 5.
[69]Los Angeles *Times*, July 5, 1931, Pt. 5, p. 2.
[70]Plaque on northwest corner of Pico House, renewed February 16, 1971, by El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historical Park Commission.
[71]*WPA*, Los Angeles, p. 11.
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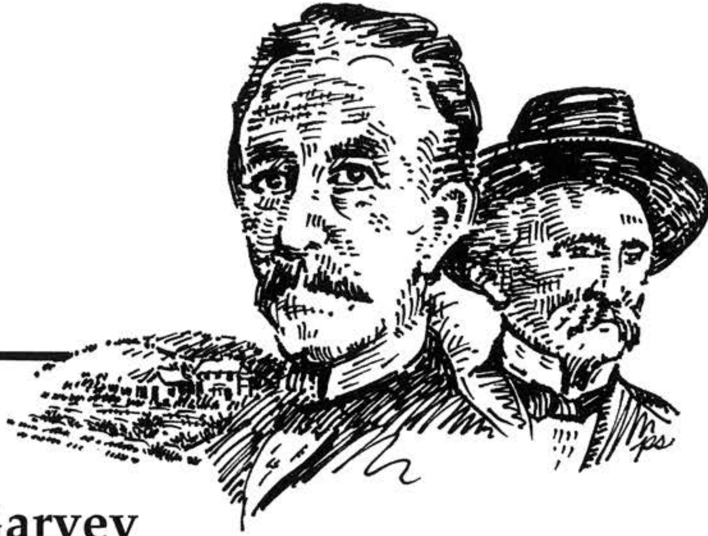
Richard Garvey.
Rosa Keehn Collection.



Richard Garvey (1838–1930) *Monterey Park Pioneer*

by Rosa M. Keehn

Richard Garvey stood alone on the dock at Savannah, Georgia. His older brother, John, was in the British Army in India, fighting the Sepoy Rebellion. Younger brother, Peter, and sisters, Delia and Maria, along with their mother, Mary Flanagan, were left destitute by the potato famine and the death of their father, Peter Garvey. Richard was to have been met by someone in New York, but he apparently missed the docking. The next port of call was Savannah, where he finally left the ship. Richard Garvey was eleven years old.

A customhouse official named Phillip Russell noticed the young man standing alone as the ship sailed on. Russell talked with him, found him to be intelligent, although dirty and dressed in ragged clothes, but still standing straight and proud. Russell suggested he come home with him, get a bath and clean clothes, and he would help Richard find a job.

Garvey's first job was setting type by hand, at three dollars a week, part of which he saved, hoping to bring the rest of his family from Ireland. His second job was working in a foundry with much better pay. He saved enough to go to New York, and then on to Cleveland, Ohio, where there were many Irish families. Richard remained the main support of his family, but still was able to complete his education.

His older brother, John, was released from the Queen's Service with a Service Award. He later joined the West Virginia Volunteers, serving as a captain, but was severely wounded at Antietam and sent home, where he died.

Having matured physically, Richard Garvey decided to move west, where he got a job as a freighter, driving mules from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Garvey soon learned all about mules, gaining a great amount of respect for the animals. He moved further west, walking to Fort Bridger. Again he drove mules, and vowed to never use a whip on his animals. He saved his money with the goal of buying a horse of his own.

When he could afford a horse he joined a small wagon train. Lack of proper guidance led to an 1859 attempt to cross the desert without proper preparations. Lack of water was soon a problem, and Garvey's horse died. He heaved his saddle on one of the wagons and walked through San Bernardino and the rest of the way to Los Angeles. He was twenty-one years old.

Looking for a job, Garvey met an old friend, Captain W. B. H. Hancock, later a Civil War general. He hired Garvey to haul the United States mail, plus supplies, to the outlying forts of Mojave, Fort Tejon, Yuma, and New Mexico. He used the route he had walked from San Bernardino, sleeping by day and hauling at night, to avoid any Indians or other signs of trouble. He held the job for three years, traveling about 3,000 miles a year.

He trusted the mules' intelligence, so when they balked at high water in Los Angeles, he just waited until the mules felt it was safe to cross the river. He continued his practice of never using a whip, and always took good care of his team. His route passed the rolling green hills of what is now the San Gabriel Valley, an area he greatly admired. When the Civil War began, all the soldiers were sent east, and the mule trains to the forts were no longer needed. The mules were sold, with Garvey buying the very best for himself.

Southern California was considered to heavily favor the Confederacy. There were large groups of Southern sympathizers at Holcomb Valley, and Garvey was sent to check for problems. There was indeed bad blood between the sides; they all had guns and bullets, but lacked powder, so they had to satisfy themselves with fistfights.

In Holcomb Valley Garvey became interested in mining. He met George Hearst, father of William Randolph Hearst, of later newspaper fame. Hearst helped Garvey obtain a loan of $18,000 to buy into the Moss

Mine. He also became acquainted with Elias Jackson Baldwin, later known as "Lucky Baldwin." Baldwin hired Garvey to build a stamp mill, a means of breaking up ore in search of gold. Garvey was able to sell his mining interests in 1872 for $200,000.

The depression of 1875 greatly concerned the banks in Los Angeles—their depositors were pulling out their savings. Some banks closed, but Temple and Workman thought they could hold on to theirs. They hoped to borrow capital from San Francisco, but banks there were having the same problem. Finally, the Temple and Workman Bank went to Lucky Baldwin for money to tide them over. Baldwin was willing to loan cash, but wanted security. Both Temple and Workman put up their property in the San Gabriel Valley as collateral. Unfortunately the bank failed, and Baldwin wanted to name a receiver of his own choosing. It was Richard Garvey he trusted.

Garvey was hired for the almost three years it took to return the bank to solvency. His hard work paid off well, and Garvey invested in land. He bought the Potrero Grande Ranch, one-half of the Felipe and Largo Ranch, and 2,500 acres of school lands.

Garvey began planting trees—eucalyptus, pepper, and pine—along the road to his ranch. He also planted barley and wheat. He had 700 head of cattle, 150 mares and colts, and 50 mules. He always bought stock to improve his own.

Earlier while Garvey was hunting in Holcomb Valley, he had come across some surveyor's stakes. He and his friend, Judge J. B. Slauson, decided to file mining claims in the same area. Later, both thought it was a good deal when a young engineer from back east wanted to buy the property on which they had filed. He offered $23,000. They decided to sell. It turned out the young man was a very astute engineer who knew what he was doing. He built a big strong dam (still in use), and began to sell land around the lake thus created at Big Bear. Garvey and Slauson both later lamented that selling was the dumbest thing they had ever done.

In 1883, Garvey returned to Cleveland to see his family and rekindled an old friendship. He ended up bringing his bride, Miss Tessie B. Mooney, back to California with him. Their first child, Richard ("Dick") was born January 12, 1884. A second infant was stillborn and Tessie died in December 1885. She was twenty-three years old; Garvey was forty-seven. He never married again.

Garvey's younger brother, Peter, named after their father, became a

Catholic priest, and was assigned to serve at the orphanage on the Island of Galveston, Texas. It was there in September 1900 that he lost his life. The Galveston Flood, one of the worst in history, was reported in a special section of the *Los Angeles Times* on September 9, 2000. "At 7:30 P.M., winds topped 120 miles an hour, a tidal surge at 15 feet engulfing the City."

At St. Mary's orphanage, nuns lashed themselves to thirteen small children in a second floor refuge. Finally, the sea swallowed all but three boys who were able to scramble free and swim away. The rest were swept ashore and buried under tons of ocean-born sand.

Garvey had established a small mausoleum in Calvary Cemetery, and Peter, the priest, is the only member of the family not buried there. The Monterey Park Historical Society has repaired the little mausoleum, returning it to its original beauty.

In 1905, Garvey was pressed for funds, and sold 1,000 acres of land. In 1906, he sold 236 acres more, but kept his beautiful hillside, and the flat area just below it. Escaping from debt, he sensed the need for more water. He contracted with J. DeBarth Shorb for piped water. Soon thereafter Garvey found an artesian well on his own land. It is still part of Monterey Park's water system.

Garvey wanted a north-south road from his land north to Lucky Baldwin's property, in the area now known as Rosemead. Baldwin wasn't interested, citing that there were a few of his small buildings on the route. Garvey, being astute, took his men out at night, moved the small sheds to the east and replaced the fence. He then built the road we now call Rosemead Boulevard. Unfortunately, Lucky Baldwin did not leave his papers to the Huntington Library, as his daughter Anita would do. The only mention of Garvey is in a letter to Baldwin, in San Francisco, urging him to get home and take care of things, written long before Garvey was ranching.

Garvey started to subdivide his land into small farms, with room for a house, shed, and fruit or garden agriculture. Garvey had planted orange trees on some of the property. Because of them, the street leading to his house was called Orange Avenue, and still is today.

The small farms proved quite popular, and soon there were many more children in the area. Garvey's own son had started his education at Ramona Convent in Alhambra, but Garvey decided the area needed a school of its own. That first school had only two rooms and eventually he built a bigger one across the street. The small bell from the top of the first building was saved, and is today at the Garvey School Headquarters.

Emily Lambert, one of those children, remembered Garvey walking by her house on Orange Avenue, dressed in a black suit, white pleated shirt, tie, and hat. She also remembered his nicely trimmed moustache. She further remembered the time Garvey had a picnic for the school children at his house, and for the first time in her life she tasted pink lemonade. She said it was a wonderful treat.

Dick Garvey (Richard Garvey, Jr.) attended the little Garvey School and then continued his education at St. Vincent's College, later to become Loyola-Marymount University. He then went east to Columbia University Law School, graduating with the top honors in his class. He practiced law in Los Angeles, became active in politics, supported Teddy Roosevelt, and worked for ten years under Burton Fitz as a deputy district attorney. He was both an amateur astronomer and a student of early California history, planning to write a book about it. However, a tragic 1946 automobile accident in Mexico killed him at the age of sixty-two. He had followed many of his father's ideals. His will left land and money to the Garvey School District, valued at $246,601. Some of those funds were used to build an auditorium as a memorial to his father on the site of the first small school building that Garvey Senior had built.

Part of the land was later sold to the Metropolitan Water District, and in 1961, a park area was set aside for baseball fields, picnic areas, children's playground, and parking facilities for Monterey Park.

The Monterey Park Historical Society started the Monterey Park Historical Marnew Park Museum in a small room of the Garvey house. The Los Angeles Astronomical Society recently renovated Garvey's Observatory. This proved to be a useful project with the current temporary closing of Griffith Park Observatory. Monterey Park also built a large addition to the Museum, now open Saturdays and Sunday afternoons and used throughout the week for school visitations.

Garvey School District has now grown to include six schools, 6,770 students, and a faculty of 356 teachers.

There are many stories of Richard Garvey's generosity, his love of children, and his honesty and integrity. He created a city of over 62,000 citizens, bounded on both sides by freeways.

"The Luck of the Irish?" you might ask. No, Richard Garvey made his own luck. I would have liked to have known him.

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From Other Lands
Ethnic Angelenos Worth Knowing

by Gloria Ricci Lothrop

The topic, "Los Angeles Lives Worth Knowing: History as Biography," prompted me to examine what has been written about the relationship between these kindred subjects. Let me share some of those observations.

According to Sir Walter Scott, the history of the world is but the biography of men and women. He declared that there is no heroic poem that is not at bottom a biography; it may be said as well that there is no faithfully recorded life that is not, in a sense, an heroic poem.

Ralph Waldo Emerson felt as strongly. He wrote: "Man is a bundle of relations, a knot of roots, whose flower and fruitage is the world," leading him to observe that there is "no history, only biography."[1]

It is the biographies of those who led their lives in southern California who can make our past come alive for us. Our local history is populated by a variety of individuals whose actions affected the content of our lives today. Some are known to us. Some remain at the margin of history. Many of those interesting Angelenos represent the numerous ethnic communities which exist in Los Angeles. In 2002 California was home to 8.9 million foreign-born, the largest concentration in the United States.

One may hear French or Italian as often as English or Spanish on the streets of Los Angeles, observed visitor Ludwig Salvatore in 1876. Indeed,

Los Angeles was already a multi-ethnic city by that date. Nothing so effectively highlighted the diversity of traditions and the blending of cultures as the city's centennial celebration did in 1881. In a unique display of cosmopolitanism, the town's 12,000 citizens listened to ceremonial speeches delivered in English, Spanish, and French.[2] As early as 1860 more than 10 percent of the local residents were French. Today French residents are creating a growing expatriate community in Venice, which somewhat approximates the atmosphere of their distant Mediterranean Sea.

There are many unexpected ethnic enclaves in this prismatic metropolis. For example, West Los Angeles is home to the Iranian music business, "which by most estimates produces 90 percent of the world's Farsi-language pop music."[3] Manila Way bisects the business district in suburban West Covina. The Filipino shops which line the thoroughfare are patronized by members of the Filipino community in Los Angeles County, the largest outside the Philippines.[4]

Many of the world's great cities are known by their recognizable signatures. Paris has its boulevards, New York its skyscrapers. If there is a signature for Los Angeles, it is its mix of races and the ethnic diversity of its neighborhoods. The county is home to 50,000 Germans and at least 200,000 Americans of German descent.[5] There are 20,000 Irish-born Angelenos and another 630,000 who claim ties to Ireland. Los Angeles is home to the largest Indonesian community and the largest Danish settlement in the United States. Based on population statistics, Los Angeles is the largest Korean city outside of Korea's capital, Seoul. Los Angeles claims the second-largest concentrations of Salvadorans and Guatemalans in the world. There are more Mexican residents here than in any city except Mexico City. More Samoans reside in Los Angeles County than in American Samoa. In addition, there are more Japanese Americans in Los Angeles than anywhere else in the world.

Two 3,000-pound fiberglass dragons span North Broadway, serving as gatekeepers to New Chinatown populated by mainland Chinese, Taiwanese, and a growing number of Vietnamese. They are part of the county's Asian population, which has grown by 34.4 percent since 1990.[6] Beyond the gateway there are several thriving businesses established by the late Fung Chow Chan, an ethnic Angeleno one should meet. Chow was a Cantonese immigrant who, shortly after his arrival in 1933, established the family-run Phoenix Bakery, which has become a multimillion-dollar business famous for its whipped cream and strawberry cake, a favorite at

Courtesy of the author.

downtown office parties and a staple at Dodger and Laker team events. Despite his growing success, over the years Chan had difficulty securing business loans. As a result, he and several other investors secured a charter for Cathay Bank, the first Chinese American bank in southern California. As chairman of the board, Chan oversaw the development of twenty-one branch banks in New York, Hong Kong, and Taipei. He also co-founded East-West Federal Savings, the first federally chartered thrift in a Chinese American community. This enterprising businessman, who was also a scholar of the Chinese classics, in the words of one admirer, "reached great success through hard work, eggs and flour."[7]

There is another group of immigrants whose seemingly humble contributions may have been overlooked. But their labors, one stitch at a time, made a significant difference in the economic life of the region.

The Los Angeles garment district sprawls for blocks a few miles south of the dragon gateway to Chinatown. Since earliest days it has occupied converted downtown lofts and crowded stalls along Santee Alley. The area hardly appears to be the leading garment manufacturing center in the United States, and second-largest center in the world. The Los Angeles needle trades gained momentum early in the twentieth century sewing sportswear from butcher cloth and using wool from flocks owned by Kaspare Cohn, founder in 1914 of Union Bank and major lender to the garment industry. By the end of the twentieth century, it employed 122,500 workers. Traditionally, leadership has been provided by Jewish, European and American owners and contractors.[8] But 66 percent of the workers are

Latino and mostly female.[9] The statistic reflects the little-known fact that since the late 1920s more than half of the nation's immigrants have been female.

The more recent preponderance of female immigrants reflects patterns of family reunification. But the feminization of the nation's newcomers also reflects "the willingness of more women to use migration to improve their fortunes."[10] The garment industry has offered ready employment to these newcomers limited in labor and language skills. As a result of the fact that they are newcomers, these non-union workers often earn below the minimum wage, doing piecework in unregulated environments. These Latina workers are generally employed by garment contractors who operate shops of thirty to forty workers or rely on homework to meet short delivery deadlines. These contractors constitute an informal labor sector where business is done in cash, where undocumented workers are exploited and unrepresented, and health and safety regulations are largely unenforced.

The current situation stands in contrast with the conditions following the 1933 month-long strike by largely Latina members of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. Despite clubbings and arrests, the women, led by labor organizer Rose Pesotta, won a modest wage increase and, more importantly, secured recognition of their union, the ILGWU.[11]

News of Latinos' labor struggles and their infrequent victories were reported in the Spanish-language press, the most widely-read in Los Angeles being *La Opinion*, first published on September 16, Mexican Independence Day, 1926, by journalist Ignacio F. Lozano, Sr. A native of Nuevo Leon in northeastern Mexico, Lozano moved to San Antonio, Texas, when he was twenty-one. There he established a bookstore, and, "Fueled by a passion for journalism and a mission to establish a truly independent newspaper, Lozano founded the daily Spanish language newspaper, *La Prensa* in 1913."[12]

Lozano's newspapers carried news from Mexico throughout the southwest and as far as Oregon and Kansas. *La Opinion*, which by the end of its first decade had a circulation of twenty-five thousand, featured foreign correspondents in Paris, Mexico City, and Washington, D.C., as well as some of the most prestigious writers in Mexico. Today it is the largest Spanish-language newspaper in the United States, with a daily circulation of 700,000. Lozano served as publisher until his death in 1953. The newspaper, which celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in September 2001,

has been headed by successive generations of the family, which is considered to be among the fifty wealthiest Latino families in the United States.

From our neighbor to the north, Canada, came migrants like moviemaker Mack Sennet and evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson. Both would have far-reaching influence on the people of Los Angeles and beyond. The community of Canadian Angelenos also included Allen and Malcolm Loughead, who first settled in Santa Barbara before joining the ranks of daring aviation experimenters in the Los Angeles area. The brothers arrived at a propitious moment in the infancy of aviation. The Los Angeles Aeroclub had successfully presented two international air shows at the Dominguez Ranch in 1910 and 1912. There gliders, balloons, dirigibles, mono-planes, and pusher bi-planes had captured the popular imagination. Cal Perry Rogers' eventful transcontinental flight in 1911, culminating in a landing before thousands at Victory Park, Pasadena, had been hailed by the press as the feat of the century. Later in 1914, at an air show staged to inaugurate the new Pomona auto raceway, Glen L. Martin demonstrated the Martin Life Pack Parachute, established air to ground communication, and dropped ammunition on a land target—all dramatic firsts for aviation.

The Lougheads entered this heady atmosphere where aviation was literally ready to take off. They established their airframe company in 1917, all the while cultivating professional relationships with aviation inventors such as Glen Martin, Donald Douglas, and Jack Northrop. By the 1920s companies headed by Douglas, Martin, and the Lockheeds were recognized internationally for the successful implementation of their new ideas. They were not the largest companies in American aviation, but in the opinion of aviation historians, "they had the largest role in translating the advances in aeronautical science and technology into operating aircraft during the years 1925 to 1935."[13]

Among the local innovations was the Lockheed *Vega*, first built in 1927. The high-wing, single-engine monoplane, designed to carry ten passengers at speeds of up to 135 miles per hour for a range of up to 900 miles, was an aviation innovation which revolutionized plane design in the United States. Its wooden fuselage and cantilevered wooden wings in an advanced streamline shape were aerodynamically superior. The Lockheed brothers' *Vega* became the model for general-purpose aircraft. It was duplicated worldwide and ultimately influenced the design of larger transport airplanes.[14] The Lockheeds, who officially changed their name in

1934, sold their interests in the company in 1930. Malcolm, the inventor of the widely used four-wheel hydraulic brake, retired to his mining property in the California gold country.[15] But the two brothers' pioneering innovations in aviation design live on in the name of the company, Lockheed Martin, which in 2001 was awarded a ten-year contract to produce 3,000 fighter jets for $200 billion, the largest contract ever granted by the federal government.

The golden age of aviation attracted independent spirits who were intrigued by innovation and inspired by challenges. The new field, which had few barriers, welcomed otherwise excluded minorities including African Americans and women. Katherine Cheung, who had come from China to study music at the University of Southern California, was unique among them all. In 1932, after merely twelve and half hours of instruction, the petite pioneer became the first Chinese American woman to fly. The mother of two "donned pants and an aviator helmet" and became a barnstormer, often blithely flying her open cockpit plane upside down. She became a member of Amelia Earhart's organization of professional women pilots, the Ninety-nines, and regularly entered air races flying a biplane presented to her by the local Chinese American community. Until her retirement in 1942, Cheung was an enthusiastic advocate for women aviators, declaring, "We drive automobiles—why not fly planes?" Today she is honored in the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. In the Beijing Air Force Aviation Museum she is described as China's Amelia Earhart.[16]

Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini was another southern California migrant who was not restrained by conformity. While faithful to the rules of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, the religious order she founded, her vision and her conviction led her to explore possibilities beyond the expected. Undaunted by chronic ill health, the diminutive Italian missionary sailed the Atlantic thirty times in thirty-five years in her effort to minister to her migrant Italian countrymen living in the two Americas. From New York to Buenos Aires, Cabrini purchased property, drew up contracts, and negotiated with a host of foreign governments as she built orphanages, hospitals, and schools.

In the United States she established six centers in major cities including Los Angeles, to which Bishop Thomas J. Conaty invited her order in 1902. Mother Cabrini arrived in the summer of 1905 to find a city which, she wrote, "is widespread and seems to grow recklessly. Property is very

expensive."[17] She marveled at the quality of the air and extolled the afternoon breezes which tempered the summer heat. Invited to Catalina as a guest of the Banning family, she described seeing the island on the horizon in a burst of saffron color set amidst a sea of "such a transparent blue, that myriads of fish could be seen deep down."[18]

Cabrini, the director of a far-flung international enterprise, was nevertheless attentive to detail, noting that Los Angeles "homes [were] made of wood are of exquisite workmanship." With undisguised admiration she praised the city's "incomparable system of electric trains constructed by the characteristic boldness of Americans." These red cars transported her to Abbot Kinney's Venice in America and to the heights of Mount Lowe.[19] From the 6,000-foot peak, "Los Angeles appeared like a majestic queen," she later wrote.[20]

By the fall of 1905 she had converted the J. W. Robinson estate into an orphanage housing more than 100 infants. Another 110 infants and toddlers were housed on Mateo Street, and St. Peter's school was established on Alpine Street. On subsequent six-month visits she provided added programs. After studying local maps, which it is said she used much as a general would before battle, she purchased undeveloped land in Burbank and constructed the state's first preventorium for the treatment of girls at risk from tuberculosis. Today it is the site of Woodbury University.

At her canonization in 1946, a mere twenty-seven years after her death, Pope Pius XII observed: "Especially toward immigrants . . . did she extend a friendly hand, a sheltering refuge, relief and help."[21] The first naturalized American citizen to be canonized lived in our times and moved in our midst. She is a twentieth-century missionary who belongs uniquely to Los Angeles.

The city claims many more distinguished émigrés. This year, the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Arnold Schoenberg, the city is examining his works and honoring one of the most controversial figures in the world of music. Schoenberg was an unabashed romantic, a celebrated intellectual, an outcast in exile, a father, a teacher, and a composer who forever changed music.

Schoenberg was a contemporary of Russian composer Igor Stravinsky. Like Stravinsky, he would spend a significant portion of his composing life in Los Angeles. He arrived in 1934 with his wife and three children, fleeing the rising tide of Nazism. They were befriended by an expatriate community of Germans and Austrians which included former student Otto Klem-

Courtesy of the author.

perer, who was director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic from 1933 to 1940. Klemperer conducted a number of Schoenberg's works, including the premiere of the "Suite for String Orchestra" in concerts at the Philharmonic Auditorium. The circle of friends also included Thomas Mann, whose novel *Buddenbrooks* was awarded the Noble Prize for its humanity and the loftiness of poetry and intellect; there was German dramatist Bertolt Brecht, author of such plays as *Mother Courage* and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle,* who attended Schoenberg's composition classes at UCLA. Also among the friends were Austrian-born architect Richard Neutra, his wife, Dion, and Austrian-born novelist Vicky Baum. German writers Lion and Marta Feuchtwanger hosted many gatherings at their home, Villa Aurora, overlooking the Pacific, where they were joined by writer and composer Franz Werfel and his wife Alma Mahler. While Schoenberg never composed for Hollywood, the industry had attracted several within his circle, including German-born screenwriter and art patron, Galka Scheyer, the collector of the Blue Four Expressionist painters, and Polish-born actress and screenwriter for Greta Garbo, Salka Viertel, who chronicled the émigrés' lives in Los Angeles on the eve of World War II in the book *The Kindness of Strangers*.

In 1935–36 Schoenberg taught at the University of Southern California. From 1936 until his retirement in 1944, he was a member of the UCLA music faculty. His students included John Cage, David Raksin, and Hollywood composers Mario Castelnuevo-Tedesco and Oscar Levant. Schoenberg's theoretical writings and harmony texts produced during this period are considered important writings a half-century later. He composed more than a dozen concert works while living in Los Angeles, including the haunting "A Survivor from Warsaw" in 1947.[22]

Schoenberg's musical work is marked by a distinctive "form of organizing the pitches of the scale—the 12 tone system." This device permitted him to order pitches without reference to traditional harmony. Yet he retained an inner unity in his music. Thus he could use conventional forms like the sonata but create music that was unpredictable and complex. Leopold Stokowski wrote in 1937 that Schoenberg stood alone: "In the evolution of occidental music there never has been a musician of similar character and gifts."[23]

On a Sunday afternoon in July 1944, in the same Philharmonic Auditorium where Schoenberg's works had been played, impresario Norman Granz launched what would become the famous Jazz at the Philharmonic.

The fundraiser for the defendants in the Sleepy Lagoon Case was unique, for it brought together jazz soloists with a racially integrated band. As Jazz at the Philharmonic concerts were played across the country, Granz insisted that the audiences also be integrated.[24]

There was ample reason for Jazz at the Philharmonic to be launched in Los Angeles. As early as 1908 musicians playing ragtime had been migrating here from New Orleans and other southern cities. By 1912 the first record store was opened by the Spike brothers on Central Avenue, not far from the Cadillac Cafe, where "Jelly Roll" Morton entertained. By the early 1920s when rag was being replaced by "jazz," Reb Spikes organized a band called the Majors and Minors and made records including the first African American New Orleans jazz recording. It featured incomparable jazz musician Edward "Kid" Ory.

Because of the racial divide which existed even in Los Angeles, African American musicians were not accepted in the white musicians' union and were overlooked in hiring. Consequently, they organized their own union and performed in Black clubs and theaters along Central Avenue and at Sebastian's Cotton Club, a white club featuring African American talent, on Washington Boulevard near La Cienega in Culver City. It headlined such historic talents as Fats Waller, the Mills Brothers and Lionel Hampton. "Los Angeles soon became recognized as a Mecca for some of the greatest jazz in the world."[25]

Jazz reviews, as well as advertisements for such Central Avenue theaters as the Rosebud, the Gaiety, and the Tivoli, appeared in the Black press, including the *California Eagle,* published by Charlotta Bass from 1912 to 1951. Through the paper she and her husband John battled against discrimination, employment restrictions, and *de facto* segregation, taking on the Los Angeles Registrar of Voters as well as the Ku Klux Klan. In 1952 Bass capped a politically-active career by running for vice-president in the national presidential campaign on the Progressive Party ticket. Her slogan was, "Win or Lose, We All Win!"[26]

It was, no doubt, with pride that Bass reported on the singular honor conferred upon a former neighbor, a high school valedictorian who had been denied membership in the city's honor society because of race. Ralph Bunche later became the first African American to win the Noble Peace Prize. Undeterred by his earlier exclusion from the honor society, Bunche matriculated at UCLA, where he was a football quarterback, captain of the debate team, and UCLA's first black valedictorian. After earning a doctor-

ate in political science from Harvard, Bunche joined the faculty of Howard University. The civil rights activist later entered government service where he had a key role in organizing the United Nations. His pioneering "shuttle diplomacy" in the Middle East during the Six-Day War and in such areas as Suez, the Congo, and Cyprus won international acclaim. While director of the NAACP, Bunche was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom—the nation's highest civilian honor—in 1963.

Among her early crusades, Charlotta Bass had unsuccessfully attempted to halt the production of "The Birth of a Nation," which D. W. Griffith filmed in southern California in 1914. The climate, the variety of settings, and the casting possibilities provided by the Southland's multi-ethnic population drew early filmmakers from their show shops and motion picture arcades lining 14th Street along the northern edge of Manhattan's lower east side. By the second decade of the twentieth century, films were being made in Victorian buildings atop Bunker Hill and in the hills east of Glendale Boulevard. Mack Sennet directed frantic chases with his Keystone Cops in hot pursuit. By 1913 the feature film joined the rollicking one-reelers, when Cecil B. DeMille directed "The Squaw Man" in a rented barn at the corner of Selma and Vine streets in the rural community of Hollywood.

The conservative country town of Hollywood, which limited grazing herds of sheep to two hundred, would soon be made the film capital of the world by a group of eastern European Jews who would reign over their glamorous creation for thirty years. They transformed the store-front theaters of the late teens into the movie palaces of the twenties.[27] They filled the entertainment firmament with stars and successfully produced motion pictures celebrating the American mores and attitudes which these immigrant entrepreneurs had enthusiastically adopted as their own. Each had rejected his personal past and, instead, embraced America, its culture, and its promise, as his own. In the estimation of one historian, they nearly made a religion of assimilation. One even permanently obscured the date of his birth, declaring instead that he had been born on the Fourth of July. These eastern European immigrants who had experienced discrimination from so many quarters became part of an infant industry too young to have established protocols or erected barriers. Consequently, there were no impediments barring their entry into this faintly disreputable business of movie making. There was opportunity for Jews, as there was for the Black businessmen who in 1915 founded the Lincoln Film Company.[28] At

the outset of their careers, these future Hollywood moguls had been employed in the clothing trade and the retail merchandising, where they had come to understand public taste and became masters of marketing. They used this valuable experience to great effect in the business of filmmaking.

The eight who were singularly influential in shaping Hollywood were a remarkably homogeneous group and were born or had roots in communities separated by no more than a few hundred miles. Carl Laemmle was born in 1867 in a small village in southeastern Germany. After the death of his mother, the thirteen-year-old appealed to his penurious father to allow him to migrate to the United States. Eventually, he would establish Universal Pictures. Adolph Zukor was born in the Tokay district of Hungary. Orphaned in infancy, he was placed in the austere household of an uncle. When old enough, he fled to America, where he would later found Paramount Pictures. William Fox immigrated to America from Hungary with his parents. To compensate for his father's neglect, young Fox sold soda and sandwiches to support his family. He would one day head the Fox Film Corporation. Louis B. Mayer traveled with his parents from Russia to the Maritime Provinces of Canada. He, too, departed from his parents' authority at an early age, setting up a salvage business in Boston before heading for Hollywood, where he created the greatest studio of them all, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Benjamin Warner left Poland for America, where he labored as a cobbler and a peddler before having enough money to send for his wife and family. In the United States, the family grew to include Harry, Sam, Albert, and Jack, who at one point decided to pool their savings to buy a dilapidated movie projector. It was a prelude to the birth of Warner Brothers Studios.[29]

Through the magic of film these recent arrivals with their business experience and salesmen's skills, were able to evoke on the screen the privileged, genteel, and affluent society from which Jews were still barred in early twentieth-century America. Ironically, the prosperity resulting from their success permitted them to create an extension of that exclusive world in their own palatial homes and clubs. With time, the vast influence and wealth of the studios would also win them a place among the nation's elite.

In the process of creating their movies, the filmmakers crafted so powerful a constellation of impressions of America that in the words of Hollywood historian Neal Gabler, "they colonized the American imagination."[30]

The mass medium of Hollywood film inevitably publicized the local setting and introduced the world to the southern California lifestyle. That included the great outdoors, especially the beaches which bordered the blue Pacific. But the hero who brought life to those beaches with the excitement of surfing and the glamour of the lifeguard was not from Hollywood, but rather from Hawaii. George Freeth, known as the Hawaiian wonder and the king of the surfboard, journeyed from Waikiki to surf with southern Californians, teach the basic rules of water safety, and generally impart his generous "aloha spirit."

Upon arriving in 1907 Freeth was employed by both Henry Huntington and Abbot Kinney to stage surfing exhibitions promoting their respective seaside developments of Redondo Beach and Venice. The popularity of both had been marred by the alarming number of drownings of ocean swimmers. This had revealed the inadequacy of the region's ocean rescue response. Freeth soon ushered in change by teaching his innovative water rescue techniques. At the same time he served as a swimming and diving instructor, providing valuable free training to several Olympic hopefuls.

In the words of Freeth biographer, Arthur Verge:

> Freeth's greatest virtue was his willingness and ability to teach and share the exceptional talents he possessed. . . . In an age where the ocean was to be feared and avoided, George Freeth introduced surfing to southern California. . . . It was from these warm California coastal waters that surfing would ultimately gain its greatest appeal amongst the American masses. . . . Freeth worked diligently to teach and popularize the aquatic sports of swimming, water polo, and diving. . . . His greatest impact on California, however, remains his instrumental role in revolutionizing the profession of ocean lifesaving.[31]

Freeth could not have imagined the impact of his efforts, but fortunately his personal contributions would be recognized by the American government before his untimely death in the flu epidemic of 1919. On December 16, 1908, a sudden winter squall swept into the breakwater near Huntington's Long Wharf, upsetting a small fleet of boats carrying Japanese fishermen northward. Freeth leaped to the rescue and swam through the heavy surf for two and a half hours, rescuing seven fishermen, while the rescue team he had personally trained saved three more. In gratitude, the Japanese fishermen renamed their coastal village Port Freeth and a grateful nation made him the fifth recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal, first awarded to George Washington in 1776. Freeth's is a biography which made history.

Their lives are varied. Their nations of origin were diverse. But the contribution of each is memorable. These are a few of the citizens of twentieth-century multi-ethnic Los Angeles who provide inspiration. Their biographies are the heroic poems, to paraphrase Emerson, the bundle of relations, "the knot of roots, whose flower and fruitage is the world" of southern California. Theirs are Los Angeles lives indeed worth knowing.[32]

Notes

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Guardians of the Forest

by Paul H. Rippens

The Beginning

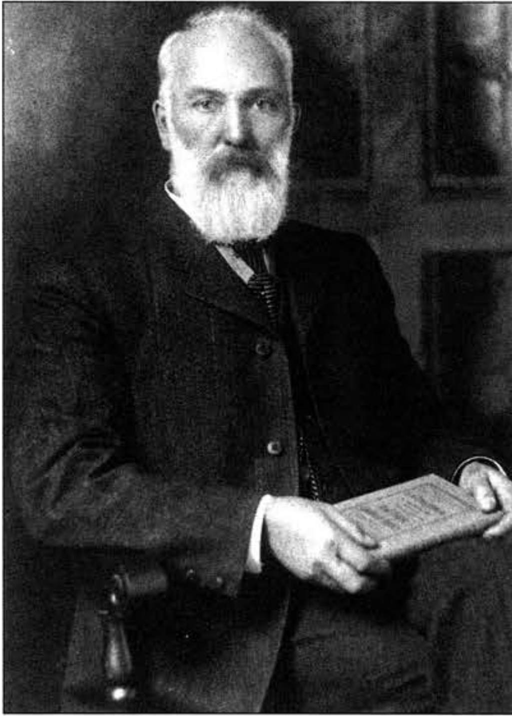
Organized forestry activities in Southern California started from three different directions at about the same time. Those directions were the State of California, the United States Forest Service, and the County of Los Angeles.

The State of California acted first by appointing commissioners as members of the State Board of Forestry on April 1, 1885.[1] James V. Coleman was elected at the first chairman of the board but was replaced within a year by Abbot Kinney, the developer of Venice, who continued to serve as chairman until 1888.[2]

At the federal level, Congress, after more than twenty years of receiving official reports and public petitions requesting preservation or management of forested lands, established the Forest Reserve Act in 1891. Dr. John Ise says in *The United States Forest Policy* 1920, that:

> the first important conservation measure in the history of our national forest policy cannot be credited to congressional initiative, but to a long chain of peculiar circumstances which made it impossible for Congress to act directly on the question.[3]

On the last day of March 1891, President Benjamin Harrison set aside the Yellowstone Park Timberland Reserve, the first such reserve in the



Theodore Parker Lukens, father of forestry in southern California, ca. 1905. *Courtesy Huntington Library.*

United States. At the end of December 1892, the second reserve was created, the San Gabriel Forest Reserve which extended from Pacoima to Cajon Pass and embraced more than 550,000 acres.

The first mention of forestry-related activities in Los Angeles County government appeared on October 8, 1896, when the Board of Supervisors adopted an order to take immediate steps in extinguishing mountain fires in the Sierra Madre Mountains in the vicinity of Pasadena which were endangering the water supply of the county. The board's primary intent was based upon protection of this watershed.[4]

Also in October 1896, the County Board of Supervisors directed a request to the Regents of the University of California to open the Santa Monica Forestry Station for the benefit of students. At that time the population of Los Angeles County was 142,758.

During 1898–99, Theodore P. Lukens of Pasadena became interested in the need for reforestation, and, together with Reinhold J. Busch and three other citizens, organized an association known as the Forest and Water

Association of Southern California. The association had no federal assistance but raised funds from local sources to carry on its work.

One of the first projects under the direction of Lukens was digging terraces on a contour between Eaton and Millard canyons above Pasadena and Altadena for the planting of seed. Mexican labor, at a wage of $1.50 per day, was used on this work. Lukens had also planted trees at Heninger Flats in 1892, which was the first experimental reforestation in California.

In 1902, Lukens was appointed agent for the Bureau of Forestry of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. At that time, William L. Hall was Chief Forester of the Bureau under Gifford Pinchot. Lukens desired to established a nursery to grow conifer seedlings on Mary Street in Pasadena.[5] On September 28, 1903, Hall advised Lukens as follows:

> Gifford Pinchot has gone over your plans and has full confidence in the work. While you have a nursery established at Pasadena, I believe you should secure Heninger Flats, as I believe it to be a better nursery location, as stock will harden quicker in the fall. We would recommend that you secure it. I will be in San Francisco in the fall and will see you.[6]

In October 1903, Pinchot approved Lukens to lease the Heninger Flats property from the Mount Wilson Toll Road Company. The Company agreed to spend $2,000 in developing a water supply and making other improvements. Lukens anticipated spending an additional $1,000 to fix up the site as a nursery. He engaged a man with a family to take care of the nursery for $60 per month.[7]

Lukens continued to control the operation of the nursery at Heninger Flats until 1908 when the facility was closed and moved to Lytle Creek in what is now the San Bernardino National Forest.

Meanwhile, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors slowly made their way towards the appointment of a Board of Forestry. On February 27, 1899, they appointed a Fish and Game Warden and the Board passed numerous ordinances pertaining to the taking of wild game. The first Fish and Game Warden was W. B. Morgan.

On May 28, 1906, the Board appointed W. B. Morgan to serve as the Chief Fire Warden along with his work as County Fish and Game Warden. For his efforts, Morgan was paid $125 per month as Fish and Game Warden and $25 as Fire Warden.[8] For the fiscal year 1909–10, Warden Morgan's report showed that $861 had been paid out for fire control. On September 10, 1910, the Board of Supervisors appointed J. A. Baetz to succeed Chief Fire Warden Morgan who had passed away.

On June 13, 1910, a communication was considered by the board requesting the appointment of a County Board of Forestry. The communications, presumably from the State Board of Forestry, also dictated that two members of the County Board were to be women. The Board of Supervisors finally funded $2,000 for expenses incurred by the Forestry Board but did not create such a board until May 8, 1911.[9]

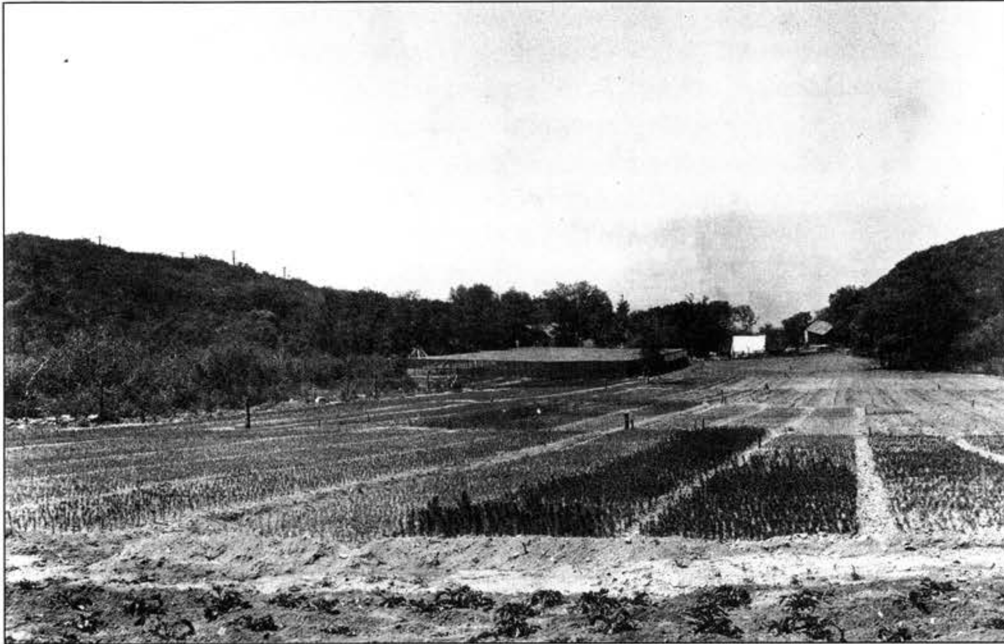
So the stage was set for forestry to be recognized in southern California from the federal, state, and local governments. But forestry would not mean only the protection of forested lands, but also the protection of lives and property, as we will see in the following pages.

The United States Forest Service

In 1891, the conservation of America's public lands began simply and quietly. A small section of the Forest Reserve Act passed that year authorized the President to set aside forest reserves in order to protect timber resources and watersheds. President Benjamin Harrison acted promptly by establishing the Yellowstone Forest Reserve in Wyoming, the first such reserve to be authorized; by the end of 1892, he had set aside fifteen reserves embracing more than thirteen million acres. This landmark in conservation included the creation of the San Gabriel Timberland Reserve, the predecessor to the Angeles National Forest, on December 20, 1892.

The credit for the establishment of the San Gabriel Reserve cannot go to Washington officials alone. Conservationists in Southern California actually initiated the recognition of the need for forest protection in their region by pointing out to their legislators just how vital the mountain watersheds were to the future health of the farms and communities in the valleys below. Civic leaders such as Abbot Kinney, former Pasadena mayor Theodore P. Lukens, and Redlands businessman Francis Cuttle captured the attention of national statesmen and made them their allies in the conservation of southern California's public lands.

In Washington, President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Gifford Pinchot to the position of Chief of the Division of Forestry in 1898. This bureau became the Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1905. Pinchot was born in Simsbury, Connecticut, and graduated from Yale University in 1889. He studied forestry in France, Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, and used his enormous skills to run the Forest Service until 1910, when he left the Forest Service to become President of the National Conservation Committee.



Heninger Flats Nursery, ca. 1905. *Courtesy Huntington Library.*

The creation of the San Gabriel Timberland Reserve came at a time when Americans were growing increasingly concerned about the health and future of the nation's natural resources. The explosive growth of the United States following the Civil War and the terrible waste of timber, water, and land led many American to work for conservation in the 1880s and 1890s and they sent a clear message to Congress to enact laws that punished such indiscriminate use of resources. Federal agencies were created that supervised the nation's public lands and led to the creation of the Forest Service.

In southern California, the real estate boom of the 1880s, which brought tremendous expansion, was followed in the next decade by financial panic and slowed growth. Conservationists like Kinney and Lukens realized the need to protect the San Gabriel Mountains above Los Angeles in order to preserve the priceless water supplies that ensured the future urban and agricultural development of the region.

Residents of the area began to use the mountains for recreation purposes that resulted in what was called "The Great Hiking Era." The open-

ing of the Mount Wilson Toll Road in 1891 made it much easier for the public to gain access to Mount Wilson. Resorts sprang up—such as Schnider's Half Way House; Camp Wilson, known better as Martin's Camp; and Strains Camp on the north slopes of the great mountain—to accommodate the crowds that made the nine-mile trek to Mount Wilson. Later the Mt. Wilson Hotel was opened and quickly became a favorite place to visit.

On July 4, 1893, the Mount Lowe Railway opened, increasing the number of people making entry into the mountain range. Located above Altadena, the railway whisked people from Altadena Junction on north Lake Street into Rubio Canyon, where they could enjoy the surroundings while partaking of lunch at the beautiful Rubio Pavilion. If they wished, they could board the Great Incline to travel up the 62 percent grade to Echo Mountain and stay at the magnificent Echo Mountain House, opened in 1894, or at the Chalet. Still later, in 1895, the railway continued to Crystal Springs, where Ye Alpine Tavern was located. One could visit for the day or stay in the Tavern's finely appointed rooms or in one of the small tent cabins.

During all of this activity, the presence of forest rangers was nonexistent. The first federal forester did not arrive until 1897, and he had no staff, no rangers, and very little funding for any work beyond the purchase of some public education material. Through the efforts of Gifford Pinchot, prior to his being appointed as Chief of Forestry, more money and manpower become available to the reserves. By 1900, twenty rangers worked on the San Gabriel Reserve.

The early rangers concentrated on fire prevention and prosecuting camping violations. They also worked to cooperate with conservation groups, local communities, and private water, land, and hydroelectric companies situated in the mountains. These local organizations helped fund the necessary programs within the forest such as fire fighting, trail building, the construction of roads and firebreaks, and the installation of telephone lines.

The San Gabriel Rangers were the first uniformed force in the nation. Besides their tireless efforts to protect the forested lands, they found time to enter into shooting contests with Los Angeles City Police. As time went on there was not a need for the forest rangers to be armed—but that has changed in recent times.

In 1905, Congress transferred the Division of Forestry and the Forest Reserves to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, adopting Gifford Pinchot's

new name for the agency, the United States Forest Service. In 1907, the Forest Reserves became the National Forests, and a year later President Theodore Roosevelt created the Angeles National Forest out of the San Gabriel and San Bernardino forests.

Fire has always been a serious problem within the forested lands throughout the United States, but even more so in southern California. The combination of heavy, dense fuels in the form of chaparral, long dry summers, and the ubiquitous Santa Ana winds in late summer and fall create one of the most volatile fire situations in the world.

Serious fires in the San Gabriel Mountains in 1919 and 1924 captured national attention and helped increase public awareness of the need for better fire prevention and protection. This fire problem prompted federal officials to reorganize the Angeles National Forest into its present configuration, with the San Bernardino National Forest being created from the eastern half, and the Saugus District in northwest Los Angeles County being added from the Santa Barbara National Forest (now the Los Padres National Forest).

The Great Depression and World War II in the 1930s and 1940s increased the presence and role of the Forest Service in Southern California. The Forest Service made the construction of lookout towers for fire detection a top priority in the 1930s. The Los Angeles County Forestry Department assisted with this program and built their own towers to compliment the work of the Forest Service. The Civilian Conservation Corps, a peacetime army of young men put to work on improving the public lands, proved essential to meeting the increased demands on the southern California Forests. They built campgrounds, worked on roads, firebreaks, phone lines, and flood control projects, as well as assisted in fire prevention and suppression.

On March 1 and 2, 1938, the forests above Los Angeles encountered one of the most destructive forces of nature ever to strike the area. Heavy rains caused the Great Flood of '38 and destroyed many structures and facilities in the San Gabriel Mountains. The damage caused by this single event renewed efforts by citizens and federal officials to make flood control more effective.

Following the war came the explosive growth and development of Southern California that placed additional pressure on the local environment and upon the Forest Service. The increase in usage of the National Forests also brought additional problems such as an increase in fire activi-

ty, overcrowding of camping facilities, crime, and the call for additional recreation facilities such as ski areas. The Forest Service met many of these challenges but in recent years, with a steady increase in the local population and a steady decrease in budget, the men and women of the United States Forest Service have found it difficult to keep up with the pace. Not until the disastrous fires in New Mexico during the 2000 fire season did Congress finally decide to make funds available to increase the fire fighting resources needed for such a long time. However, undaunted by years of lack of congressional support, the Forest Service continues to commit to their mission to care for the land and serve the people of the United States.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) is the largest fire agency in the world, with 42,653,087 acres of responsibility. Besides fire protection for State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands covering 31,653,087 acres, the CDF contracts with local responsibility areas (city/county acres) to protect an additional 11 million acres. The CDF employs 3,800 permanent workers, 1,400 seasonal workers, 5,500 local government volunteer firefighters, 2,600 Volunteers in Prevention (VIPs), and uses 3,800 inmates and wards of the court for vegetation management and fire fighting. Almost 85 percent of CDF's budget is dedicated to fire protection services.

The CDF is broken into two regions, the Coastal-North Region, headquartered in Santa Rosa with a Northern Area Office in Redding, and the Sierra-South Region, headquartered in Fresno with the Southern Area Office in Riverside.

The Sierra-South Region that covers all of southern California has the impressive responsibility of providing fire protection, resource management, pre-fire management, and fire prevention programs to a total of 27,968,346 acres, including areas protected by CDF contracts with cities and counties.

The State Board of Forestry guides and sets policy for the CDF and was established in 1885, abolished in 1893, and reestablished in 1919. During the time that the Board of Forestry was abolished, the state appointed E. T. Allen as its first state forester on July 12, 1905. Mr. Allen held the position for only one year, until G. B. Lull was appointed to the position on July 1, 1906.[10]

In 1907, the state made its first appropriation of money for fire protection in a cooperative effort with the federal government to construct roads, firebreaks, and trails in the San Bernardino National Forest.[11]

On February 25, 1910, G. Morris Homans received the appointment as state forester and 1913 saw the establishment of the School of Forestry at the University of California at Berkeley, with the first classes held in 1914. This school of higher learning would produce some of the top foresters in the country.

With the recreation of the State Board of Forestry, the state forester was finally granted the power to contract with counties for fire protection. The year was 1919 and the state made $25,000 available for firefighting organizations. Rangers were hired for Northern California counties, some for a three-month summer period.

In 1920 the Office of County Fire Warden was established in Los Angeles County. The Santa Barbara County Fire Department was formed in 1926, and Ventura County followed with the formation of their Fire District in 1928. In 1930 the counties of Orange, San Bernardino, San Diego and San Luis Obispo were added as contract counties. These counties, along with counties in northern California, received funds from the state for the protection of SRA lands.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection has faced the same problems as other agencies throughout the years—proper funding. Without the funding, resources dwindle and firefighting becomes much more dangerous. The current funding situation within the state (2002) promises to try even the most seasoned firefighter and legislator.

The Los Angeles County Forestry Department

Prior to the establishment of a Board of Forestry or a Forestry Department in Los Angeles County, forestry activities were already under way. The first introduction of exotic species was apparently in the year 1850 when the eucalyptus was imported into California from Australia. This information is taken from the University of California Experiment Station Bulletin, which further records that the eucalyptus was first introduced in southern California about 1880 by T. P. Lukens of Pasadena and Abbott Kinney of Venice, who were both prominent in early planting activities. It also records the fact that Stuart J. Flintham of the U.S. Forest Service (later Los Angeles County Forester) made a report on *Eucalypti* in Southern California in 1907.

As mentioned at the beginning of this story, T. P. Lukens continued his quest to plant trees throughout the foothill areas of Los Angeles County. Unfortunately, many of his plantings were done on south facing slopes and failed to grow due to the harsh hot and dry locations. Lukens was among the first in the United States to start the planting of *Pinus Halenensis*, Allepo pine, of which there are thousands now planted in southern California.[12]

In 1900, Abbott Kinney wrote in his book, *Forestry and Water*, that "We have opened in Los Angeles this year (1899) the first Forest School in California; the first on the Pacific Slopes; the first west of the Alleghenies."

On April 28, 1909, the Legislature of the State of California passed an act entitled:

> *An act to provide for the protection of shade and ornamental trees growing and to be grown upon the roads, highways, grounds and property within the State of California; and for the planting care, protection, and preservation of shade and ornamental trees, hedges, lawns, shrubs and flowers growing and to be grown in and upon such roads, highways, grounds and property; and to create county boards of forestry for such purposes to serve without compensation; and to prescribe the duties and powers of such boards; and to authorize such boards to appoint county foresters; and to prescribe the duties and fix the compensation of county forester, and to empower such boards to enforce all laws and adopt and enforce any and all lawful and reasonable rules for the protection, planting, regulation, preservation, care and control of such shade and ornamental trees, hedges, lawns, shrubs and flowers.*

One would think that this would encourage the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to act upon the formation of a Board of Forestry, but they did not until May 8, 1911.[13] The Board of Supervisors created the County Board of Forestry under the provisions of Chapter 729, Statutes of California, 1909, and appointed the following members representing the various supervisorial districts:

Mrs. Charles Lee Lewis	1st District
Prof. A.B. Ulrey	2nd District
Mrs. S.P. Rhoades	3rd District
Mr. E.A. Sweetser	4th District
Mr. Ernest Braunton	5th District

The newly formed Board of Forestry held its first meeting on May 16, 1911, with Mr. Sweetser being elected chairman.

On December 11, 1911, the Board of Forestry approved a three-hundred-dollar expenditure to purchase suitable trees with which to plant approximately twenty-five miles of highways and good roads as follows:

Long Beach Boulevard, Huntington Park to Long Beach, and Washington Boulevard from Los Angeles to Santa Monica.

On January 26, 1912, the board appointed Mr. Stuart J. Flintham as county forester subject to the pleasure of the Board of Supervisors, at a salary of $150 per month, with Mr. Flintham to furnish a bond of $1,000. Appointment to be effective upon the placing of bond. Flintham's final approval came on January 30, 1912. Flintham immediately started an intensive program to plant trees throughout the county. On April 2, 1912, he managed to convince the Board of Forestry to approve payment of the following bill of Theodore Payne:

200 Magnolias at 75 cents a tree	$150.00
800 Redwoods at 1.00 a tree	800.00
800 Deodars at 1.25 a tree	1000.00

Flintham continued planting programs already in place and, with newly acquired help, was able to plant a total of thirty-four miles of roadways within the county with 9,500 trees during 1912.

On May 8, 1914, E. H. Sweetser, chairman of the Board of Forestry, sent a letter to the Board of Supervisors notifying them that the entire board was resigning rather that follow the supervisors' order to remove certain trees along Valley Boulevard. The supervisors accepted all the resignations and instructed the forester to carry on the work pending provision for further conduct of the work by the State Board.

Chief Forester Flintham continued his responsibilities to plant trees along streets throughout Los Angeles County. By this time, the responsibilities of developing and maintaining county parks also fell upon the shoulders of the county forester.

On January 7, 1915, five new members were appointed to the County Board of Forestry and they held their first meeting on January 19, 1915.

On February 8, 1918, Forester Flintham advised the Board of Forestry that the Board of Supervisors had executed a lease for the development of the Altadena Reforestation Nursery in what is today Farnsworth Park. The Forestry Department would operate this facility until early 1929, when they would move the operation to Heninger Flats on the Mt. Wilson Toll Road above Pasadena.

On July 1, 1920, Flintham also assumed the title of fire warden. This would signal a change in the County Forestry Department that would eventually change the name to the County Fire Department. At this time, however, the title was the County Department of Forester & Fire Warden.

Present Visitor Center, Heninger Flats Nursery.

As more people moved into the county, more structures were built and the demand for more fire protection increased. New equipment was purchased and additional personnel were hired to fill the positions created by fire protection districts. The forestry end of the department continued with its tree planting programs and with the maintenance of the counties' parks. Historical records of the Department show a significant change of interest from forestry activities to fire fighting.

On June 10, 1925, Forester Stuart J. Flintham passed away after being ill for several weeks. Spence D. Turner was appointed as the forester and fire warden, a post he would hold for the next twenty-seven years. During that time, the department continued to grow, but much of the growth was in the direction of fire protection. However, the nursery in Altadena propagated 710,000 hardy coniferous trees.[14]

In 1928 the department purchased 150 acres of property in the mountains above Pasadena from the Mt. Wilson Toll Road Company. This property, known as Heninger Flats, had been the nursery site for the Forest Service starting in 1904. The department relocated the reforestation nursery in Altadena to Heninger Flats and started operation in 1929. This site continues today under the operation of the County of Los Angeles Fire Depart-

ment and, besides propagating conifers, provides camping facilities for hikers and scout troops.

Over the years of operation, the Forestry Department, and now the Forestry Division of the department, has provided trees for erosion control and windbreaks, as well as many thousands of conservation education programs for schoolchildren and other groups. The County Forestry Division was the leader in the effort to establish the permanent outdoor conservation education center at the Los Angeles County Fair Grounds (Fairplex).

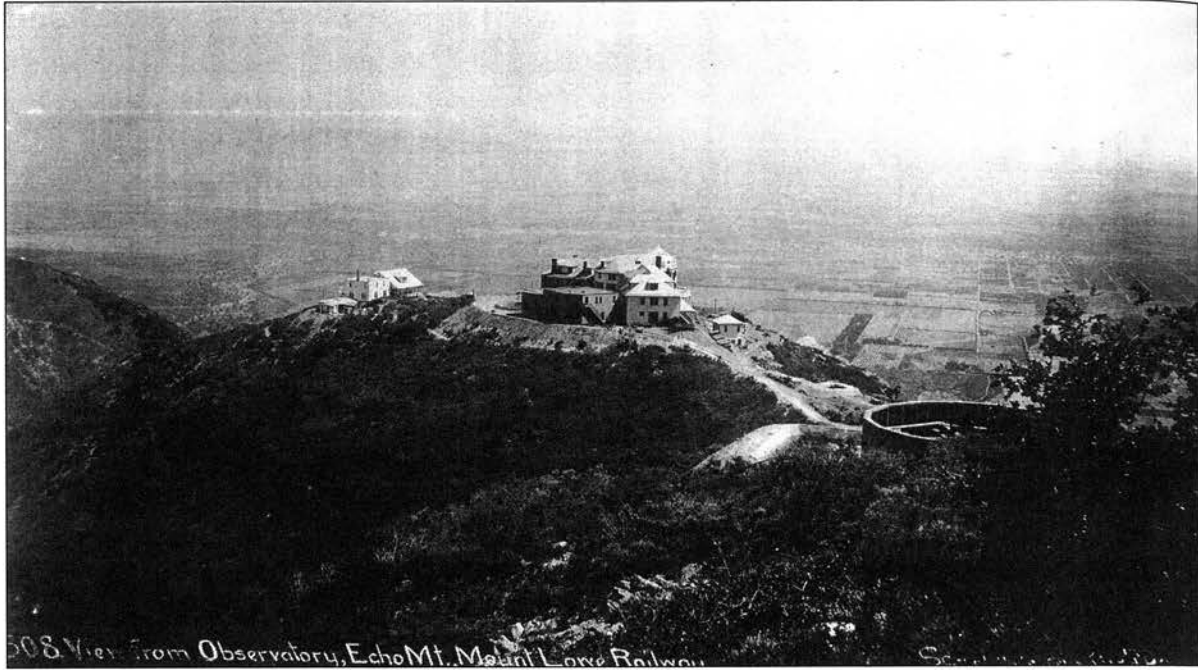
Today, much of the effort of the Forestry Division has shifted from the growing and planting of trees to the protection of property through proper landscaping techniques and the mandatory brush clearance program. County foresters oversee the brush clearance program to insure that all inspections are done in a timely manner and that property owners comply with the laws requiring proper clearance around structures to protect these structures from wildfire.

The Forestry Division also reviews and approves landscape plans for any new or existing structure that is being remodeled or rebuilt (over 50 percent of structure) to insure that proper plant material is being used that will not contribute to the loss of the structure during a wildfire. Irrigation system designs are reviewed to insure that adequate water is being provided to maintain the landscaping in a healthy manner. This ordinance only applies to buildings in designated wildland areas of the county.

Times have changed drastically for foresters from all the agencies, but the mission remains the same—to protect lives and property while caring for the land and its indigenous inhabitants.

Notes

[1]C. Raymond Clar, *California Government and Forestry*, p. 98.
[2]Los Angeles County Forestry Department Annals.
[3]C. Raymond Clar, *California Government and Forestry*, p. 143.
[4]Los Angeles County Forestry Department Annals.
[5]Ibid.
[6]Ibid.
[7]Ibid.
[8]Ibid.
[9]Ibid.
[10]The position of state forester, now called director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, is appointed by the governor and subject to ratification by the state senate.
[11]The Forest Reserves changed to National Forests in 1907.
[12]Los Angeles County Forestry Department Annals.
[13]Ibid.
[14]Information from the Annals of the County Forestry Department.



The White City, Echo Mountain, ca. 1896.
The cannon can barely be seen on the cleared flat just behind the Echo Mountain House.
Courtesy of Paul Rippens.

The Legend of Thaddeus Lowe's Cannon at Mount Lowe

by Michael Patris

Upon his arrival to California in 1888, Thaddeus Lowe, by all newspaper accounts, had the world by the tail. Internationally renowned as the chief aeronaut of the Union Army Balloon Corps during the Civil War, he was also the inventor of artificial ice and refrigeration, as well as the manufacturer of heating and illuminating gas. This man seemed unstoppable. It was with this momentum that the native New Englander took California by storm.

Compared to the northeast, gas seemed expensive to this most recent retiree to Los Angeles, so he successfully formed a new gas company to generate competition and drive the prices down. He founded Citizen's Bank of Los Angeles (which is still in business today), opened an ice manufacturing plant, and began plotting his sales pitch to his waiting wife and children back in Norristown, Pennsylvania.

With half of their ten children grown and out of the house, Lowe convinced his wife, Leontine, to pack up all their belongings, as well as the youngest children, and make the move to California. Having contracted malaria during the Civil War, Thaddeus Lowe thought California's climate would be just what the doctor had ordered.

Upon his wife's arrival, Lowe began looking in earnest for a piece of land on which to build their new home. He purchased a fifteen-acre parcel

on Millionaire's Row, which we today know as Orange Grove Avenue in Pasadena. This lot reached from the street that was, even then, the main thoroughfare to Los Angeles, all the way down to the Arroyo Seco.

An architect was retained and plans for what was to become the largest residence in the nation began. At just less than 24,000 square feet, no one would dispute that claim. In an 1893 letter to their daughter Ida, Mrs. Lowe confided she hated the monstrosity that was large enough to be a hotel and would be happy if they could ever sell it for what they had invested in it. Little did Mrs. Lowe know that there were actual drawings made that would have expanded the mansion into a 300-room hotel.

While Mrs. Lowe was embarrassed by the opulence of a home that sported a four-story observatory, it was this splash, among other things, that brought attention to the neighboring residents of Pasadena. Perry Green, president of the Bank of Pasadena, made Lowe feel welcome in the Crown City and offered his services to the noted inventor.

About the time Lowe met Green, the nation was in the midst of a recession and the lavish Pasadena Grand Opera House had been foreclosed upon. One of the biggest problems Lowe found about the old wooden opera house is that is didn't have adequate heating during the winter months, which made patrons unbearably cold. Lowe had the ability to heat the Victorian structure through his Lowe Gas Company, which made heating and illuminating gas for both commercial and residential use. After all, Lowe thought, Pasadena should retain its societal status, so he purchased the property to save it from the wrecking ball. Little did Lowe know that this would be the site of his offices for his next venture, the Mount Lowe Incline Railway.

Ever since the Lowe family moved to Pasadena they had commented on how the Sierra Madre Mountains (now called the San Gabriels) reminded them of Thaddeus Lowe's native state of New Hampshire and the White Mountains. It was at Mount Washington, New Hampshire, in 1875 that Thaddeus Lowe took his daughter Louise for a trip on the famed cog railway. In a letter written in that same year, on Mountain Top House stationery, Lowe wrote to his wife telling of the incredible views to be had at such an elevation. It reminded him of his early days of ballooning. Perhaps this was a seed in Lowe's mind that had yet to germinate.

While Thaddeus Lowe pondered what the view would be like from the top of the Sierra Madre Mountains, a former Santa Fe Railroad engineer named David Macpherson was trying to do something about it. There had

been camps called Strain's and Steil's set up near and at the top of Mount Wilson for campers and hikers to enjoy, but the talk of some sort of mountain railway had been circulating in local circles for some time. Macpherson wanted to make sure he had something to do with the project, and from that desire he set out on his own to map the canyons and peaks of the Sierra Madres.

Macpherson believed he had a plan, but lacked the necessary funding with which he could act. After consulting his banker-friend Perry Green, Macpherson soon had a meeting with Thaddeus Lowe—the man who was known for getting the impossible done and enough cash to back it up.

Soon enough the entire southland area was buzzing with excitement regarding the prospect of a new mountain railway and how Thaddeus Lowe was going to get it done.

On June 2, 1891, articles of incorporation were drafted for the Pasadena and Mount Wilson Railway Company. This would only be in existence a short time, however, as the focus shifted from the battling camp owners on the peak at Mount Wilson to a lesser-known place called Oak Mountain, later to be renamed Mount Lowe by Andrew McNally of the Rand-McNally Map Company, and a few other appreciative Pasadenans who thought the world of Lowe. Now Lowe was heading up the Pasadena and Mount Lowe Railway Company.

After the groundwork into the canyons from Altadena's Mountain Junction (near the current northwest corner of Lake Avenue and Calaveras Street in Altadena) was completed, it seemed the right-of-way would be built into Rubio Canyon to a spot just south of several waterfalls. Here, Lowe built a small dam to harness the natural waterflow to power his Pelton water wheel, which would in turn generate electricity for the incline. While the change of focus on the terminus had changed, the work into the canyon and the subsequent work up Echo Mountain were taking shape.

During all of this preliminary work, several local businesses were taking note and hoping to reap the benefits of being tied in with Thaddeus Lowe and one of his money-making ventures. After all, he seemed to single-handedly turn everything he touched to gold, so why should this enterprise be any different?

Baker Iron Works of Los Angeles was one such business that had repeatedly asked Lowe for the opportunity to bid on any foundry work that needed to be done. The Bakers were no strangers to Lowe, as they had done business with him when Lowe was setting up his gas plant in the Los

Angeles area. Lowe had paid his bills on time and was considered a "cash cow" for local business owners due to his advance payments and understanding demeanor.

Although Lowe purchased the steel rail for the right-of-way from a ready-made supplier in the east, the Bakers got their chance to bid as soon as the construction of the incline began above Rubio Pavilion. The 1½-inch diameter endless steel incline cable had to be carried on some sort of "cable carrier," which consisted of a cast-iron half-circle collar mounted on top of two A-shape legs. This, in turn, mounted at approximately a 45-degree angle on one of the railroad ties, which was then secured to the bed of the incline. Dozens of pairs of these cable carriers were made and are stamped with the infamous B.I.W., for Baker Iron Works. After receiving the award for this bid, Baker received subsequent bids as well, most notably for the steel rail for the entire three miles of the Alpine Division.

The installation of the cable carriers allowed the old horse-drawn wooden windlass and rope to be replaced by the new steel endless-loop cable and winding machinery at the top of the incline. This winding machinery had been designed by none other than Andrew Hallidie and his California Wire Works, who were well-known for their work with cable cars in San Francisco.

Every step forward was a *cause celebre* for Lowe, and the placement of the cable was not going to be an exception. The installation of this monstrous wire rope took several hours and was witnessed by Lowe, Macpherson, Thaddeus Lowe, Jr. (construction supervisor), Col. G. G. Green (patent medicine king and Green Hotel owner), as well as a host of other family and friends who all wished the endeavor well. Most notably present were the men of the press, with whom Lowe shared all his charisma.

Placing the permanent incline cable allowed Lowe to begin the concerted effort of construction on Echo Mountain. It was during all of this incline work that the foundations had been poured for the first hotel on this peak; he was anxious to use his new steel-cabled incline to haul lumber up to the construction site. This would be completed and open on July 4, 1893.

As Lowe was an extremely patriotic man, it should come as no surprise that July 4th was this inventor's favorite day. The opening of the Mount Lowe Incline Railway just made the day all the better, with loads of fireworks exploding above Echo Mountain on a day that promised to seal the success of the incline following brisk ticket sales. The lines to ride the

opera cars to the top were long and the crowd was patient, although the fare was more than a week's wages for most at five dollars.

Sporting twelve guest rooms, a post office, a kitchen, and a dining room, opening day at the Chalet would be nothing compared to what was taking shape just a few yards away. A seventy-room hotel called Echo Mountain House would take all the glory of her smaller neighbor. This new Crown of Echo Mountain, upon its completion, brought a new name to the structures that graced this peak: The White City.

This group of buildings, which could be seen from the valley and points beyond, began as a few hotels, a winding station, and a powerhouse for the incline cable. What would emerge was a zoo with cages for several local fauna, a bear pit, a dormitory for the workers, and an observatory. Lowe thought that the more diversified the area was, the more chances he had of bringing visitors to the peak. Lowe even sought out the great World's Columbian Exposition searchlight (three-million candle power) for a permanent home on Echo Mountain after its use at the mid-winter's exposition in San Francisco. This was the largest searchlight ever built (eleven feet tall) and was constructed by the General Electric Company.

General Electric had-hand picked and trained a man, a Mr. King, to operate this huge light both at the Expo in St. Louis and at San Francisco, so Lowe saw fit to give him a home on Echo Mountain along with his light. For several years King operated the light, shining it on the valley below, much to the dismay of romantics and horse owners, who all hated the luminous intrusion.

It was about this time when the blasting began on the Alpine Division; for miles around the echo of "cannonading" could be heard from the foothills. People in the valley below had no idea whether all this blasting would continue to be expected, or if there was a problem on the mountain. After all, there had not been any telephone service installed into the canyon at that point.

Baker Iron Works believed they had a solution for the lack of communication, as shown by this excerpt from the *Star News*, December 24, 1894:

Professor Lowe's Christmas Gift

A heavy cannonading has been going on in the Sierra Madre Mountains for some weeks past. The strategic point seems to be somewhere between Echo Mountain and Crystal Springs, desultory firing going on along the bold ridges at the head of the deep canyons. The Baker Iron Works of this city heard the thunder of artillery and saw the smoke and dust of battle

> from afar, and, becoming alarmed for the safety of their friend, Professor Lowe, they have reinforced his command, and have presented him with a heavy one-pounder cannon, Breech loader, mounted on trunyons [*sic*], with the following inscription cast in the metal and nickel-plated: "*Professor Lowe, Christmas, 1894*."
>
> When trained upon the enemy concealed behind the round tower, and the other battlements in Castle Canyon, it spoke in such thunder tones that a wail of demoniac reverberations rolled back from cliff and wall, and canyon and mountain peak for miles along the range. It was a grand success.

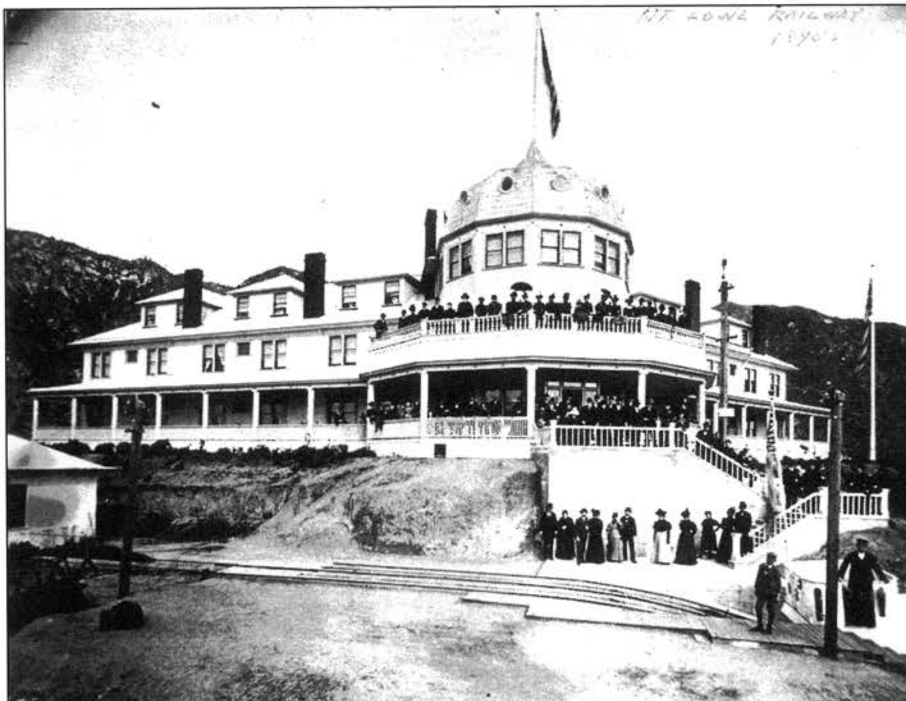
After this gracious Christmas gift was brought to Echo Mountain, Lowe saw fit to fire it off at the end of every day to assure those in the valley below that all was well on the top of Echo Mountain and in his White City. Lowe wrote to his daughter Louise in January of 1895 and confessed to "loving his new toy," although Mrs. Lowe apparently was not amused. In a letter Mrs. Lowe wrote to her daughter Louise, she thought of cannons as "tools of war" and she had had her "fill during the Civil War where dear Thaddeus had served so gallantly."

The cannon was placed behind the newly-completed Echo Mountain House and the Chalet, just on the south side of the reservoir, facing Echo Canyon. An early painting of Echo Mountain House, which was printed on some brochures of the day, reveals the cannon on artillery wheels, which means that it was capable of being moved, but was it?

By the summer of 1895, the Alpine Division of the Mount Lowe Railway was completed just a few miles short of the destination of the peak of Mount Lowe, but by this time Lowe had run out of money and had already mortgaged his real estate and gas businesses to pay his workers. The lack of public interest in bonds to be sold to the locals saddened Lowe, who didn't understand why the public would not snatch up these bonds to help out their local hero.

Lowe gave the railway everything he had, trying to sell Alpine Club memberships for $1,000 each, which would allow the member unlimited access to the incline for free and the hotels at a greatly reduced rate.

Another scheme was to sell bottled water. Today one takes bottled water for granted, but Lowe was just a bit ahead of his time bottling the clear, pure water from Crystal Springs at Alpine Tavern and selling it to the public. The water venture actually went well and existed into the 1920s. Sadly, it wasn't enough to bail out the hundreds of thousands of dollars Lowe had spent from his personal fortune to keep the railway solvent.



Lowe's Echo Mountain House, built in 1894, burned to the ground in 1900. Lowe's cannon was directly behind the hotel. *Courtesy Paul Rippens.*

Today, both the bottles and the water still exist, but not together. The glass bottles are rare, but can be found with the words Mount Lowe embossed upon their sides. The water tank is still at the site where Alpine Tavern once stood, and the sound of trickling water can be heard flowing into the old pipes and dropping into the tank.

After finally exhausting all of his sources of cash, Thaddeus Lowe decided it was time to start selling off some of the family artifacts and jewelry in order to make sure his workers would get their paychecks. In several letters written both by Thaddeus and Leontine Lowe to their children, the discussion of the sale of the family jewelry (mostly Leontine's) was quite sad. Leontine loved Thaddeus dearly, but hated the thought of parting with her trinkets. This would be yet another blow to Leontine that would make her grow more distant from her ever-optimistic husband.

The Horace Dobbins family, known as society people and for the Pasadena Elevated Bicycleway as well as other local ventures, were in-

laws of the Lowe's, since Thaddeus Lowe, Jr., married Florence Mae Dobbins. In fact, Thaddeus, Jr., and his new bride spent their honeymoon at Echo Mountain House, as the construction crew could not give up its young manager.

The Dobbins family was quite wealthy and on more than one occasion did Thaddeus Lowe call on Mr. Dobbins to be bailed out financially. Dobbins was all business, writing up receipts for everything and insisting on interest for the loans. While Lowe was unable to repay many of the debts, the jewelry and stocks stayed in the hands of the Dobbins Clan and resurfaced at different points in time in the years that followed.

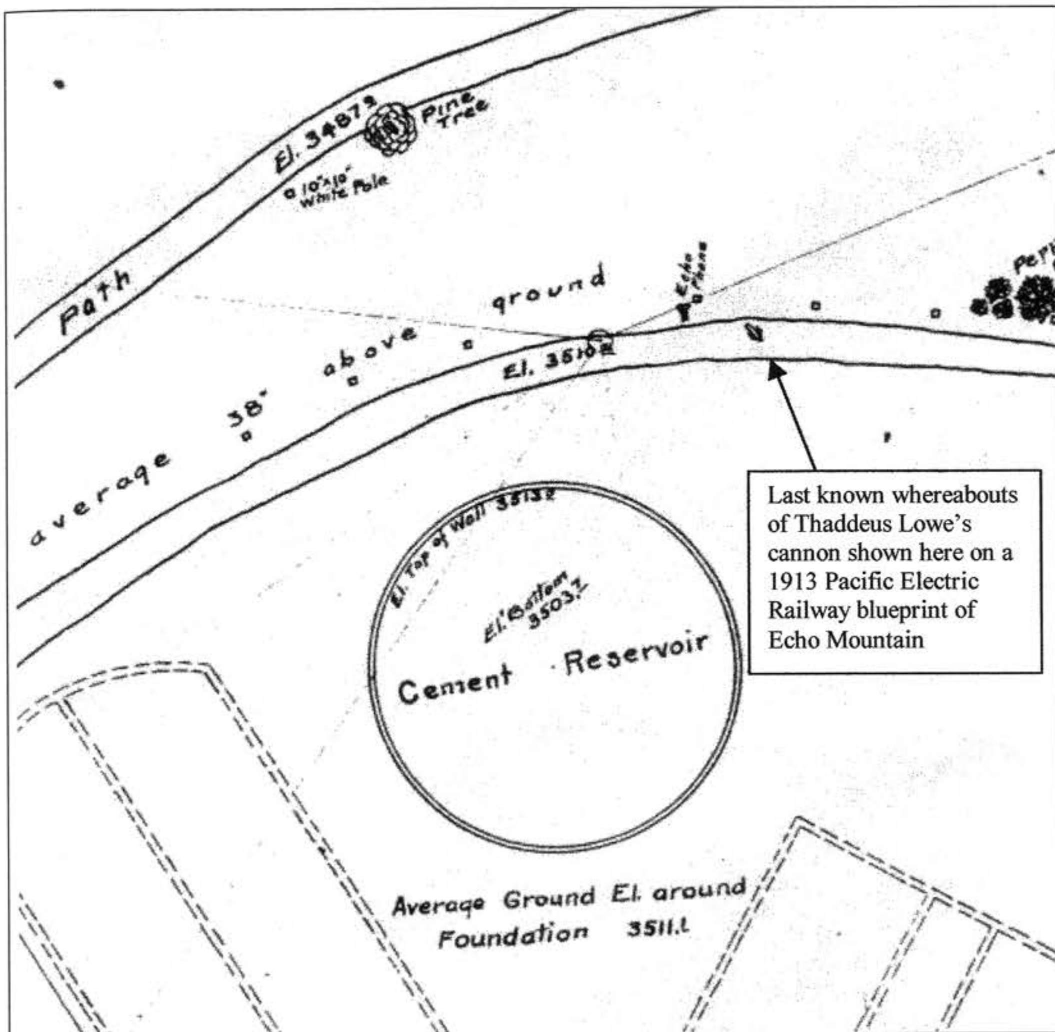
By mid-1896, after liquidating all the personal assets he could release, Thaddeus Lowe found that the nearly $100,000 he raised was simply not going to make a dent in the half-million dollar indebtedness he had incurred. Interest payments alone were reportedly in the $3,000-per-month range.

Lowe was expecting the bondholders and suppliers to understand when he told them he would not be able to meet the interest payments on time. After all, everything Lowe set out to do was fulfilled in time, and this bump in the road would not change the final outcome. Surely after building the hotels and as much as he did of the railway, the public could see everything was fine.

But things were not fine in the eyes of the suppliers. In fact, Fredrick Baker, president of Baker Iron Works and long-time business friend of Lowe, was the first one to cry for help when the news of the financial trouble surfaced. Baker contacted several of the other suppliers with whom Lowe had contracted, and together this group tried to get in line in front of the bondholders should things end up in ruin.

As this played out in the press, Thaddeus Lowe ended up losing control of his beloved railway as it sank into receivership. Although he tried for several years to regain the helm of the railway, it went from one failed receivership to another, until one of railroad magnate Henry Huntington's subsidiaries took it over in the summer of 1901. This was the Los Angeles Railway Company, which would later be merged internally to be part of the Pacific Electric Railway Company in 1902.

That was the good news. A new, substantial owner would finally be able to take over the mountain railway and make it work. The bad news was, in the course of it changing hands in receivership, the insurance had not been kept up with its value and Echo Mountain House burned to the



1913 Pacific Electric Railway blueprint of Echo Mountain.
Michael Patris Collection.

ground in February 1900. It was a total loss; charred debris and molten glass can still be found up there today.

Apparently Thaddeus Lowe had other things on his mind while trying to regain control of his railway, and he neglected to bring his cannon home. Perhaps it was an unfriendly reminder of the Baker family and how they started the avalanche of lawsuits that forced Lowe into foreclosure.

At any rate, the cannon was out of Lowe's hands. Did it burn up in the fire? Did it get rescued by some souvenir hunter and carried home? It appeared to be lost at the time of the fire, but somehow it reemerged.

On official blueprints from the Pacific Electric Railway dated 1902, there is a small object that only the most sophisticated eye might catch. It wasn't anything architectural in nature, but what could it be? Not even the most sophisticated Mount Lowe aficionados know of a cannon, but that is what it is.

The chalet burned in a huge firestorm in 1905, taking the winding station at the top of the incline and the Casino (a dance hall) with it at the same time. The year 1909 brought the destruction of Rubio Pavilion, and by 1936 Alpine Tavern had burned to the ground.

By 1913 both Thaddeus and Mrs. Lowe had passed away, and although they were interred at Mountain View Cemetery in Altadena, not many of the living Lowe family members remained in the shadow of the incline. Perhaps one of the Lowe boys had found the cannon and taken it as a souvenir of happier days for both their father and the railway.

Because the Mount Lowe Incline railway only operated at a profit for a few months from 1893 through 1936, the Pacific Electric Railway abandoned it, allowing the right-of-way to revert to the Federal Forest Service. By early 1940 the salvage rights to the property were sold for a mere $800. Shortly thereafter the steel rail was salvaged for the war effort. Maybe the cannon was sold for scrap.

So where was Thaddeus Lowe's cannon? It had disappeared from view for years and was thought to be lost. Rumors of its existence had surfaced from time to time, but none panned out. This might have been because not more than a handful of individuals knew about it in the first place. By 1959 Mount Lowe Tavern (formerly known as Alpine Tavern) had been dynamited by the Forest Service, and by 1962 the remains of the powerhouse on top of the incline were destroyed as well.

In 1963 a bottle digger found a heavy, cylindrical piece of metal which resembled a cannon, but at three feet long and nearly one hundred pounds, is would not go down the three-mile trail to the car that day—perhaps one day in the future it could come down the hill. In the meantime, the bottle digger thought it prudent to drag it to a better location and bury it where it could be retrieved later.

By the mid 1990s the images of the cannon started to play in my mind. Why was there this image of a cannon on an Echo Mountain House

brochure? No Mount Lowe collector I had ever met had known of or had heard about a cannon. People thought I was nuts. I had successfully found the blueprints with the cannon on it, I had found the newspaper article that told about it, but I had never seen a photo of it. It wasn't even mentioned in Charles Seims' book, *Mount Lowe: The Railway in the Clouds*.

In 1998 I met a bottle digger who claimed to have seen the cannon that was buried on Echo Mountain. I was delighted to learn that someone had seen this great piece of history. After I approached him, he appeared to be standoffish. He didn't want to tell me anything. Needless to say, this broke my heart, as I had come so far and learned so little.

Months passed and finally I got the information I sought. He had been the individual who had found the cannon and had reburied it. He told me there had been an inscription of some sort and that the Lowe name had been stamped on it. He also informed me that it was quite heavy and that is why he never brought it down the mountain. Unfortunately, he had forgotten where he had buried it. To this day he still cannot think of where it may have been. He also cannot remember where he had found it in the first place.

After looking for years and never seeing any photographic proof, a trip to a friend's home ended up being quite a day. After knowing Paul Rippens for some time, I took him up on the offer to view his Mount Lowe collection. Paul is known to be quite a collector and has some wonderful things.

I looked at his postcards, his brochures, and then his photographs. After seeing a photograph of the back of Echo Mountain and the structures, I asked Paul if he had a loupe or a magnifying glass. He must have thought I was crazy to look at something that appeared to be so common, but upon further inspection, there was the cannon in the photo! This was the photographic proof I longed for.

Perhaps some day the cannon will be found and put on display for all to enjoy. In the meantime, it really doesn't exist to many, and is a legend waiting to be solved for the rest of us.

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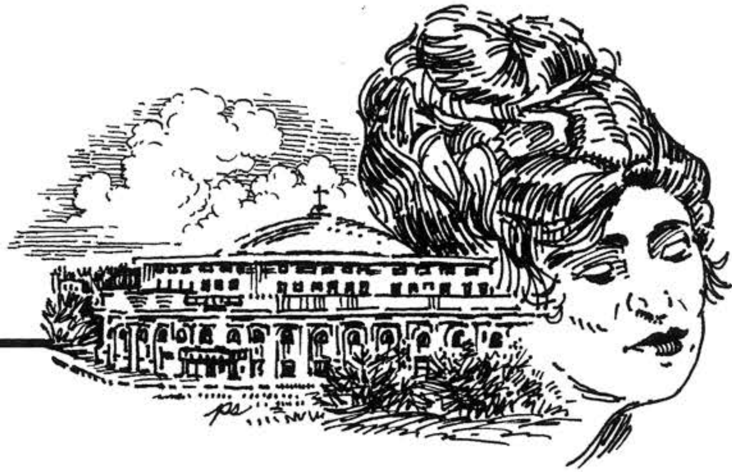


Sister Aimee and Fighting Bob
Religious Rivals in 1920s Los Angeles

by Abraham Hoffman

In choosing a topic for historical research, historians would do well to remember that some topics sell better than others, with the result that often those topics are better remembered than the more esoteric academic efforts. For example, a biography of George Cryer, two-term mayor of Los Angeles in the 1920s, would sell only a limited number of copies no matter how well-researched or written such a book may be—unless the long-forgotten Cryer had a life full of scandal and controversy. The biography would also have to be widely reviewed and publicized.[1]

On the other hand, Mayor Cryer's contemporary, Aimee Semple McPherson, has been the subject of some half-dozen biographies and a TV movie. Her combination of politics, religion, and sex might have been taboo in polite conversation, but it has guaranteed continuing interest in Sister Aimee more than half a century after her death. Richard B. Rice and his co-authors, William A. Bullough and Richard J. Orsi, thought Sister Aimee relevant enough to devote an entire chapter to her in their state history, *The Elusive Eden*. Articles about Aimee have appeared in both academic and popular publications, and in 1991 she was the subject of one of

the episodes in the Los Angeles History Project, shown on PBS. Needless to add, Aimee's life and work is the subject of numerous Internet web sites.[2]

Unfortunately for Sister Aimee's chief rival in Los Angeles religious evangelism, omission of one element out of the famous three conversational taboos reduced a once-prominent figure to subsequent obscurity. Like Mayor Cryer, Robert P. Shuler is a largely forgotten figure today; students in a history class often confuse him with Robert Schuller, pastor of the Garden Grove cathedral. For Reverend Robert P. "Fighting Bob" Shuler, politics and religion were not enough to retain much historical memory about him, especially in a city that thrives on reinventing itself. Controversial in his own right, Shuler lacked Sister Aimee's flamboyance, and his personal life never made headlines the way hers did. Still, a look back at the turbulent religious and political controversies of the 1920s, to which sex scandals garnered considerable public notice, provides a more balanced view of the era than a focus on Aimee Semple McPherson alone.[3]

The general outline of Aimee Semple McPherson's arc to fame and controversy is well-known in Los Angeles history. More than six decades after her death, arguments still erupt over management of the church she founded, and a younger generation then becomes acquainted with the legendary evangelist. Born Aimee Kennedy in Ontario, Canada, in 1890, the young girl grew up on a small farm, the only child of James and Minnie Kennedy. Her father disappears almost immediately from the biographical record, but Minnie Kennedy would play a powerful role in her daughter's career.

In 1907 Aimee attended a revival meeting, and at age seventeen experienced two epiphanies: conversion to a fundamentalist belief in Christianity and marriage to Robert Semple, the young preacher who inspired her. In 1910 they set out for China, heading east across the United States and through Europe and the Holy Land. They had barely arrived in China when Robert died of malaria, leaving Aimee a young and pregnant widow. After her daughter Roberta was born, Aimee returned to the United States. She joined her mother in New York, where Minnie, separated from James, had enlisted in the Salvation Army. Before long Aimee met Harold McPherson, a young accountant from Providence, Rhode Island. He proposed marriage, and they were wed in the spring of 1912. Aimee gave birth to her second child, a boy, whom the parents named Rolf.[4]

Minnie had dedicated Aimee at birth "to the service of God," and

Aimee Semple McPherson.
Courtesy Seaver Center for Western History Research.

Aimee plunged into the work of an evangelical preacher, holding prayer meetings and Bible classes, and lecturing about her brief career as a missionary in China. Harold McPherson was stunned by the extent of Aimee's religious activity. Aimee said she heard God's voice commanding her to "Preach the Word!" She became seriously ill from overwork and almost died, but on deciding to obey the voice, she soon recovered. Not so the marriage, for Harold and Aimee soon divorced over her religious commitment. Aimee commenced her career as an evangelist in August 1915, overcoming apathy and resistance from potential converts, holding tent meetings, and attracting a growing number of people to her "canvas cathedral."[5]

Aimee bought a 1912 Packard and was on the road for three years as a traveling revivalist preacher. The "Gospel Car" carried such signs as "WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY?" and "JESUS IS COMING SOON—GET READY." The car served as transportation, home, pulpit, office, and advertisement for Aimee. It also took her to Los Angeles. After eight "Gospel

Tours" which took her repeatedly across the continent, and a bout with the influenza that was sweeping the world at the time, Aimee took the advice of her mother and chose Los Angeles as a permanent place for home and ministry. She rented Victoria Hall for her services, and when enthusiastic audiences filled it to capacity, she moved to the Philharmonic Auditorium. Aimee had no difficulty filling the 4,000 seats of the Philharmonic. A large banner outside the auditorium proclaimed, "Aimee Semple McPherson—Lady Evangelist," and promised an evening with a "full orchestra, choir, Holy Ghost Revival."[6]

Aimee Semple McPherson arrived in Los Angeles at a moment in time that virtually guaranteed her success. Her followers might argue it was the Lord who brought her there in 1918; the more secular-minded might note the economic forces that were making Los Angeles grow to major metropolitan status. The city doubled in population between 1910 and 1920, with more people—many more—to come in the next decades. The people who came to Los Angeles for the promise of those economic opportunities came from all parts of the United States and many other countries. Many arrived rootless, without a sense of place, and they were looking for some sort of connection to assuage their loneliness and separation from a past and memory that offered little adaptability to life in Los Angeles. They found it in Sister Aimee's church.

Aimee offered a religious appeal that excluded no one. She welcomed one and all to her church, and she displayed a keen perception of the people who would attend her services. "Oh, my brothers and sisters, I know the agony of your lives," she said. "Your city is torn, your families are torn, and you are torn. You don't know how you can get through another day, and you took to City Hall, to Hill Street, to the world for help. Only the Love of Jesus can carry you on. You must choose between the outward drive and the inward life; between the world and Jesus."[7]

Mammon mixed with religion almost immediately. By 1921 ground was being broken for the Echo Park Revival Tabernacle, now better known as the Angelus Temple. Aimee raised funds with revival tours to San Diego, Fresno, and as far away as Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. The money poured in seemingly in no time at all—January 1, 1923—Angelus Temple had become a reality. It seated 5,300 and was the largest auditorium in Los Angeles, an astounding mixture of religion and show business with its huge organ, stage, costume rooms, a second auditorium, and baptismal pool. Aimee's church was interdenominational, but she

soon established the Foursquare Gospel Church. A radio station, KFSG, started in 1924, was one of the first in the nation to offer religious programming, and was the third radio station in the city.

All of Aimee's accomplishments came within five years of her arrival in Los Angeles. One triumph followed another, and the only fly in the ointment seemed to be the cynical eye that newspaper reporters cast on her activities. Much of Aimee's popularity stemmed from the show business techniques she employed during her religious services. Sermons formed only one part of the show. Aimee's arrival onstage might be heralded by her descending a staircase, holding a huge bouquet of roses, but she might also appear wearing a fire-fighter's uniform, or riding a motorcycle and dressed as a police officer, or even as the captain of a ship. Whatever the costume, Aimee tied it to the theme of her sermon. "Stop! You are breaking God's law!" declared Aimee in her police uniform. As "rear admiral" of her Salvation Navy, she used a mock lifeboat to steer to a "soul saving station." The U.S. Navy didn't like the close similarity in uniforms, and some workers felt their assigned rank was too low, so the Salvation Navy proved short-lived. When the fire department made Aimee an honorary battalion chief, she took the opportunity to preach a sermon urging higher pay for firemen and policemen.[8]

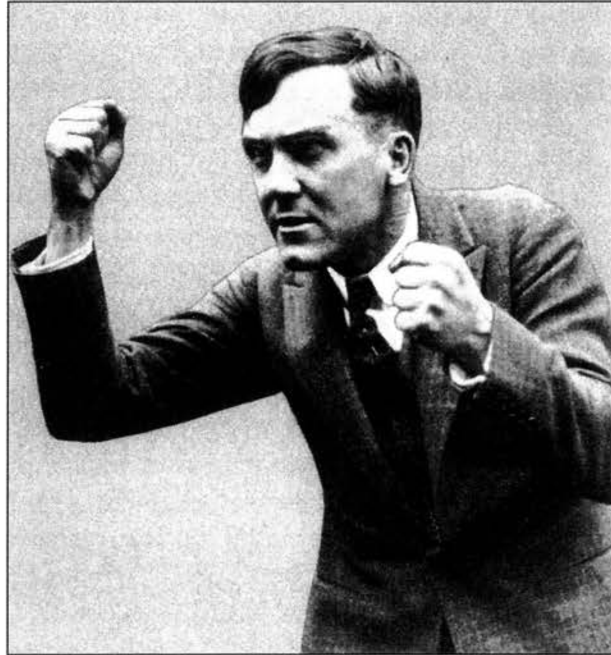
By the end of 1923 it could be said that Sister Aimee had reached a pinnacle of success, except it seemed that with each passing month, she achieved ever-higher pinnacles. The local press—six metropolitan dailies in the 1920s—found her activities always made good copy. New arrivals in Los Angeles—and there were thousands of them in the 1920s, propelling the city's population from 576,000 in 1920 to more than a million in 1930—came rootless. They left their history and past behind, only to find Los Angeles a place seemingly without a history of its own. Everyone appeared to be a newcomer, an impression not far off the mark. And Sister Aimee welcomed the lonely as well as the gregarious, one and all, to the Church of the Foursquare Gospel.

Of course, Aimee Semple McPherson was not the only evangelist in town, nor even the only successful one. Other people of the cloth, ranging from established church leaders to fly-by-night charlatans, opened the doors of cathedrals and storefronts to people looking for religious guidance and hope in their lives. Second only to Aimee was Reverend Robert P. Shuler, who soon became known as Aimee's chief rival and ultimately bitter enemy.

Shuler's early career roughly paralleled the hardships experienced by Sister Aimee, though not the tragedy of a spouse's early death. Born on a farm in Grayson County, Tennessee, Shuler grew up in a devout Methodist family, and he remained proud of his rural origins and fundamentalist faith throughout his life. Educated at Emory and Henry Colleges, Shuler was ordained as a pastor in the Holston Conference of the Methodist Church in 1905. After a brief stint on a revival circuit Shuler was appointed to a Methodist church in Temple, Texas. In 1916 he became pastor of the Methodist church in Paris, Texas, where he honed his oratorical and rhetorical skills, setting patterns that would bring him success in Los Angeles. With Texas officially a "dry" state that supported prohibition, there seemed little challenge for Shuler as pastor of a congregation that already supported his religious and moral views. However, Shuler soon found himself in the political arena, lambasting Governor James E. Ferguson for his opposition to prohibition. Shuler began a monthly magazine, the eponymous *Bob Shuler's Free Lance*, the first of a series of such publications that expanded his sermons well beyond the Sunday pulpit. His congregation grew steadily and generally supported his populist views. Shuler did not hesitate, however, to condemn injustice; he roundly denounced a lynch mob that murdered two black men in July 1920.

A week after Shuler's condemnation of vigilantism (and unconnected to it), he received word that the Methodist Church was transferring him to Los Angeles, California. Contrary to Kevin Starr's claim that Shuler had "used up his welcome in rural Texas," Shuler's work there had been quite successful. The pastor had united two rival churches into one harmonious congregation that greatly grew in size, gained a wide audience with *Free Lance*, and acquired a reputation as a leading Texas minister. But it was time to move on to a larger ministry, and the Methodist Church gave him that opportunity in Los Angeles.[9]

The Trinity Methodist Church had been organized in Los Angeles in 1869, and its growth was matched by moves to a succession of new buildings. In 1915, having overestimated itself in the construction of a nine-story edifice, the congregation bought an abandoned church at Twelfth and Flower Streets. This would be Shuler's church for the rest of his career. He arrived to find an apathetic congregation of 900 members, two mortgages totaling $50,000, and another $20,000 owed to local businesses. Shuler lost no time in putting the church finances in order. Like Sister Aimee, he recognized the potential opportunity in bringing the newcom-



The Reverend Robert P. Shuler, who called Aimee's story "an outrage against Christianity." *Courtesy of Lately Thomas.*

ers, the spiritually starved, and those seeking a connection to the conservative Protestant theology they had left back home into his church. Within two years membership had increased to more than 1,700; four years after that the congregation numbered more than 3,400. Shuler credited the growth to the Methodist faith and the commitment of church members, but much of the success was clearly due, as Mark Still put it, to "the dynamism of his own personality, his leadership, and his powers as a pulpiteer."[10]

Worshipers were packing the Shuler and McPherson churches, but the sermons they heard carried quite different messages. Sister Aimee preached a God of love and devotion, of redemption and forgiveness. Shuler used his pulpit to rail against sin, and he saw plenty of it in a city where Protestant political influence was on the decline. He criticized modern divorce laws, public displays of affection, flagrant violations of the Volstead Act, suggestive dancing, Hollywood movies and the immoral behavior of movie stars, and the "Jew-owned industry" that made the movies. In March 1922, with the financing of an old Texas friend, Shuler began publishing *Bob Shuler's Magazine*, selling the month-

ly publication at Los Angeles newsstands and in effect reaching an audience much larger than at his Sunday sermons. "This magazine shall devote itself to a real emphasis upon spiritual values, social and moral standards, civic righteousness, American idealism, the respect for law and our Constitution, character forming, educational factors and that sanity and safety that much undoubtedly thread through our entertainment life [*sic*] if virtue and honor are to survive among us," he declared. He promised his magazine would "eternally oppose that invasion of foreign nations that aims in this hour a death blow at Christian idealism and American institutions."[11]

Shuler also took on local politics, attacking the police department's tolerance of vice and involvement in protection and bribery. He pressured Mayor George Cryer to fire Los Angeles Police Chief Louis Oaks, who had been arrested in San Fernando (a separate city) for importing liquor. He found common cause with the resurgent Ku Klux Klan in his blaming Catholics, Jews, and foreigners for allegedly subverting America as a Protestant nation. Shuler claimed the Jesuits and the Knights of Columbus were out to destroy the KKK, asserting this view both in his sermons and his magazine. This position placed him in a distinct minority among Protestant churches and publications, since only one other leader of note, J. Frank Norris of the First Baptist Church in Fort Worth, openly praised the Klan. Los Angeles officials who opposed the KKK also had to deal with Shuler's support of it. The political fighting could get nasty. Shuler castigated District Attorney Thomas Woolwine, who in Shuler's view was guilty of multiple sins, since the official was a Democrat, a Wet, and a KKK opponent. When Shuler attacked former Episcopalian priest George Chalmers Richmond for his opposition to the Klan, Richmond sued him for libel. Both men came out badly when the trial judge rebuked Shuler for being abusive and Richmond for being a liar. Eventually Shuler became disenchanted with the KKK, when the Los Angeles Klavern supported Asa Keyes, a Shuler foe, for district attorney.[12]

Shuler's involvement in politics is arguably his best-known activity in the 1920s and 1930s, but he also had another target for most of this period. Los Angeles was large enough to accommodate a number of evangelical ministers, and Shuler maintained cordial relations with J. Whitcomb Riley of the Temple Baptist Church, E. E. Helms at First Methodist Church, and Louis J. Talbot at the Church of the Open Door. But he early on had no use for his main rival, Aimee Semple McPherson and her Foursquare Gospel

Church. Her gender was not a factor in Shuler's animosity. He never condemned her because she was a woman or said a woman should not or could not be an evangelical pastor. Shuler had other reasons for his dislike, and he never hesitated to let everyone know the reasons.[13]

Shuler's growing dislike of Sister Aimee, as demonstrated repeatedly in his sermons and magazine articles, as well as press coverage of their rivalry, centered on three basic issues: theological differences, McPherson's much-publicized alleged immorality, and the financial mismanagement problems at the Angelus Temple. Many books and articles have dealt with the latter two issues, but the theological arguments were the first to surface publicly. Shuler became concerned with certain practices Aimee was conducting in her church. Although fundamentalism and Pentecostalism held similar views in Christian theology, fundamentalists rejected glossolalia (speaking in tongues) and faith or divine healing.

Shuler took early notice of McPherson's endorsement of glossolalia and faith healing, and he lost no time in criticizing these Pentecostal practices. Careful not to identify Sister Aimee by name, he nonetheless made it clear in his sermons and editorial articles that he disapproved of her departures from orthodox Christianity. When McPherson supporters protested his criticism, he responded ingenuously, insisting that "whether from the platform, pulpit, or through the press, I have never in any way attacked her, criticized or condemned her." Shuler then cleared away any doubts about his target by noting, "I can do nothing less than say to those why [*sic*] say that I have attacked her, that if the shoe fits, I know no way to prevent her wearing it."[14]

Shuler found no Scriptural endorsement for faith healing or glossolalia. Pentecostalism was a modern movement, and faith healers that produced "miracles" could not be compared with biblical accounts. Without identifying the specific location of a "prominent faith healing service in Los Angeles," Shuler described two alleged healings that turned out to be considerably less than miraculous. A "stone blind" black woman "shouted that she could see," and a mute boy allegedly cried, "Praise the Lord!" Subsequent inquiry revealed that prior to the service the woman was not stone blind but had severely limited vision, and some days her vision was a bit better than other days. Although there seemed no qualitative difference after the service, the woman claimed she was making progress and looked forward to future services "until she was cured." As for the mute boy, his grunting noises, interpreted by observers as "Praise the Lord,"

were no different than the sounds mutes ordinarily made. Shuler believed that the Lord could heal, that "he has healed and does heal and will heal." But he cautioned against charlatans "doing spectacular business these days and all supposedly healing," with thirty-five practitioners active in Los Angeles.[15]

Shuler also inveighed against glossolalia, pointing out that speaking in tongues violated St. Paul's teaching and was not the same as was described in the New Testament. After all, why would Angelus Temple have to teach missionaries the languages of the countries where they would carry out their mission, if Biblical and modern glossolalia were the same? He saw little to endorse in ceremonies where men and women rolled around on the floor, "jabbing and working themselves into a physical intoxication of sensual and nervous ecstasy, often amounting to a voluptuous and sensual carousal. . . ."[16]

Late in 1923, Minnie Kennedy, Sister Aimee's mother, invited Shuler to speak at the first anniversary celebration of the opening of Angelus Temple. This invitation was followed by another letter, this one from Sister Aimee, asking Shuler to attend a conference at Angelus Temple and to take a tour of the premises.[17] Believing the real intention behind these invitations was to win some form of endorsement for the Foursquare Gospel movement, Shuler decided not to respond to them. Instead, he sent McPherson a letter of his own, dated December 31, 1923, going by registered mail so he would have a receipt showing the letter was delivered.[18]

Shuler enclosed a folder listing four sermons he would be giving in his church during January 1924—the same month Angelus Temple would be celebrating its first anniversary. The sermons would deal with the issues of divine healing, speaking in tongues, healing cults, and what he termed "McPhersonism." "My purpose is not to attack but to warn of what I am honestly convinced is a humanly builded and very selfishly builded movement that bids fair to disrupt the evangelical churches and do much and lasting harm." Shuler noted "there are literally scores of rumors floating about concerning you and your work. My effort shall be to get the truth and publish it."

Shuler's method of getting the truth was novel if not audacious. In addition to the sermon brochure, he enclosed a list of a hundred questions that called for McPherson to explain at length the core of her Pentecostal beliefs. Many of the questions were clearly intrusive and no doubt meant to be that way. This did not prevent Shuler from insisting,

> I do not want you to think these questions impertinent. . . . If you should feel that they should not be answered, I assure you that I shall be forced to be satisfied with your refusal, though I think, Mrs. McPherson, that the time has undoubtedly come to put yourself on record very emphatically in answer to these inquiries that are upon many lips.[19]

McPherson had no intention of answering one hundred questions about her church and her beliefs. She responded by ignoring Shuler's letter, something he must have expected she would do; hence the registered mail receipt to prove it had arrived. Undaunted, Shuler sent a second letter by special delivery, on January 6, urging her to answer the hundred questions. Again, McPherson ignored the letter. However, these letters were an open secret, since on January 6 Shuler gave the first of the four sermons. McPherson followers showered him with their invective. Dozens of letters and phone calls to Shuler heaped "wrath and hate of every conceivable character" on him. On January 10 he sent a third letter to McPherson, saying that the complaints against him were based on his not giving her a chance to defend herself, which of course could have been done if she had only answered the hundred questions. He said this "whole agitation" could be settled by her answering the questions. This was a necessary act "because I feel you owe it to the public to set right absolutely any erroneous rumor or story that should be afloat concerning you, your work or your teachings, if the reports that are undoubtedly current are erroneous." Torquemada or Savonarola could not have said it better. Shuler knew from an Angelus Temple source that Aimee had read at least some of the questions, and he hoped "you will do me the courtesy of answering them so that I may present your answers to the people to whom I am talking in these afternoon services." Although Shuler claimed that most of the questions could be answered "yes" or "no," many were quite intricate and in fact were multiple inquiries. For example, Number 99 asked, "In describing one of your visions, you speak of your body slipping to the floor as the vision came upon you. Is there any Scriptural reason why these visions, trances, and tongues manifestations should come to those whose bodies are prostrate upon the floor?"[20]

Sister Aimee Semple McPherson ignored the third letter, and Reverend Robert P. Shuler delivered his four sermons as scheduled.

The first of the sermons, "Is 'McPhersonism' Apostolic, Biblical or Dispensational?" dealt with divine healing. Christ and his Apostles healed completely, without regard to affliction, and they raised the dead. Aimee

Semple McPherson's alleged healings were gradual and partial, avoided certain maladies, and did not raise the dead. McPherson never had anyone with physical deformities such as amputees or an eye gone join the healing procession. Church staff coached their subjects, weeding out anyone who might not "show" the cure. McPherson did not claim to work the miracles done by Jesus, such as turning water into wine or walking on water. Her healing program was not biblical either, since sin and sickness were not equivalent to atonement and redemption. As for Dispensation, the Bible said nothing about ministers serving as agents of Christ—but it did warn against false prophets and anti-Christs. Shuler conceded that McPherson "has been most timid in affirming that her healing program rests on any Dispensational foundation and has in a most OUTWARD [*sic*] fashion given her congregations to understand that she does not claim to herself any distinctively superior place in the Body of Christ, though her literature abounds with such claims." This reticence did not stop her congregation from worshipping her performance.

In the second sermon, "Modern Miracle Workers: Or, Is 'Divine Healing' of the Lord?" given on January 13, Shuler expressed his belief in divine healing but said modern healers were dishonest, and Aimee Semple McPherson was one of them. The third sermon, on January 20, dealt with "Healing Cults—a Comparison." Shuler condemned commercialized healing and McPherson's imitators who were preying on the sick for money. He also attacked Mary Baker Eddy, Joseph Smith, and others as frauds. "Cults demand worship for leaders," he argued. He compared Christian Science to Emil Coue's philosophy (a fad of the 1920s). Eighty percent of all sick people get well "without a healer, a physician, an osteopath, a pill or the anointing of oil." This gave faith healers an 80 percent lead. They could also claim that a loss of faith would result in the loss of the healing, a good excuse for a "cure" not lasting.

The final sermon, "The 'Tongues' Movements—Are They Honest?" was given on January 27. Shuler asked why missionaries who can speak in tongues had to learn the language of the natives when they went to China or other countries. He claimed that McPherson put people who said they could speak in tongues into soundproof rooms at the Angelus Temple and not in regular services. "Sanity and the tongues movements have never yet joined hands," observed Shuler, and that McPherson knew it, but was stuck between the extreme and the mainstream.[21]

The four sermons were given to capacity audiences at Trinity Methodist

Church. Shuler printed the brochures by the thousand, and he announced the sermons in his magazine. In 1924 *Bob Shuler's Magazine* had a claimed circulation of 17,000 copies per issue (it would reach 30,000 two years later). "The Editor of this Magazine wishes it understood that the many critics who feel that he has no right to discuss these questions are at perfect liberty to remain away from such discussions," he announced. "He invites all fair minded people, who are willing to listen patiently to a fair and altogether brotherly presentation of what he believes is the truth and he assures you that whether you believe his position to be correct or not, you will be convinced that he is honest in it and that only after prayer and much earnest inquiry has he entered into such discussion."[22]

Having given his sermons, Shuler expanded upon his theological debate (one-sided though it was) by printing a sixty-four-page booklet, *"McPhersonism": A Study of "Healing" Cults and Modern Day "Tongues" Movements.* He included the letters he had written to McPherson, the list of one hundred questions, and the four sermons. Since McPherson had not answered the letters, Shuler took excerpts from her published writings and church advertisements. They were not taken out of context, since the advertisements spoke for themselves. One compared Sister Aimee to Joan of Arc and included a picture of herself on horseback in a pose suggestive of the Maid of Orleans. Shuler also offered "Some Interesting Facts" about McPherson, a compilation of factoids. One noted that she referred to herself in her autobiography, *This Is That,* more than 10,000 times; another, that she said she was a Pentecostal preacher from 1908 to 1920 but in 1924 was claiming to be a Baptist; and such Shulerian comments as "Mrs. McPherson's attitude to her husband and home, if sanctioned by Christianity, would strike a death blow at the marriage relation."[23]

McPhersonism went through three printings and was revised in 1926 to meet the sensational events in Sister Aimee's life that year. Shuler's attack on her and on her church had been met with a wall of silence, though her supporters had protested through angry letters and phone calls. McPherson did make one gesture that seems to have been an attempt at conciliation, though nothing came of it. Around March 1924 she wrote a letter to the Church Federation of Los Angeles, calling for a meeting of Los Angeles Protestant church leaders. She offered to give a presentation at the meeting that would describe her work at the Angelus Temple. Her letter was read to the Federation's Executive Committee, of which Shuler was a member. Shuler moved that the Executive Committee answer her by

investigating her church work. The motion was not carried; Federation Executive Committee members had no desire to conduct an investigation instead of a meeting proposed by the very person Shuler wanted investigated. However, Shuler wrote to McPherson on April 4, asking her to do what his failed motion had intended be done—allow an investigation to be made regarding her work and teachings. For Shuler, it was not enough for Sister Aimee to come before the Federation and give a speech. This "would not at all get at the bottom of the situation concerning which there is now deep interest not only in this city but all over the country," stated Shuler.[24]

Since McPherson had no desire to hand over her head on a platter to Shuler and a body of "Christian physicians, Christian attorneys, Christian business men, pastors of this city," she ignored the letter. Perhaps the comparison with Joan of Arc was a bit too close, considering what an investigation had meant for the Maid of Orleans. Shuler took Aimee's silence as another opportunity to criticize her, including his letter in subsequent editions of *McPhersonism* as "One More Unanswered Letter."[25]

With the Church Federation of Los Angeles declining to support Shuler's crusade, the Methodist pastor left his attacks to occasional editorial shots in his magazine. The summer of 1926, however, offered him an arsenal of new ammunition against McPherson. This time around, McPherson would find that Shuler was but one of the many critics who assailed her credibility as an evangelist and moral person.

On May 18, 1926, Aimee Semple McPherson went to Ocean Park, a seaside area near Venice Beach, for an afternoon of ocean swimming. Emma Schaffer, her secretary, accompanied her. Aimee mixed the pleasure of wading in the surf with dictating sermons to her secretary, as she had done on other occasions. Time passed, however, and Schaffer grew concerned that the evangelist had not returned. Word soon went out that Sister Aimee was missing, possibly a drowning victim. Thousands of people crowded onto the beach, praying and hoping to get some news that Aimee was not dead. Two searchers drowned while trying to find her body. A month passed. Then Minnie Kennedy received a note demanding half a million dollars for her daughter's safe return. Believing Aimee dead, Mrs. Kennedy ignored the ransom note. Less than a week later, on June 23, Aimee miraculously (cynics and unbelievers would certainly object to the adverb) reappeared, bringing with her an incredible story. She claimed three people had kidnapped her. They had approached her at the beach with the sad story of a dying child in their car. When Aimee went to the car, the kidnappers forced

her into it and drove off. Aimee had spent most of the time in a shack in the Mexican desert south of Arizona. When the opportunity presented itself, she escaped from her captors and walked through desert heat to the town of Agua Prieta, across from Douglas, Arizona.[26]

Almost immediately the people of Los Angeles fell into two camps. There were the believers, who numbered among the 100,000 along the streets of the city to witness her triumphant parade from the train station to the church; and unbelievers, among them newspaper reporters, city and county officials, and Protestant church leaders, most notably Reverend Shuler. Since the disappearance and return made national headlines, the subsequent investigation, with all its twists and sensationalism, attracted the attention of everyone who read a newspaper or magazine.

Shuler never believed that Aimee had drowned. He had been attending a Methodist General Conference in Memphis, Tennessee, at the time of her disappearance. His first impression was that McPherson had staged the disappearance as a publicity stunt. When rumors surfaced that McPherson had gone off on a romantic tryst with Kenneth Ormiston, a former KFSG radio operator, even Shuler at first found this hard to believe, since she was a divorced woman and, her reputation notwithstanding, could become involved with anyone she wanted. Of course, fornication would hardly become an evangelist. On the way back from Memphis Shuler met any number of people who said to him they thought she was alive. His initial public statement counseled caution. "I desire that it be understood that I have no proof to substantiate my private opinion as to the circumstances that have transpired, save that I have read and heard what all others in these parts have read and heard."[27]

What others may have read and heard soon mattered little to Shuler, for he found the adulation of Aimee's followers, as well as her hyperbolic comparisons to her own situation and the casting of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the fiery furnace, illogical and unacceptable. Aimee had emerged from her desert ordeal without sunburn or so much as a speck of dust on her shoes or sweat stains on her dress. The Lord's protection of the Hebrew youths in the fiery furnace was a miracle, but for Aimee to make that comparison was too much. Shuler called for the District Attorney's office to conduct an investigation into the veracity of Sister Aimee's claims, since according to her story, a major felony—kidnapping—had been committed. If the story was false, then Aimee herself was guilty of a crime—fraud, or worse, criminal conspiracy to obstruct justice.[28]

For the next seven months the local press provided continuous coverage of Shuler's demands for an investigation, the reluctance of District Attorney Asa Keyes to conduct one, and the sensational revelations that kept popping up. If McPherson's story was to be believed, the Los Angeles Police Department should have been looking for the kidnappers, and the Grand Jury should have been filing indictments against them. Alleged "witnesses" were coming forth with claims they had seen McPherson in southern Arizona, northern Mexico, and Carmel, California, this last place the location of the tryst with Ormiston, an affair that soon became the keystone of the argument that McPherson had faked the drowning and the kidnapping. Keyes finally requested a grand jury investigation. McPherson listened to conflicting advice from her advisors and decided to comply with the subpoena to testify. For a week she told her story, and when Superior Court Judge Arthur Keetch announced no grand jury report would be made unless indictments were returned, Shuler accused him of covering up evidence.[29]

As he had done two years earlier, Shuler used pulpit and press, this time to lambaste the timidity of the grand jury, the contradictions in Aimee's story, and the failure of public officials to press the matter. Each month his angry editorials demanded a search for the truth of the episode. At last the grand jury issued blank indictments for "Steve Doe," "Rose Doe," and "John Moe," the alleged kidnappers, to be served if they could be found—or even found to exist. On July 25 Shuler held a mass meeting at his church, carefully hedging his charges with the cautionary note that Aimee's story might be true—but warning of the dire consequences she would face if the story were false.[30]

Meanwhile, Los Angeles newspapers kept busy destroying McPherson's credibility. Their investigative reporting went well beyond the grand jury or Shuler's fulminations. Stories featured accounts from numerous witnesses who claimed they saw Sister Aimee and Ormiston at Carmel-by-the-Sea after the alleged disappearance. Even Keyes was persuaded by the testimony of no less than fourteen witnesses. Since Ormiston had left the state, McPherson had to come up with some rationale to counter the witness stories. She claimed that a "mystery woman," disguised to look like her, was the person seen with Ormiston, and it was all part of the kidnap and extortion plot. McPherson castigated the two police officers investigating the kidnapping/fraud case, accusing them of involvement in a conspiracy to destroy her by character assassination. KFSG became Aimee's

forum for reaching the public beyond her church doors. And she even connected Shuler to an alleged Catholic conspiracy against her.

Pro- and anti-McPherson factions clearly were going to extremes, each side accusing the other of covering up evidence or tainting it, suborning witnesses, badgering public officials or enlisting judges and investigators in one conspiracy or another. The press and public had a hard time keeping up with each new revelation. Lorraine Wiseman achieved celebrity as the "hoax woman" who may (or may not) have been the woman witnesses saw (or thought they saw) at Carmel-by-the-Sea. Wiseman revealed that McPherson had offered her $5,000 to admit that she, not Aimee, had been with Ormiston. Foes labeled Wiseman a psychopathic liar.

District Attorney Keyes finally took action amid all the accusations and counter-charges. He filed felony complaints on September 17 against McPherson, Mrs. Kennedy, Ormiston, and Wiseman. The preliminary hearing began on September 27 and went on for four weeks. On November 3, having heard testimony from both sides, the judge concluded that enough evidence existed to try McPherson on three counts of perjury. A guilty verdict could send her to prison for a one to fourteen-year sentence.[31]

What ultimately happened was anticlimactic, and to the avid followers of the whole sordid episode in the newspapers, a letdown. Keyes decided that his principal witness, Lorraine Wiseman, was so unreliable that no jury would believe her testimony. Early in January 1927 he requested that the charges be dismissed. There would be no trial.

McPherson naturally proclaimed this decision a vindication of her innocence, but in fact no one other than her devoted followers believed it. Certainly Shuler had not been idle in his campaign against her. In September he had issued a revised edition (the third) of *McPhersonism*, increasing the size of the booklet to 126 pages and including the developments in the disappearance/reappearance controversy to that time. Just before the charges were dismissed, Shuler issued another booklet, "Miss X." His "Miss X" was a variation on the title *Madame X*, a best-selling novel and stage play by French author Alexandre Bisson. The play had already been made into a motion picture three times by 1920 (by 1981 it had appeared in more than a dozen film versions) and told the story of a woman's vengeance against her tormentor. The title also strongly suggested a "fallen" woman, which may be why Shuler chose his version of the name.

The ninety-six-page booklet presented the story of Aimee's disappearance with no doubt as to where Shuler stood regarding the kidnapping

tale. Shuler offered three stories—Aimee's alleged drowning and the search for her body; the kidnapping of Aimee and her being held hostage somewhere in the Sonoran desert; and the tryst at Carmel where Aimee and Ormiston carried on their torrid affair.[32]

Shuler created a heavenly perspective of all this activity by having an angel looking at the participants through field glasses. For Shuler, there was no doubt which version was the true one. The balance of the booklet covered the investigation and hearings, recounted the attempts at bribery, and paid a great deal of attention to Lorraine Wiseman. Shuler argued that Aimee had attempted to pass Wiseman off as resembling her so closely that witnesses at Carmel would confuse the two. McPherson had Wiseman wear makeup and a hairstyle to become Aimee's "twin." The booklet featured photographs of the purported disguise.

According to Shuler, the whole affair had resulted in the deaths of seven men. These included a diver who drowned while searching for Aimee's body; a man, the father of "little children," who died of exhaustion after overexerting himself in the search; and a deluded man who committed suicide by jumping into the ocean to "join" Sister Aimee. Shuler also laid the suicide of a doctor—accused of acting as a go-between in arranging the Carmel love nest—who took poison; and three men killed in a car accident, though Shuler was vague on how this tragedy was connected to Aimee's disappearance and resurrection. The booklet mocked the kidnapping story and, in reporting on the preliminary hearing, ridiculed the contradictions in Aimee's story and the witnesses whom he believed had been bribed.[33]

In the months that followed, Shuler continued to add stains to McPherson's blemished reputation. When he learned that McPherson had never put a headstone on Robert Semple's grave in China, he scolded her for abandoning his memory. This act must have stirred Aimee's memory, for soon after she had a headstone placed on her first husband's grave. Shuler also publicized the conviction of Hollice B. White, a former assistant pastor at Trinity Methodist Church who had taken a position at Angelus Temple, for contributing to the delinquency of a minor. As things turned out, however, Aimee Semple McPherson became her own worst enemy. She entered into an unwise third marriage that soon ended in divorce, a situation mirrored by her mother's equally bad choice of a new husband. Disagreement over the handling of church finances tore the family apart. Aimee became estranged from her mother and daughter. Shuler's criti-

cism of the way church funds were being misused was but one of the voices that found every McPherson foible grist for the public mill. One Foursquare Gospel Church member recalled how she heard a newsboy hawking, "Sister Aimee does it again! Sister Aimee does it again!" She bought a paper but couldn't find any news story about McPherson. When she asked the newsboy about this, he admitted there wasn't any story, but his saying so helped sell his papers.[34]

Aimee Semple McPherson never recovered her status as an evangelical icon in Los Angeles religious circles. Although she selflessly helped the hungry and homeless during the Great Depression, an act for which she has received too little credit, the constant infighting among family members detracted from such good works. Exasperated church leaders urged reconciliation in the McPherson clan and greater accountability for Angelus Temple expenditures. Her church continued to grow, with branch churches and missionary work in other countries, but even among her followers Aimee was admired but no longer venerated. The stress of family dysfunction and the public mocking of her personal life led to a nervous breakdown in 1930. Thereafter her reliance on medication moved from habit to probable addiction. On September 26, 1944, Aimee died of an overdose of Seconal. There were rumors of suicide, but the coroner ruled her death accidental. A line of 50,000 mourners filed past the casket in which Aimee lay. The funeral procession had hundreds of cars in a solemn parade that stretched for miles.[35]

As for Shuler, "Fighting Bob" still had many battles before him. In 1926 Elizabeth Glide, a wealthy Methodist widow, bankrolled radio station KGEF for him, extending his voice beyond pulpit and magazine to an audience of radio listeners throughout southern California. He continued to be involved in local politics, endorsing John C. Porter, an auto parts dealer and former Klansman, for mayor of Los Angeles in 1929. Porter won, and Shuler used his influence with Porter to win the dismissal of Chief of Police James "Two-Gun" Davis, the second LAPD chief to earn the reverend's disapproval. Shuler also weighed in against the various characters embroiled in the scandals over the sale of Julian Petroleum stock, a massive fraud that involved the exposure, trial, conviction, and sentencing of former District Attorney Keyes on bribery charges.[36]

Shuler continued to display his animosity to the Catholic Church. His booklet *Al Smith: A Vigorous Study of the Man, His Public Policy, His Ecclesiastical and Political Connections and His Un-American Activities* appeared

during the 1928 presidential campaign. This odd publication linked events in American history to Catholic conspiracies. He blamed the assassination of Lincoln on a "Romish" plot, the wounding of Theodore Roosevelt in 1912 on a "Romanist," and claimed the Catholic Church had engineered at least 100,000 assassinations. Yet Shuler could state in his booklet, "I have no hate in my heart for any devout Romanist."[37]

Aiming for the bleachers, Shuler was a power hitter in his campaigns against civic corruption and moral failure, but he swung too hard and too often. His accusations frequently lacked the necessary evidence, so opponents sued him for libel and slander. He did jail time for contempt of court. He lost the radio station because of intemperate remarks. His support of prohibition earned him the nomination of the Prohibition Party for the U.S. Senate in 1932, but he lost by 50,000 votes; a relatively narrow defeat, but a defeat nonetheless, and the closest he ever came to elective office.[38]

In later years Shuler calmed down, retreating into the mainstream of Methodism and becoming less politically agitated. As Los Angeles became increasingly diverse racially, ethnically, and politically, religious leadership assumed a less influential role, as it looked towards harmony rather than the divisiveness of rivalry. Shuler found it possible to reconcile the Methodist and Pentecostal views, conceding the theological similarities mattered more than the few differences. A decade after McPherson's death, Shuler delivered a sermon at the Angelus Temple in which he stressed the common goals of the Methodists and the Pentecostals. "Above all and beyond all, they preach Christ," he said.[39]

Mark Still, Shuler's most important biographer, observed,

> Thus, in the end Shuler's unswerving commitment to the 'fundamentals' of the Christian faith, aided by the mellowing effect of passing years, tempered even his abhorrence of McPherson's probable moral indiscretions and her accumulation of personal wealth, so that he came to welcome her spiritual heirs as allies in the battle to preserve the faith.

A fitting epitaph to the rivalry between Fighting Bob and Sister Aimee, but not an unqualified one. Still also notes that Shuler's conciliatory comment may have been motivated by the Foursquare Gospel Church's support of his son, Jack Shuler, who was conducting a series of evangelical crusades in the 1940s and 1950s.[40]

Notes

[1]For a contemporary look at Cryer, see John T. Morgan, "Our American Mayors: VIII. Mayor George T. Cryer of Los Angeles," *National Municipal Review*, 18 (January 1928), 27–32. Jules Tygiel, *The Great Los Angeles Swindle: Oil, Stocks, and Scandal During the Roaring Twenties* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), discusses Cryer's involvement in the Julian Petroleum stock fraud and other controversies of the time.

[2]Richard B. Rice et al., *The Elusive Eden: A New History of California*, 3rd ed. (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2002), Ch. 19, pp. 381–395. Major biographies include Daniel Mark Epstein, *Sister Aimee: The Life of Aimee Semple McPherson* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1993); Lately Thomas, *Storming Heaven: The Lives and Turmoils of Minnie Kennedy and Aimee Semple McPherson* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1970); and Robert Bahr, *Least of All Saints* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979). Thomas's book is a reworking of his earlier *The Vanishing Evangelist* (New York: Viking, 1959).

The best article-length study of Sister Aimee is Gloria Lothrop, "West of Eden: Pioneer Media Evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson in Los Angeles," *Journal of the West*, 27 (April 1988), focusing on her pioneering efforts in radio broadcasting. Books on Los Angeles that include information on McPherson are Harry Carr, *Los Angeles: City of Dreams* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, Publishers, 1935), pp. 331–336; Remi Nadeau, *Los Angeles: From Mission to Modern City* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1960), pp. 228–235; David Clark, *Los Angeles: A City Apart* (Woodland Hills, CA: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1981, p. 121; and Cecelia Rasmussen, *LA Unconventional: the men and women who did LA their way* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Times, 1998), pp. 103–109. See also Jack Smith, "Echoes of Aimee," *Westways*, 62 (April 1970), 11–13, 60. For web sites, see the Aimee Semple McPherson Resource Center at http://members.aol.com/xbcampbell/asm/indexasm.htm, and the web site for the Liberty Harbor Foursquare Gospel Church at www.libertyharbor.org/aimee.htm, which provides a short, favorable biography of McPherson.

The above citations represent only some of the published materials on McPherson, as a search of bibliographies, biographical sources, and web sites will reveal. Many of the items are polemical, biased, and lacking in documentation whether defenses or attacks upon McPherson, and therefore should be used with caution.

[3]Mark Sumner Still, "'Fighting Bob' Shuler: Fundamentalist and Reformer" (Ph.D. dissertation, Claremont Graduate School, 1988), is the most comprehensive study of Shuler's life and career. The dissertation merits publication. Of the published studies that deal with both McPherson and Shuler, see Kevin Starr, *Material Dreams: Southern California Through the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 136–172. See also Edmund Wilson, *The American Earthquake: A Documentary of the Twenties and Thirties* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1958), pp. 371–396. For a general study of religion in Los Angeles during this period, see Gregory H. Singleton, *Religion in the City of Angels: American Protestant Culture and Urbanization, Los Angeles, 1850–1930* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979), pp. 148–149, 164–171.

[4]Lothrop, p. 52; "Aimee: A Short Biography," p. 5.

[5]"Aimee: A Short Biography," p. 6.

[6]Ibid, pp. 6–7; Lothrop, p. 52.

[7]Quoted in Singleton, p. 149.

[8]Thomas, *Storming Heaven*, pp. 29, 31, 92–93.

[9]Starr, p. 136; Still, pp. 139–140.

[10]Still, pp. 141–147.

[11]*Bob Shuler's Magazine*, 1 (March 1922), 8.

[12]*Los Angeles Times*, August 2, 1923; Still, Ch. 5.

[13]Still, pp. 245–246.

[14]"Divine Healing—Is It of the Lord?" *Bob Shuler's Magazine*, 2 (September 1923), 141–144; "How Strange!" idem, 2 (October 1923), 168.

[15]"How Strange!" p. 168.

[16]Robert P. Shuler, *McPhersonism: A Study of Healing Cults and Modern "Tongues" Movements* (Los Angeles, 1924), p. 82; Still, pp. 204–207.

[17]*McPhersonism*, p. 40. The booklet reproduced Shuler's letters to McPherson, and his questionnaire. The booklet went through several printings.

[18]Ibid, p. 52.

[19]Ibid, pp. 40–51.

[20]Ibid, p. 52.

[21]Ibid, passim.

[22]"In Defense of the Faith," *Bob Shuler's Magazine*, 2 (January 1924), 238.

[23]*McPhersonism*, pp. 60–61.

[24]*McPhersonism* (1926 edition), p. 126.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Thomas, *Vanishing Evangelist*, is the most comprehensive account of McPherson's disappearance, return, and subsequent investigation. An objective study of the entire affair is almost impossible to achieve, since ultimately one either accepts McPherson's version or does not. For an uncritical acceptance of Aimee's story, see "Aimee: A Short Biography," at the Liberty Harbor Foursquare Church web site, cited in Note 2.

[27]"The McPherson Mystery," *Bob Shuler's Magazine*, 5 (July 1926), 109; Still, pp. 214–215.

[28]*Los Angeles Times*, June 27–29, 1926; Still, pp. 216–217; Rasmussen, p. 105.

[29]Still, pp. 219–220.

[30]"The McPherson Outrage," *Bob Shuler's Magazine*, 6 (September 1926), 145–146; "Sister's Challenge," idem, 6 (October 1926), 181; "The McPherson Situation," idem, 6 (November 1926), 191–192; "The Devil's Magazine," idem, 6 (December 1926), 254; *Los Angeles Times*, July 26, 1926.

[31]*Los Angeles Times*, January 11, 1927.

[32]*McPhersonism* (3rd ed.); *Miss X* (Los Angeles [1926]).

[33]*Miss X*, passim. See also "B-L-A-H!" *Bob Shuler's Magazine*, 7 (February 1927), 263.

[34]Still, pp. 240–242. The newsboy story is told in *Sister Aimee*, Los Angeles History Project video program telecast on PBS in 1991.

[35]Rice et al., pp. 393–394; Thomas, *Storming Heaven*, passim.

[36]Tygiel, pp. 248–309. Still's dissertation provides the most thorough account of Shuler's involvement in political, religious, and social controversies.

[37]*Al Smith*, passim. Following almost forty pages of accusations and condemnation of the Catholic Church on such matters as separation of church and state, public education, civil marriages, and other issues, Shuler took on Smith, attacking him for his opposition to prohibition, support of gambling, and repeal of the 18th Amendment. "And there was scarcely a day of Al Smith's boyhood that he did not spend in and about the saloons and brothels, the gambling haunts and dope dives of that [New York] bowery" (p. 48).

[38]Duncan, pp. 41 ff.; Starr, pp. 138–139; "Abusing a Privilege," *Saturday Night*, 12 (November 21, 1931), 3; "Shuler's Excessive Ego," idem, 12 (December 19, 1931), 3.

[39]"God's Little People," *Methodist Challenge*, 22 (March 1954), 7–8, quoted in Still, p. 243.

[40]Still, p. 244.

From Footsteps to Flying Machines

by Maggie Sharma

If the main drama of the Mount Wilson story is the explosion of new astrophysical information, its subplot is transportation. Carrying tonnage up precipitous slopes in the early years of the twentieth century meant solving the fiendish problem of negotiating a fragile, narrow path without the benefit of mechanical advantage. Limited to foot power and mules, early astronomers struggled with the matter of how to construct the world's two largest telescopes on top of Wilson's Peak. Even a century later, a paved highway with easy grades did not meet the demands of the newest technology, and once again the challenge of hauling instrumentation to its home on the summit was front and center. By a series of ingenious solutions, each hurdle was overcome, and Mount Wilson today stands to take its place in the forefront of world astronomy, as it did at the turn of the past century.

"The workmen say they would like to live up here permanently," Hale wrote in his diary on March 7, 1904.[1] If the beauty and rigor of living in primitive conditions on the top of Wilson's Peak appealed to these laborers, how much more meaningful their sentiment was to George Ellery Hale, whose entrepreneurial spirit had led him from his lair at Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay, Wisconsin, where he had established the world's largest refracting telescope, to a far-off California mountain top. When Hale first

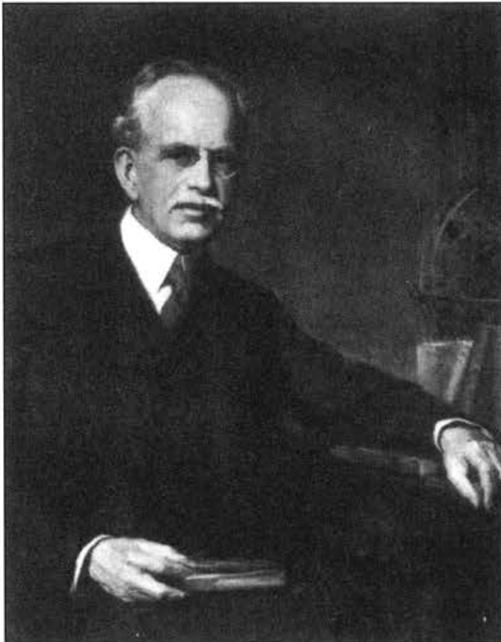


Figure 1. George Ellery Hale (1868–1938). *From a painting by Seymour Thomas.*

dreamed of building an international center of astronomy on Wilson's Peak, it was essential to be a pioneer, an irresistibly attractive assignment to some of the early scientists. Astronomer Walter Adams reminisced that upon his arrival in 1903, he was greeted by Ferdinand Ellerman, whom Hale had brought from the Yerkes Observatory some months earlier, wearing "a ten gallon hat, high mountain boots, and a full cartridge belt from which hung a revolver on one side and a hunting knife on the other. I was greatly impressed and pictured a struggle for existence on the wild mountain top, which bore little resemblance to later actuality."[2] (Figure 1)

In 1864, Benjamin "Don Benito" Wilson, a fur trapper turned politician, revamped the old Indian trail for a portion of the route, extending it to the summit. Indian trails were hazardous affairs, using the shortest route up vertical slopes, regardless of obstacles. Wilson's reward for continuing the trail to the top was to have his name live in perpetuity, first as Wilson's Peak and later as Mount Wilson. Ultimately, he made little use of the trail he and his workers so laboriously forged; the sugar pine that Wilson sought for his fences and wine barrels proved too soft, and the trail languished for two decades until new resorts lured weekend nature lovers to the glens and hollows of the mountain.

Don Benito's other legacy of this venture was a little wooden structure midway up the mountain that became known as "Halfway House," later the site of Orchard Camp, a popular resort. This may be the setting for a local legend that tells of a cabin with a casement whose window flashed rainbow colors upon the rivers, pines, and mountains, bringing joy to the hearts of sojourners, and from which the poet, Stone, received his inspiration.[3] Nothing remains of Stone's poetry, but the intoxicating view of the nighttime sky that informed his imagination is the same one that has nourished astronomers at the summit over the last hundred years.

Hale's intention was to establish an "Athens of the West," a nexus of art, culture, and science in Pasadena in which the centerpiece would be the world's largest telescope. Hale's father had purchased a 60-inch glass for his son some years earlier, with the provision that Hale would have to finance the grinding, polishing, and the great dome for the disk. Unlike the refractor at Yerkes, this would be a reflecting telescope, capable of reaching deeper into space than any in the history of mankind. Charles Yerkes, the cable car magnate of Chicago who had financed Hale's 40-inch refractor and who was now enmeshed in building the London Underground, showed no interest in Hale's proposal to add a 60-inch telescope to the Yerkes Observatory. Undaunted, Hale applied to the Carnegie Institute of Washington for a grant to establish, first of all, a large solar telescope on Mount Wilson, and in June of 1903 he arrived there on an exploratory mission to find a suitable site for extending his already considerable investigations into the study of the sun. Lying nine miles from the base of the trail at nearly 6,000 feet and well above the inversion layer, the summit was bathed in stable air for over 250 viewing days a year. A. G. Strain's camp, a popular resort on the north side of the mountain, provided a ready water source, and the little city of Pasadena at the base of the mountain contained foundries, supplies and electrical power. The mountain itself afforded firewood and excellent building stone.

In 1891 the Mount Wilson Toll Road Company (twenty-five cents for hikers; fifty cents for riders) had smoothed and widened the trail from Eaton Canyon to the summit of Wilson's Peak, but to call the trail a road was an exercise in hubris—it was still no more than a rough, zigzagged path with severe angles and daunting gradients. Several property owners lived on the mountain year-round, among them members of the Toll Road Company. Vacationers arrived at resort camps on burro or horseback by which methods neither time nor weight of baggage was of much consider-

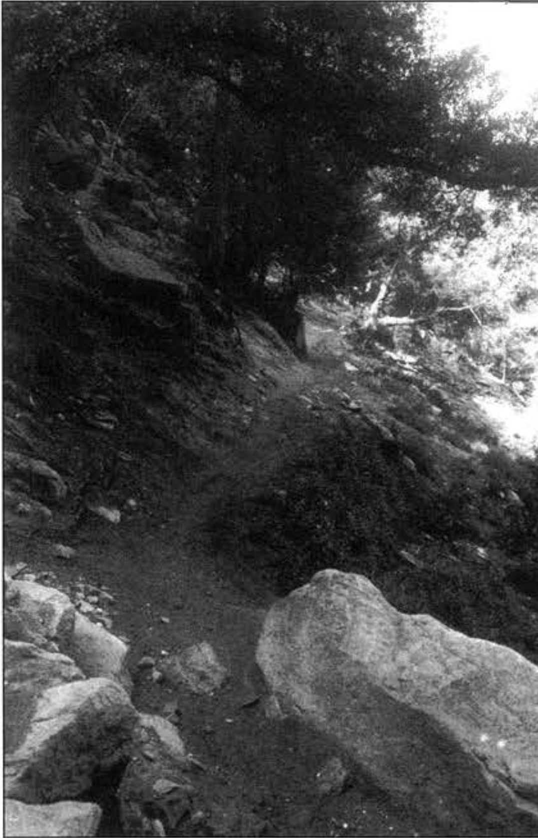


Figure 2. The old Mount Wilson Trail. *Unless otherwise noted, all photos are courtesy Mount Wilson Institute.*

ation, but Hale was struck with the realization that the transportation of tons of machinery, delicate mirrors, and massive mountings that he would need presented a grave challenge. (Figure 2)

On that first trip to survey the potential observatory site, Hale met with William R. Staats and J. H. Holmes, representatives of the Mount Wilson Toll Road Company and owners of the top of Wilson's Peak. Perhaps ready to divest themselves of land, the pair appeared more than willing to offer a choice of mountain acreage. Hale had studied the trail as he climbed the day before, noting the vegetation and land contours, and figured that it could be widened adequately with grades of no more than 10 percent, for a cost of $40,000.[4] This turned out to be very far off the mark, but the providence that seems to guide such ventures guaranteed by this miscalculation that plans proceed. Ascending the trail in dense fog, Hale had come upon the glorious burst of sunshine and blue sky that greets the traveler at about

4,500 feet. Hale had remembered this detail told to him when he was a student working at the Harvard Observatory in 1889, by members of the first flank expedition who had come from Harvard that year to scout a site on Wilson's Peak. Enchanted by the vistas of live oak and big-coned spruce, the valleys of maple and cottonwood coupled with the anomalous placement of the inversion layer, Hale believed that he had found a superb location in which to realize his grand plan. The enterprise, fraught with danger and adventure, would yield in the end an unsurpassed site for seeing.

The Mount Wilson Toll Road Company eagerly courted the young astronomer, hoping to forge a partnership in which the troublesome road construction costs would be shared. Staats informed Hale in writing of transportation costs as conceived by the Mount Wilson Toll Road Company:

> By pack animals, for articles weighing less than 100 pounds and not over 10 feet in length from Pasadena to the summit, $1.00 per 100 pounds.
> By wagon over the proposed road for all articles that can be handled by a four horse wagon from Pasadena to the summit, 50 cents per 100 pounds.
> Articles from 4000–12000 lbs = $1.50 per 100 pounds.
> By proposed electric road or incline plane:
> Less than 1000 lbs = 50 cents per 100lbs
> 1000 to 2000 = 60 cents to $1.00 per hundred pounds
> I would like to suggest the propriety of having in the estimate of the cost of the proposed observatory, an item of considerable amount, say $50,000 for construction or aiding of some of the wagon roads, or an electric road as may be decided best, in order to provide for transportation facilities if necessary without putting the whole burden on our people.[5]

Staats made it clear over the following months that he favored an electric railway, much like the incline railway Thaddeus Lowe had built a decade earlier. Later, when the Carnegie Institute of Washington finally approved Hale's application for funds, Hale, his eye ever on his goal, dashed off a letter to the president, R. S. Woodward, telling him of his opposition to this scheme. "I hope," he wrote, "to convince the owners of the property of the undesirability of constructing an electric road, since this would mean so large an influx of visitors as to interfere with the work of the observatory."[6]

Hale's astronomical studies were primarily those of the sun. "The sun is the only star whose phenomena we can study in detail," he often said, and when the Carnegie Institute at first failed to approve the funding of a large telescope, Hale decided to establish his own small solar program on Wilson's Peak.[7] If he could produce excellent results, he reasoned, he

would stand a fighting chance of securing the funding he needed from the Carnegie Trustees. Throughout his life, Hale had the knack of gambling on ventures that would become resounding successes, and so, footing the costs, he moved his family from Williams Bay to California and began to plan the first of his Mount Wilson telescopes.

Thrilled to be in Pasadena again, Hale's spirits soared. The city had a population of 25,000 inhabitants, a per-capita income unmatched by any other of comparable size, and a salubrious climate. Oranges, walnuts, figs, grapes, pomegranates—edibles of all descriptions—abounded; groves of eucalyptus and sweet-scented orange proliferated near Eaton Canyon; the enormous condor was common sight. Rejuvenated, Hale put aside his frustration with delays in funding and climbed to Wilson's Peak, marveling as he went at the profusion of purple nightshade, Crane's bill, mint, and golden yarrow amongst a host of wildflowers he could not yet identify. Accompanied by an assistant, each loaded down with equipment, Hale carried a three-inch telescope to the summit, humming airs from Schubert's "Unfinished" and Beethoven's Fifth and Seventh symphonies as he climbed.[8]

One of the vexing problems facing astronomers is distortion of the image they are trying to capture, due to the reflection of heat from the ground. Hale wondered if he would get better images if he were higher up. To the astonishment of his young assistant, he shinnied up an 80-foot yellow pine, lugging the telescope along. Hale noted in his diary, "Tested seeing in tree at 32 feet and 68 feet above ground."[9] At this moment the seed of a new design of solar telescope began to take shape in his imagination. Later it would be realized in the Mount Wilson 60-foot and 150-foot solar tower telescopes, an invention subsequently copied by observatories around the globe, but one that would require, on Mount Wilson at least, the transportation of heavy girders and steel structures up a flimsy trail.

At the end of three days, there was little doubt in Hale's mind that this was the astronomical site he had been dreaming of, and despite the anticipated difficulties of the trail, he discussed the cost of renting burros and mules with the owner of the Mount Wilson Stables on his way down. His seal of commitment was noted tersely in his diary:

> Unbroken burros; $15
> Broken burros: $35. Bassett and Son have 4-year lease of everything, road, etc.[10] (Figure 3)

A few days later, on January 7, 1904, Hale spoke with the draftsman at Baker Iron Works in Pasadena about the housing design for a large hori-

Figure 3. Burro train, ca. 1905. *Postcard courtesy William White.*

zontal telescope. Hale had used a telescope of this type at Williams Bay, the Snow telescope, and planned to bring it to Wilson's Peak to initiate his studies. Throughout the month he drew and redrew plans for the housing, but thoughts of the primitive trail and his lack of funds to improve it goaded him to change plans. Instead, he would bring out an old coelostat for his work until June. He would return to Williams Bay for the summer and come back to Wilson's Peak with the Snow horizontal telescope in the fall.[11] (Figure 4)

Hale then wrote to Ferdinand Ellerman, still at Williams Bay, to send a silvering outfit, lathes, and an iron clamp for carriages as soon as possible. The following day he telegraphed for the tube, the old coelostat, a fifteen-inch cell for the polar axis, and a fourteen-inch cell for the second mirror. He further instructed the shop to make twelve-inch clocks to drive the mounting. His plans might be modified, but they would not be stopped. Meanwhile, a meeting with Henry Huntington at the California Club had resulted in Huntington's timely offer to transport instruments and men across the country free of charge. Furthermore, Huntington informed Hale

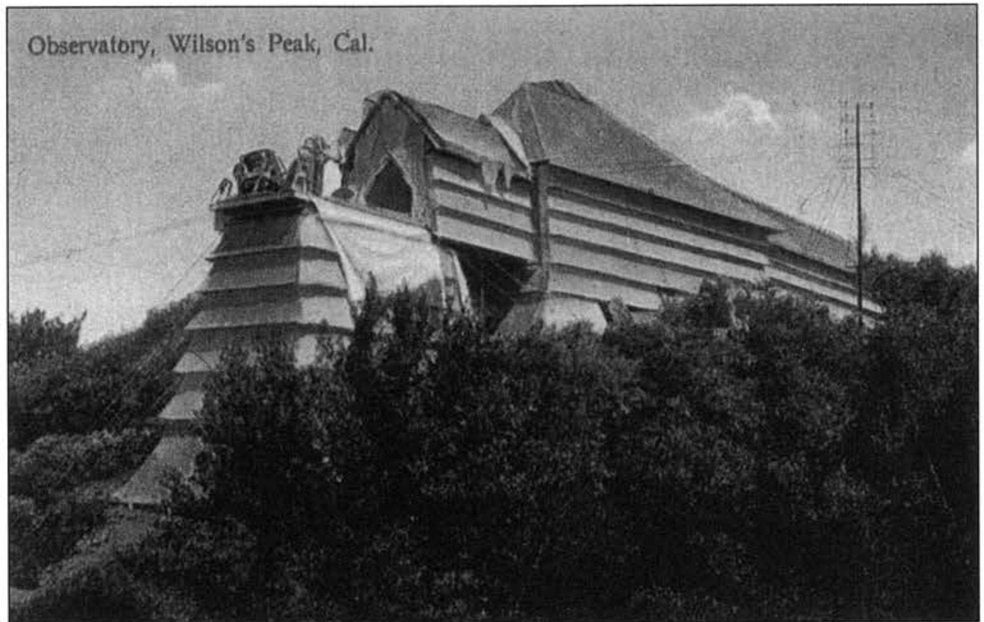


Figure 4. Snow solar telescope,
the first permanent instrument at Mount Wilson.

that surveys had shown that an electric line up to the summit would cost $65,000 per mile![12] Though the problem of the trail remained, Hale could not repress his happiness that, at least for now, an incline railway was out of the question.

In early February, Hale decided to repair a dilapidated old building as a shelter, and by the end of the month a steady procession of burros had brought hardware and bedding up the old trail, igniting the curiosity of the locals who stood in groups silently watching. Hale wrote in his diary on February 29, 1904, "Pack train reached Casino at 7 PM. Put up beds, covered a few windows and spent night at Casino. Plenty warm enough, but some drafts!" The next day Hale started down the path, using a favorite mode of transportation, "shooting the slides" which led through the thistly chaparral as links between hairpin turns in the trail.[13] He was obliged to dress in frontier clothing, arriving at home covered in dust. It was a role this well-bred academic relished.

It was not unusual for Hale to climb the mountain three times a week, often on foot, burdened with supplies, coming back to town to change his clothes and meet with Staats and Wright on the question of county bonds for the road, or give a talk on astronomy, or convene with wealthy leaders

of Los Angeles and Pasadena. By the end of February Hale knew two things: that it would require an act of legislature to enable the county to issue bonds for the widening of the road, and that he would not be able to return to Williams Bay for the summer as he had previously decided. Frequently, he mused on the fact that the Harvard expedition had been defeated, in part at least, by the intractable problems of the trail.

Although an avenue of funding the roadwork was closed to him, Hale went on with his plans to establish a solar workstation. The coelostat now waited at the base of the trail; building materials for the Casino were brought up the mountain daily, and the consignment of machine tools and shop equipment would soon arrive from Yerkes. Both size and weight of materials were limited by the load capacity of the animals, ranging from 150 poundweight for burros to over 200 pounds for mules; lumber for building was restricted to eight feet in length—to this day rounded corners can be seen on timbers that dragged a little on the ground as the mules made their way to the mountaintop. The climb up the mountain was slow and although pack trains left before dawn, they would often arrive at the summit after dark.

Fortune smiled on Hale in the form of a powerfully-built stonemason from Pasadena named George Jones, whose expertise was design and whose genius resided in his hands. Moreover, he could hoist massive blocks of stone, tossing them where needed as if they were feather pillows. The Casino, completed by this modern Paul Bunyan, held a fireplace capable of burning logs two feet in diameter in what turned out to be a wonderfully prescient idea, as it was the heat from the gigantic fireplace that kept the astronomers from freezing during winter cold snaps when heavy snowfalls imprisoned them.

Hale's problem of improving the trail was by no means the only consuming issue on his agenda. First and foremost stood his scientific work. His mind teemed with plans, not only for the Snow horizontal telescope he hoped to bring from Williams Bay, but also for his beloved 60-inch glass which still lay unused. He devised a blueprint for the organization of an International Solar Union, where ideas could be exchanged among prominent astronomers worldwide. He had just been awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Academy of Science in Great Britain and thought the time was right to present his plans for modernizing astronomy, though he knew his ideas were at odds with the older scientists'. His strategy to develop photography and spectroscopy as state-of-the-art astronomical tools would require massive equipment, compounding the difficulties of the rough trail.

By early spring, designs for a new road had been drawn up. Astronomers Ellerman, Adams and Ritchey, as well as Kinnear, the cook, and George Jones, had thrown their lot with Hale, who at last won the support of the Carnegie Institute, based on the superior photographs he and Ellerman had made with the old coelostat. By the time word came from Washington in December 1904 that Hale had been awarded $150,000 for each of two years by the Carnegie Institute, he had already leased the land for the observatory in his own name, designed and built a special form of carriage to take the heavy castings for the Snow telescope up the mountain, begun plans for the "monastery" living quarters where astronomers would stay during their runs, and proposed that the Mount Wilson Toll Road Company undertake half the cost in the construction of a suitable road for the transportation of heavy machinery. Some parts of the Snow telescope weighed up to 350 pounds, and it was for these Hale devised his special carriage, a fanciful conveyance, if ever one existed. (Figure 5)

Hale had worried himself with this problem for weeks when out of the blue the solution appeared. He imagined a narrow, steel truck that would bear weight no mule could. The bed would measure about twenty feet in length and twenty inches in width. It would be low to the ground on small rubber wheels and be preceded by a man leading a mule and followed by the same. The back-end mule would act as a brake, making sure the truck stayed on the road.[14] While the trail had been widened sufficiently to allow this special small carriage to go to the summit, Hale knew that the road would be woefully inadequate for transporting the much heavier pieces of equipment he would need for the 60-inch reflector he now could build.

Other design puzzles besieged him. Hale knew that he would have to shield from ground heat the beam of light traveling 100 feet from the plane mirror of the Snow to its 24-inch telescope, which was comprised of a concave mirror with a focal length of 60 feet. He partially solved this problem by setting the telescope high above the ground on great stone piers. Sleds of rock were built to transport the massive mountaintop stones, drawn by mules, to the pier site. It was exacting and dangerous work, and in the course of a few short weeks, a worker lost his life and a mule committed suicide by plunging over a bluff, apparently unwilling to be dragooned into pulling enormous loads against staggering friction.

By the summer of 1905 the Snow telescope was ready for use. The mule-flanked carriage had performed its task admirably, but Hale still tinkered with methods to transport visitors to the summit. Too often a wagon whiffletree broke, or a wheel loosened dangerously and a hapless visiting

Figure 5. Truck Hale used to transport material for the Snow horizontal solar telescope atop Mount Wilson 1905.

scientist was obliged to scramble to the top on his own steam. Hale had bought a three-wheeled Indian motorcycle that he hoped would be an improved method of ferrying visitors, but even with the valiant assistance of Ellerman, the trail checkmated their comical efforts to harass the telescope parts along the route.

Letters flew thickly between Hale and R. S. Woodward, president of the Carnegie Institute of Washington, during the planning of the next phase of expansion.

"The most uncertain item is the expense of widening the trail," Hale lamented. "This is bound to be a large item as it appears unsafe to have it as narrow as we first planned. A small increase in width involves a large increase in expense."[15] Instead of weighing 350 pounds, as in the case of the Snow telescope, pieces for the 60-inch telescope would weigh as much as 5 tons!

Hale had looked into the possibility of securing public subscriptions to underwrite the construction of a new road, but he abandoned the idea with the thought that "the ten percent grade would render it unfit for pleasure driving and if the money were raised in that way, the public might demand more freedom in entering the observatory and using its instruments than an efficient administration would warrant."[16] Still, a road was urgently needed not only for the transportation of heavy castings and the steel for

the building and dome, but also to create a means of swifter communication between the newly-established shop in Pasadena and the observing stations on the mountain. The Mount Wilson Toll Road Company had constructed a large hotel with a number of small cottages on the mountain and also needed easy access, but, unfortunately, the controlling partners, Holmes and Staats, were still stuck on the idea of an electric railway as the means. Hale debated the merit of suggesting the Carnegie Institute join forces with the Toll Road Company, figuring that if even just a road-bed of full width and easy grade were built, it would benefit his work. He doubted that Holmes and Staats would ever realize a finished product, but when it became clear that none of the heavy materials would be taken up the mountain before May 1907 if he waited for the Toll Road Company to act, he dismissed even that thought. Further investigations revealed that the company had incorporated in order to construct their electric railroad with a stated capital stock of $500,000, but that subscriptions only totaled $15,000 and of that a mere 10 percent had actually paid in!

> I am certain they have greatly underestimated the cost of the railroad and from what I know of their business methods, feel certain that no energetic action may be expected on their part. A preliminary survey of the road made by the only engineer they have consulted—a man whose competence I question—indicates several high bridges will be necessary and would expand the cost and duration of construction.[17]

Hale had already obtained a bid of $9,500 for widening the trail to 6½ feet, but now hesitated to accept the width limitation. Based on the drawings he and Ellerman had made for a brand new type of autotruck to transport the gigantic five-foot mounting, Hale was convinced the trail required a minimum of eight feet in width. "I hope this can be done at an expenditure of not more than $15,000. I am arranging the obtaining of bids," he wrote Woodward.[18] Directly on the heels of this optimistic note, Hale was forced to reassess his plan. "After further investigation of the problem of a road up Mount Wilson, it seems unlikely that we can undertake the widening of the New Trail (Toll Road), since the cost of the work is more than we can spend."[19] In fact, Hale and Ritchey had spent a tense three weeks examining the trail and had come to the conclusion that 6½ feet would not be wide enough to transport the heaviest castings. The edge of the trail was too friable to withstand the weight and they feared catastrophe if they went ahead with the plan. Hale, full of misgivings, finally urged Woodward to unite with the Mount Wilson Toll Road Company, explaining that a roadbed of adequate width would ensure safe transport of heavy loads.

How the next development came about is undocumented in Hale's correspondence, but apparently Woodward, sympathetic to Hale's dilemma and unimpressed with the acumen of Holmes and Staats, was able to appropriate money to widen the road to eight feet. Godfrey Sykes with Carnegie's Department of Botanical Research in Tucson was hired to superintend the work, but Hale's road worries were not over.

It was by no means certain that the owners of property along the route would give right-of-way. However, McNally, who had earlier been a vocal opponent, suddenly capitulated and Supervisor Lukens of the Forest Service promised the local forester, Gifford Pinchot, his full cooperation. Yet the Toll Road Company officially balked. In June of 1906 Pinchot, convinced of the benefit to the San Gabriel Reserve, wrote to Woodward:

> The Mount Wilson Toll Road Company claim legal authority to maintain a public highway 100 feet wide over this route. There may be some doubt about this but for the present at least I will not interfere with the Company but will make sure you have full authority to widen and use the road by issuing a permit with which your lease from the company will state you have undoubted right-of-way to enter upon and improve the present trail. You may begin work at once.[20]

Relieved, Hale could now send Ritchey back east to search for a truck capable of carrying several tons to negotiate the tortuous trail. In Grand Rapids, Michigan, Ritchey found a company willing to design and build a vehicle for $5,000. The Couple-Gear Freight-Wheel Company promised delivery by September 15. It was now June and Hale was elated with the news. He immediately authorized hiring a 123 laborers, of which 110 were Japanese. With a few mules yoked to plows and scrapers, but mainly men with pick and shovel, the laborious work on the nine-mile trail began. Stream beds had to be forded, embankments fortified, deep holes filled, and loose ground made firm. Most of the men were stationed on the lower one-third of the trail below Heninger's Flats; a few worked from the summit down toward Martin's Camp, and on July 24 Hale announced to Woodward, "the work is moving at top speed."[21]

Scientific objectives also galloped at top speed. An electric laboratory capable of producing 60,000 volts had been established at the summit to enable the astronomers to study the spark and the arc of various metals and gases as compared to the spectrum of the sun or other star. Here Hale photographed the spectrum of iron vapor in an electric arc, varying the current and therefore the temperature. Astonishingly, the results compared precisely with the spectra of sunspots disclosing the novel information that

sunspots were cooler than the surface of the sun. More experiments were carried out with chromium, manganese, titanium and other metals that had been identified in sunspots, and again the results tallied. Hale had peered into the constitution of our nearest star, and, realizing that at cooler temperatures, compounds would form from the elements, was able to witness the extensive chemical changes at work. Hale's zeal to prove that our sun was just a typical star led him to compare the spectroscopic lines of other stars with those of the sun, resulting in the hypothesis that all stellar spectra could be classified according to temperature. This classification system was of some consequence, providing a new avenue for analyzing the physical mysteries of stars. In modern times, this system became pivotal in analyzing spectral lines according to the energy levels in the atoms. The tightly guarded secrets of the spectrum were beginning to yield, and under Hale's influence, interferometry and spectroscopic analysis were becoming everyday tools of astronomers. In interferometry, a system of parallel silver mirrors face each other with a very delicate mechanism to move them apart or bring them together, causing reflection back and forth until, by interference of these rays, a measurement of a ray of light is secured. Fine alignments down to 1/50,000 of an inch rendered millimeters the grossest of calculations. Three years later, Hale would speak of his early spectroscopic experiments in an address to the Royal Institution in England as the indispensable precursor to his discovery of magnetic fields on the sun, lauded by others as "the greatest result of any that recent years have afforded to astronomy."[22]

Hale, now thirty-seven years old, was offered at the same time two prestigious positions. One was the secretaryship of the Smithsonian Institution, the leading scientific establishment in America; the other was the presidency of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Alexander Graham Bell and the astronomer Simon Newcomb both urged him to accept the secretaryship of the Smithsonian; the MIT chemist, Alfred Noyes, a college friend of Hale's, argued for the MIT post. Embroiled as he was in the creation of the fledgling Mount Wilson Observatory and its companion hindrance of transportation, Hale did not hesitate long in refusing both offers. His destiny lay with Mount Wilson, he was sure, and it was here that he would achieve his dream of applying the physicist's methods to astronomical research, thereby unraveling the life story of stars, their compositions, their pasts and their futures.

Though much of his early work was done with the Snow horizontal telescope, Hale yearned for a bigger solar telescope with improved resolv-

ing power. To this end, he designed a sixty-foot tower, born of his experiments in treetops, that would be mounted vertically. Hale's enthusiasm for this new solar telescope was unbounded, but on Dec 4, 1906, a familiar dispirited note appears at the bottom of his diary entry for the day. The cost of the road would preclude him from going ahead with the sixty-foot tower telescope under the current budget. Just the day before, Hale had been forced to report to Woodward that the road would cost $10,000 more than the last estimate.

The year had been one of frustrating delays and difficulties, epitomized by the San Francisco earthquake of April 18. Hale was back east when he got the news and unable to get a clear answer as to whether or not the mounting for the 60-inch being cast at the Union Iron Works in San Francisco had been ruined, he rushed back to California, where he learned that the worst damage had come from the many fires which erupted when gas lines burst. Fortunately, the mounting had been rescued from fire and work could proceed as planned. Hale was optimistic that by the end of the year, the 60-inch would be ready for use, but again he was foiled. Rolling strikes stopped all work on the dome and the road was still not ready for use by autumn. His remaining hope of forging ahead with roadwork during the winter was dashed just ten days into the New Year when a storm of unprecedented magnitude swept into the mountain. Packtrains were stalled, unable to make their way over landslides and deep snow; telephone and power lines were down; and the Japanese workmen deserted. The storm halted all access to the summit, and it was March before the first packtrain could ascend. At sixty-one inches, the snow lay deeper and farther down the mountain than people could remember, and even if it had melted, the road was so soft that the truck's wheels would sink to the hubs. Most discouraging of all, many of the walls that Sykes had built to reinforce the upslope side of the trail had collapsed and would have to be rebuilt. Unable to withstand the slides caused by the weight and moisture of the snow, these sack walls crumbled and hundreds of tons of rock tumbled down, carrying the trail along. The estimate for repair of damage was $8,000, if repairs were not extensive.

While the road was still impassable, Hale received a letter from the Union Iron Works Company stating that the steel would be shipped within two weeks and the dome by mid-June. The shop in Pasadena was progressing nicely on the driving clock, mirror support, parts of the mounting, and the colossal ten-foot worm gear. Ritchey only needed another month to finish figuring the 60-inch mirror, a project that had taken four

years. At the same time, steel for the 60-foot tower was expected to arrive. Pleased with the results from Mount Wilson with the Snow telescope, the Carnegie Trustees had agreed to fund the experimental solar telescope. Hale wanted the roadwork to begin on April 1 so that the steel for both projects could be brought up by the middle of June. His aim was to put the new truck into commission as soon as the shipment arrived from Union Iron Works. The steel would be transported by autotruck from the freight train to the foot of the trail, giving the men experience in handling the machine. Then, as soon as possible, when the ground had dried out a little, the autotruck would run unloaded over the road in an attempt to lay down a packed surface. Although the average grade was 10°, there were points where the incline rose to 18°, but the Couple-Gear, Freight-Wheel Company assured Hale that the truck was capable of making a 17° grade with a five-ton load. Hale had chosen Mr. Dowd, a man familiar with electric machinery and who would spend a month learning the electrical system of the truck, as one of the drivers. The other was a machinist from the shop whose knowledge of engines was remarkable. Despite the precautions and expertise, there was no doubt in Hale's mind that the enterprise was hazardous. "We must obtain accident insurance for these two men to protect the observatory," he wrote to Woodward.[23] (Figure 6)

Early in March, Hale, Ritchey, and Jones had carefully surveyed the road and discovered that a great number of the walls were completely washed out, including some of the stone walls. Extensive and expensive repairs would have to be made and land cleared below Heninger Flats where the damage was far more consequential than the men had supposed. The problem facing Hale, in addition to making the road as safe as possible, was how much consideration to give to the future, as limited funds dictated temporary measures. Hale remarked that the operation over the road would be treacherous even if the dangers from insecure walls were eliminated, and he wanted to widen the trail and even the grade once and for all. As this was not possible, eight men opened camp at the foot of the trail on March 25, and within two weeks another seventy were added. Though improvements were temporary, work on the trail advanced rapidly under clear skies and mild temperatures.

During this time of brisk activity, several world famous astronomers visited Mount Wilson by foot, horse, mule, and wagon train from Eaton Canyon. Excitement ran high and the astronomical community was eager to see what would emerge. Newspaper articles of unprecedented length chronicled the almost daily scientific findings coming from the Snow tele-

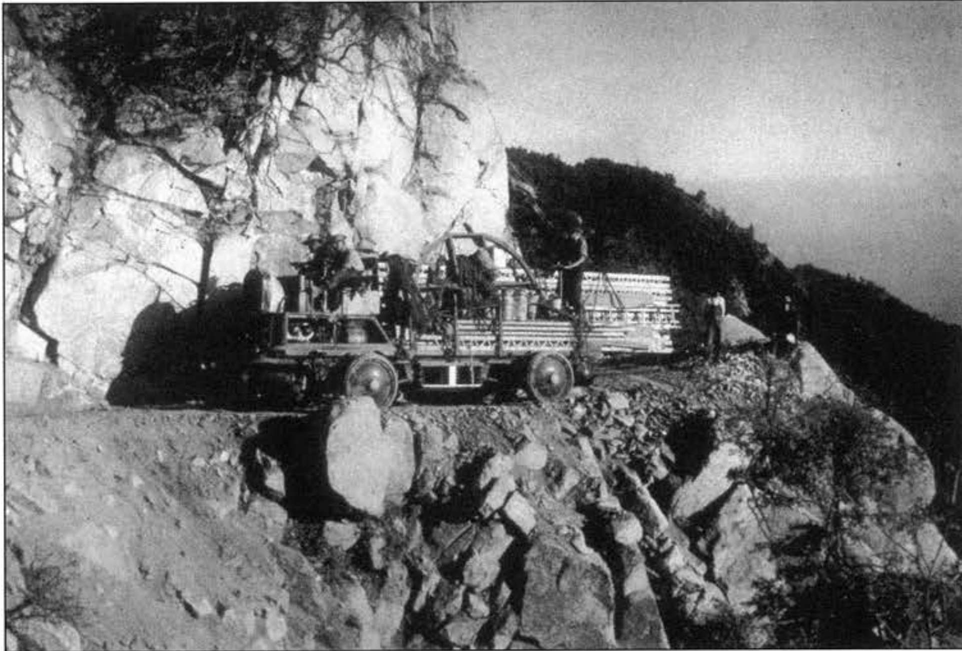


Figure 6. Gasoline-electric autotruck used to transport heavy equipment to the summit, including heavy structural steel for the 60-foot solar tower in 1908.

scope and the small laboratory; it was at this time that Hale made his important astronomical discovery of magnetic fields on the sun. A decade earlier, the Dutch scientist, Pieter Zeeman, had discovered that a magnetic field splits and polarizes the spectral lines. Working with the newly erected 60-inch solar tower, whose powerful spectrograph could spread and separate the lines far better than the Snow telescope, Hale was able to compare the widened lines he saw in sunspot spectra with those he had observed in the laboratory. The correspondence was exact. For the first time in history, magnetism had been detected outside of the earth.

On July 22, the autotruck reached the summit of Mount Wilson carrying a three-ton load. The road was still soft in places, causing the trip to be much longer than anticipated, but everyone was delighted with the trial performance. Not so delightful was the expense of reconstructing the motor, generator, and cooling apparatus to ready the vehicle for heavier loads, subtracting $4,000 from Hale's already tight budget. The footings for the steel building and the great concrete pier for the 60-inch were com-

Figure 7. The autotruck en route to the summit.
Mules helped to keep truck on narrow trail.

pleted; and the concrete foundations for the nearby tower telescope nearly finished. (Figure 7)

Just as the work reached a fever pitch, Hale was nettled once again by McNally, who, with an apparent change of heart, had insisted on behalf of the Toll Road Company that others must be prevented from using the road and turned the matter over to an attorney. Hale's lawyer was satisfied that the right-of-way did not require that others keep off the road. Because there was no evidence that the Toll Road Company was encouraging travel or collecting tolls, the only people who had the right to restrain the use of the trail were the owners of servient estates along the way, and none of them posed any objection. By this point, Hale had accurately sized up the opposition and found the whole episode "complex and amusing, giving no cause for anxiety of any kind."[24]

At the end of July, the autotruck nearly met with disaster when one of the insubstantial sack walls gave way, causing the truck to turn over on its side with a rear wheel dangling over the edge of a canyon. Fortunately, the center of gravity of the truck and its load lay within the solid part of the trail, preventing the truck from going over the precipice, but evidence was conspicuous that the sack walls could not be depended upon for support

if the wheels touched them. The heavy planking that had been used to shore up most of the sack wall problems could not be used where the grade was very steep. Moreover, the men had taken enough trips by autotruck to see that it was not capable of doing the heavy work required of it and that the cost of operating the truck had risen—a machinist was required on all trips to give full attention to the engine, and two men were needed for steering.

Hale's estimate of of $25,000, for the repair of the road and operation of the truck, had risen to $44,000. Landslides had brought down the power line to the summit and it had to be replaced by an underground system. Continuing strikes affecting the Union Iron Works Company slowed production, and Hale was prepared to delay the installation of the dome for another year. However, the company was able to meet its commitment, not by June as promised, but by November. Inopportune heavy rains in October further delayed all work on the mountain, raising fears that the transportation of steel for the dome would not be possible after all. However, as is often the case in California, when the sun came out, the earth dried quickly, allowing roadwork to proceed. A minor irritant amongst this larger drama was a letter from McNally threatening to fence off his property, thus hindering access to the summit. Hale warned he was ready to resort to an injunction against McNally if he proceeded in his folly. Fortunately, McNally surrendered to common sense and the procession of packtrains went on unmolested.

By the end of November the materials for the building and dome were at the summit, all 150 tons. Quickly, workers set to riveting the dome and Ritchey announced that his work polishing the 60-inch mirror was finished "with no error in form exceeding two millionths of an inch."[25] Interior work continued throughout the snowy months of early 1908, and in March Hale initiated the replacement of all sack walls and further modification of the road at critical points. The daunting task of bringing up the delicate 60-inch mirror was at hand and before two months had passed the sharpest turns had been rounded off.

Success began with the first trip on June 3. The huge tube, six feet in diameter and twenty feet in length, was brought up without incident, but the heaviest single load, the five-ton fork and steel float, would be the ultimate test of both the autotruck's ability and the adequacy of the road repairs. The road was still one of unending zigzags, implausible grades, and nightmarish slenderness. By any reckoning it was only a rough trail, where an error in judgment could ruin Hale's dream and the work of years.

In the cool morning air, the truck was loaded and started up the trail. A team of mules followed to help with the tightest turns. The truck strained at the load and frequent small repairs had to be made, but it reached the summit with its massive load intact. Only the mirror remained. The mood was somber as the disk was loaded onto the truck. The men steeled themselves for any eventuality. A dazed reporter from the Los Angeles *Examiner* wrote that the unimaginable task of lifting this ton of deadweight which "the touch of a baby's hand would mar" must be the most tedious and nerve-racking task of the kind ever undertaken.[26]

Hale modestly reported to R. S. Woodward, "the mirror and other large parts of the 60" reflector are now on the mountain."[27] For the moment the drama was over. Hale estimated that the 60-inch reflector would be ready for use in December and, deciding to strike while the iron was hot, asked Woodward to appropriate money for a new 150-foot solar tower as soon as possible. The Snow and the 60-foot tower were in daily use for study of the sun, but Hale, in the same letter, made the case that "at least four telescopes working simultaneously will be needed to make a suitable attack upon solar phenomena." Three weeks later Woodward notified a jubilant Hale that the appropriation would be made.

Just four years after the founding of the observatory, on December 20, 1908, the first photographs were taken with the 60-inch reflector, and it wasn't long until the scientific community was dazzled by its powers. The huge mirror gathered light from stars as distant as the twentieth magnitude. Since two stars differing by one magnitude also differ in brightness by a factor of 2.5, it is easy to see that each magnitude revealed millions of stars never before seen. The edges of the known universe were flung deeper into space, exposing more and more nebulae and ancient globular clusters to the keen eyes of the astronomers. Not only did our understanding of the universe dramatically change, but also that of our own Milky Way. The birth, life, and death of stars, complex though it was, began to take shape as a fruitful source of investigation. Studies poured out of Mount Wilson, colleagues from all over the globe came to observe and learn, and for ten intense years, the 60-inch telescope remained the largest in the world. (Figure 8)

Predictably, Hale had even grander dreams than the 60-inch reflector, knowing that advances in astrophysics depended on larger telescopes with greater light-gathering capabilities. During his early years in California, Hale had met John D. Hooker, a Los Angeles businessman with a flair for amateur astronomy. Hooker listened with interest to Hale's dream of build-

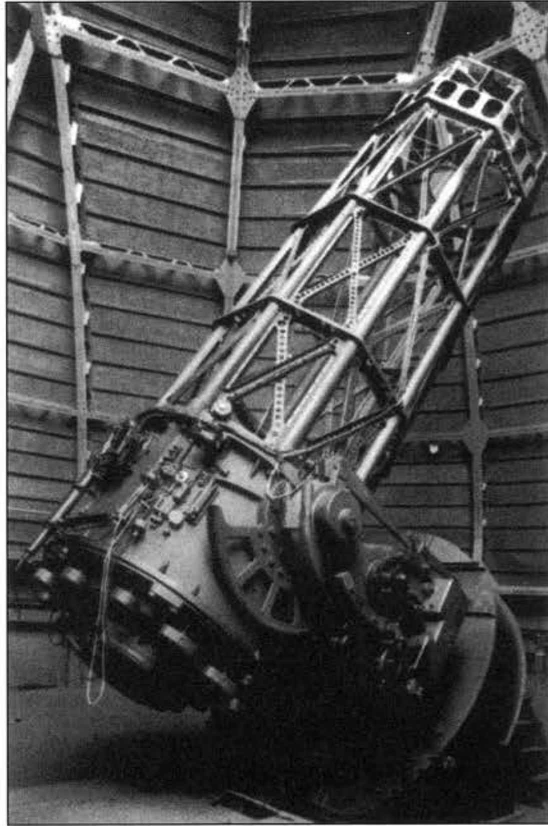


Figure 8. The world's first largest reflecting telescope, Mount Wilson's 60-inch, saw first light on December 20, 1908.

ing an even bigger telescope than the planned 60-inch, one that would surpass by an incalculable margin all existing telescopes. Hooker offered $45,000 for the construction of the mirror; Hale would have to raise the rest. Unsure of the Carnegie Institute's willingness to fund such a venture, Hale wavered, but the allure of a 100-inch mirror proved irresistible and when Hooker urged him to go ahead, Hale could only believe that someone, somewhere, would pay for the expensive mounting, dome, and building. Two years before the 60-inch reflector was completed, the order went out to cast a 100-inch disk, and before first light of the 60-inch, the huge disk of glass for the 100-inch had arrived in Pasadena.

Hale was certain the new mirror would answer the questions now being raised by the 60-inch reflector. Do stars decrease in number as we probe deeper into space? Is our universe infinite? Are the patchy nebulae part of our Milky Way or are they island universes, separate from our

galaxy? What exactly constitutes the life cycle of a star? In order to answer these and other long-standing puzzles, the Carnegie Institute agreed to fund the proposed telescope, but Hale's perennial problem remained: how to transport materials up the inadequate road, which once again had been damaged in the heavy storms of 1909. Where the road had been widened to accommodate the 60-inch reflector, landslides occurred on the fragile upslope. The new mirror weighed 4.5 tons in contrast to the 1 ton of the 60-inch; the yoke and mountings proportionally more. Fire protection at the summit was now deemed a necessity, and a large electric pump as well as several hose reels housed in concrete shelters had to be constructed.

Moreover, the 150 tons of steel for the new 150-foot solar tower telescope were ready to be hauled to the summit. To save money, Hale decided to use mules and wagons for the work, instead of the autotruck. Over 70 tons of cement would be needed to steady the tall frame of the tower, and before long $5,000 had been spent just on mules and wagons for the task ahead. With credit to the husky animals, the steel, cement, and instruments were successfully brought to the site and the 150-foot tower was readied for business. With the smaller tower telescope, small sunspots had been beyond the range of observation, but with the 150-foot they leapt into view, vindicating Hale's need for the bigger instrument. As Hale continued his observations over the following months he witnessed an extraordinary event. The sun-spot vortices of the southern hemisphere of the sun were whirling in the opposite direction. This was the beginning of his discovery of the twenty-two-year sunspot polarity cycle. "Some extraordinary change had occurred in the sun," Hale wrote to his friend James Scherer, but it would take forty years for the phenomenon to be explained.

Ongoing difficulties with the trail during the construction of the 150-foot tower deepened Hale's worries about transporting material for the gigantic 100-inch telescope. At the back of his mind was the constant anxiety that the road would be too weak to withstand heavy loads. The mounting for the telescope was being fabricated at the Fore River shipbuilding plant in Quincy, Massachusetts, and would be shipped by way of the Panama Canal to San Pedro Harbor. The dome, designed by D. H. Burnham of Chicago, would come by rail from the East Coast. By the time sections of the great telescope tube were to be shipped, war clouds were gathering, making the prospect of safe passage uncertain, but although the war interrupted the construction of the telescope, no materials or equipment were jeopardized. Hale, realizing the role of science in any plan of

preparedness, had offered the resources of the Mount Wilson Observatory to President Wilson's war effort. At least war was a fathomable delay, unlike earthquakes or capricious roads.

Once again, the road had to be widened where possible and reinforced where necessary, but even so, it remained the slipknot that could undo Hale's grand scheme. It was characteristic of Hale to take on simultaneous projects with unbounded energy. By the time the 100-inch telescope saw first light, he had founded the greatest observatory in the world against alarming odds, discovered magnetic fields in sunspots, revived the National Academy of Sciences, transformed the Throop Institute, a small polytechnic school, into the first-rate California Institute of Technology, organized astronomy on an international scale through the Solar Union, and produced a steady stream of academic research papers which earned him six medals from as many countries and twelve honorary degrees. Stretched to the limit, he worried that the road up the mountain would prove inadequate. The piper had to be paid. The inhuman pressures took a toll on his health, and several times during the construction of the 100-inch he was obliged to take a rest cure away from Mount Wilson. Walter Adams had been approved by the Carnegie Institute to act as Hale's deputy director during his absences, and George Jones was entrusted with commanding all construction and road work.

In order to transport the huge pieces of steel sections of the pedestal supporting the telescope, Jones engaged a Mack truck from the company's Los Angeles branch. The strong truck proved to be a godsend in the vast construction work in preparation for the building to come. Only once did a near-fatal accident occur. Carrying a load of cement, the truck leaned too far to the canyon edge at a point called Buzzard's Roost and hurtled into the canyon three hundred feet below, taking the driver with it. Adams, along with the assistant driver, managed to leap to safety; the driver also miraculously survived. By 1913, the gigantic piers for the new telescope were in place. The astronomers compared them to the pyramids as a measure of human endeavor, represented by the heroic work of George Jones.[28] The piers rose thirty feet above the ground, supported in two large troughs of mercury to minimize friction. For three years the trucks operated, carrying over 1,800 tons of material to the summit. Falling boulders occasionally halted a truck, but the faithful Mack was able to conquer breathtaking pitches of 18 percent and dealt cavalierly with the 12 twelve gradients. However, when the freight train arrived from the steel mills in the east with

two sections of the telescope's cast iron pedestal, weighing 8 and 11 tons respectively, George Jones despaired. The three-ton Mack was totally unsuited to handle these colossi; trailers weren't useful because of the hairpin turns; and winches were slow and unreliable on the soft shoulders of the trail. Jones placed a call to the Mack truck headquarters and explained the problem. "Is there a truck in the world that could accomplish this task?" he asked. Possibly a 6½-ton Saurer could do the job, he was told. (Figure 9)

Adolph Saurer, originator of the truck bearing his name, had designed a vehicle to transport heavy textile machinery in the Swiss Alps. It was uniquely configured for mountain work and could take switchbacks and steep pitches in stride. But friction brakes were inefficient on the downhill of steep grades, and after a number of accidents, the Swiss government refused to allow passage of the Saurer over certain roads. Saurer, a gifted engineer, then designed the first air-brakes, which converted the engine into a two-cycle air compressor operated by a reverse movement of the throttle-lever, producing a brake effect varying from the mere friction of the mechanism to almost the full driving power of the motor.

The manager of the Los Angeles branch of Mack, J. A. Stoner, came to Mount Wilson to assess the trail and agreed to make a trial trip with the smaller eight-ton pedestal section. If all went well, he would be willing to take up the eleven-ton piece as well. The Carnegie Institute was notified that this was not a business arrangement, but merely a test of the truck. No promises were given, and Stoner made it clear that the chances were overwhelmingly in favor of failure.

The Saurer stood at the bottom of the trail with its shiny new steel wheels and eight-ton pedestal on its chassis. A Mack truck would precede it, carrying a load of three tons, to be used for towing or even holding the Saurer to the road by chains when necessary, and another Mack would follow with timbers to be used to support the edges of the road if they could not stand the strain. Slowly the truck began its Herculean climb while the workers watched in amazement as the trip to the summit went smoothly, even on the steeper grades. With more trepidation than exhilaration, Jones got ready to deliver the eleven-ton section to the foot of the trail. This time, an escort of fifty observers accompanied the truck, all apprehensive, all believing that there was no vehicle on earth mighty enough to carry eleven tons to the top of Mount Wilson under its own power on such a faulty road. The event was so important that two motion picture companies who produced news weeklies assigned their star cameramen to cover the event. (Figure 10)

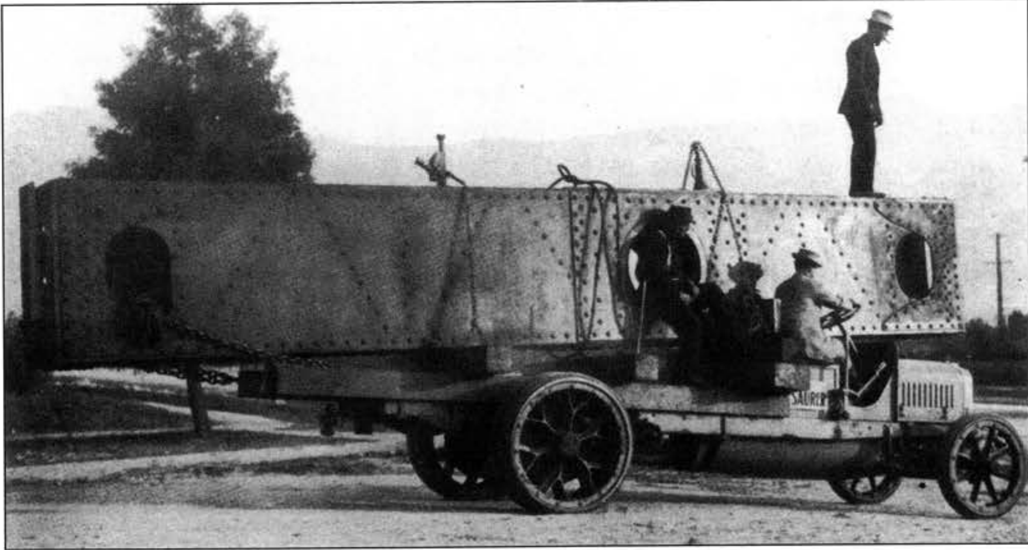


Figure 9. The Saurer 6.5-ton truck ready to climb to the summit with its thirteen-ton load.

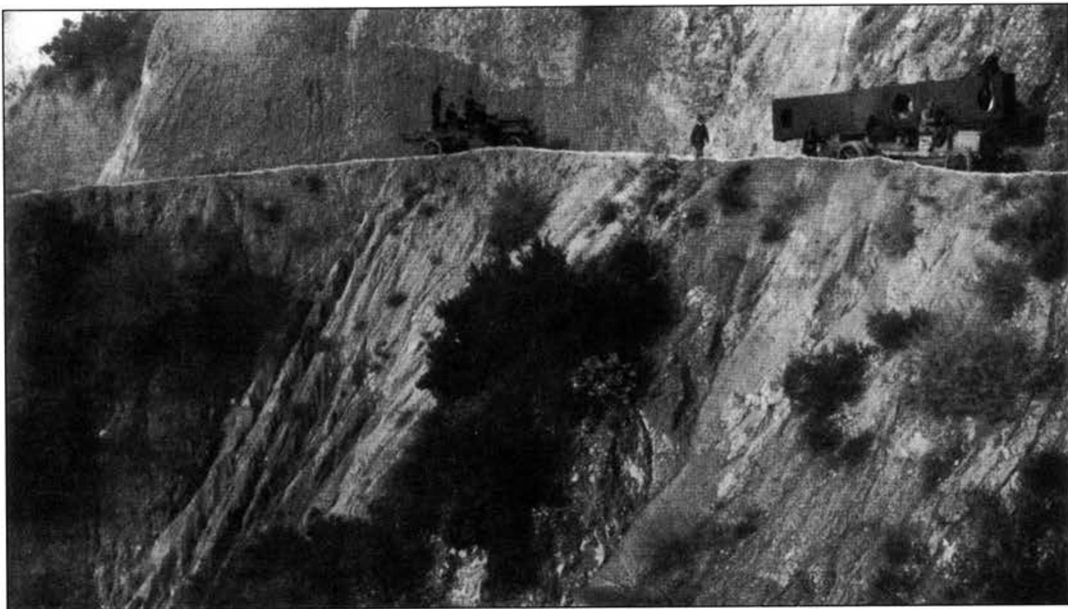


Figure 10. A plunge of two thousand feet is the penalty for a truck's faulty construction or inattentive driver. The Saurer pulled twice its rated capacity.

Stoner was prepared to have the Mack truck pull him through parts of the trail, but the hefty thirty-horsepower Saurer dug in and settled down to the job with startling tenacity. The driver would say later that at the end of the first mile, he felt as if he had gone ten, so exhausting and nerve racking was the effort.[29] On the ascent, the hairpin turns required much skillful backing and filling, but the truck managed unaided until it came to a soft section of the road known as The Desert. No traction could be had, so the Mack pulled the Saurer for a distance of fifty feet. Again, at Martin's Camp where the trail had frozen and thawed, leaving the surface treacherous, the Mack was needed. The driver discovered that when the strain was too much, the Saurer would lug itself almost to the dying point, but if he released the clutch in time, the doughty truck would regain speed and forge ahead. Six hours and twenty minutes after starting out, the truck arrived at the summit. The infamous Devil's Elbow and Buzzard's Roost had not defeated the great Saurer and its talented team. Moreover, there was no evidence of overheating and the cylinder heads were only lukewarm. (Figure 11)

Figure 11. A large boulder weighing twelve hundred pounds fell from the side wall, striking the girder. Note the boulder in the road in front of the second truck.

"Capacity 13,000 pounds. DO NOT OVERLOAD." The grim warning sat on the dashboard of a modified Saurer truck that would carry up the two heaviest pieces of steel for the support of the 100-inch telescope. The problem of weight was truly the archenemy, with each piece weighing over 23,000 pounds. An additional ton's weight of heavy timber, iron chains and steel cable to fasten the huge load firmly to the truck would add to the total. The long mounting obscured the left-hand view of the driver, and Mr. Stoner would have to rely on signals wigwagged to him from the front end of the load. The difficulties facing the men were stupendous. Nobody before had overloaded a Saurer, to their knowledge, and no one knew how the truck would behave under such circumstances. This time backing and filling presented a keen problem because of the long load. Would there be room on the severe hairpin turns to maneuver? (Figures 12 and 13)

Running the engine in low gear, Stoner started out on December 12, 1915, at 8:45 A.M. The average grade of 12 percent offered no difficulties, but on the steeper pitches the center of gravity was thrown so far to the rear that several men had to pile on the radiator and front axle to keep the front wheels on the ground.

At 3:10 in the afternoon, the truck pulled up to the summit in triumph. Not once had it needed the help of the Mack, and as before, the engine ran cool. The second section was brought up without incident the following day. It is no exaggeration to say that without the remarkable truck these immense burdens of 23,000 pounds could not have reached the summit. The pack animals had borne the bulk of construction, contributing their spectacular service to the world's foremost temple of science. "All these animals were highly temperamental, and their characteristics were doubtless responsible for the development of the now rapidly vanishing group of men of remarkable skill and lurid vocabulary who drove them," Walter Adams wrote.[30] One of the muleskinners even rose to the rank of astronomer, a feat that would not be admissible in modern times. Milton Humason began his career as a bellboy at the Mount Wilson Hotel. Soon after, he became the driver of a packtrain, taking all sorts of equipment up to the observatory. When he was offered the position of janitor at the observatory, he was delighted, as living on the mountaintop was all the young man aspired to. Eventually he was made a night assistant, working first on a 6-inch, then a 10-inch, and ultimately the 60-inch and 100-inch telescopes. He disclosed exceptional aptitude as an observer and was recognized by the astronomers for his patience and perseverance on spectro-

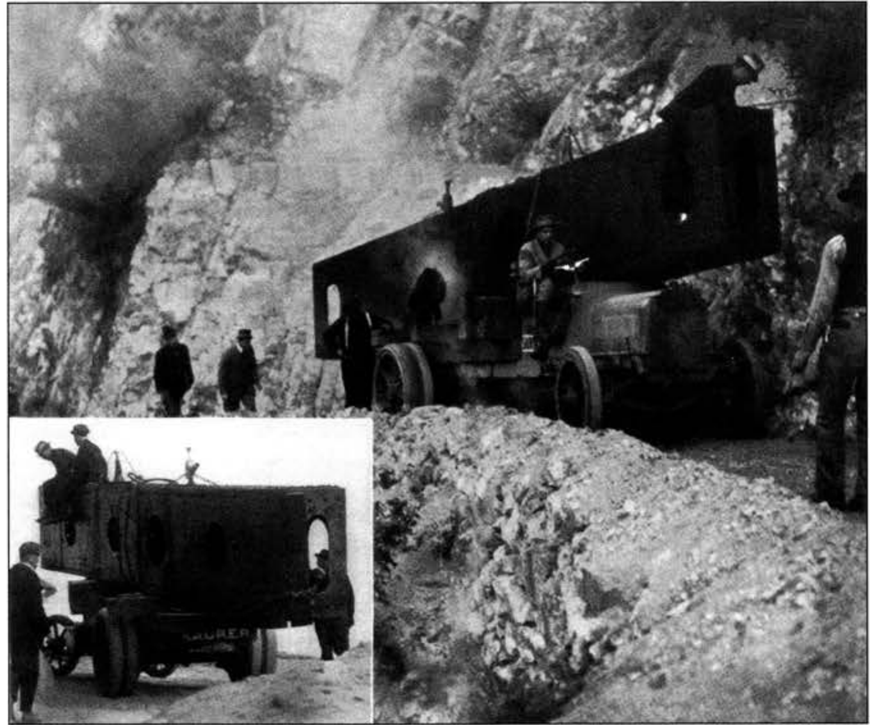


Figure 12. Lower view: backing and filling on a sharp turn.
Large view: the rear wheel of saurer crushes through
the soft, narrow roadway on the brink.

scopic observations demanding exposures as long as thirteen hours. At first Hale had been reluctant to let this grade school dropout become a member of the team, but when Humason began chronicling the velocity of nebulae or red shifting, as it became known, Hale apologized and approved the appointment. Humason went on to receive an honorary doctorate from the university at Lund in Sweden. Assistance from these diverse and humble sources contributed fundamentally to the success of the Mount Wilson Observatory.

The next challenge for the Saurer would be to convey the fragile 100-inch mirror to its home. The mirror at 9,000 pounds weighed much less than the mounting, but was infinitely more delicate. Made from wine bottle glass, it is the largest mirror ever made from a solid disk of glass. On July 17, 1917, with war still raging, the mirror was quietly brought to the top of the mountain. Previous runs with heavier material had equipped

Figure 13. Near-disaster when the road collapsed beneath a Mack Truck hauling part of the tube assembly, for the 100-inch, to the summit.

the drivers with solid knowledge of the road, widened but still dangerous, resulting in an uneventful trip.

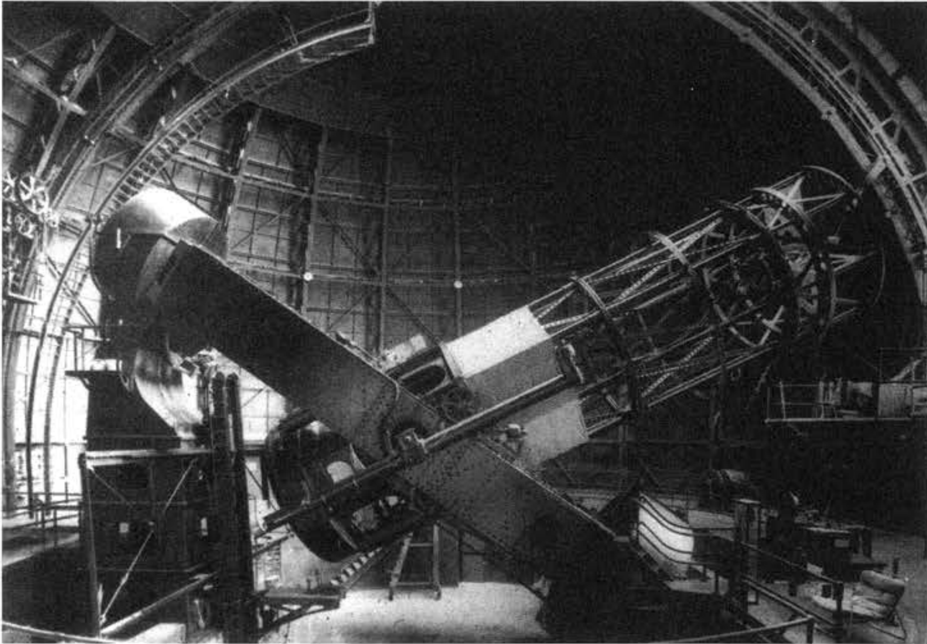
When the telescope was ready for use it alone would have over 100 tons of moving structure, but careful counterbalancing and the use of mercury bearings would allow these parts to be moved easily and positioned accurately. Welding had not come into widespread use, and the metalwork was made heavier by the rivets that held it together. The moving parts of the dome weighed 600 tons and would be rotated by 28 four-wheeled trucks, running on circular rails, to be constructed after the dome was completed in order to accomplish the highest level of smoothness possible. Hundreds of pounds of steel and bronze made up the massive telescope drive, which would point the telescope with precision and compensate for the Earth's rotation. The worm gear had to mesh perfectly with a worm wheel seventeen feet in diameter. The two halves of this great wheel were

hauled separately to the top of the mountain where they were bolted together and the 1440 precision teeth lapped once the wheel was in place. Gear boxes and solenoids, electric motors and levers made up a chain of relays allowing the telescope to be slewed in celestial latitude and longitude. For the next three decades the magnificent Mount Wilson 100-inch telescope dominated the field of astronomy as the largest and most powerful telescope in the world. (Figure 14)

Numerous other pieces of equipment necessary for the electrical system of such a huge instrument had also been installed. Direct current motors, counterweights, observing platforms, cranes, ebonite panels, and much auxiliary equipment had been hauled to the observatory. "The building is in fact infiltrated by the cotton-clad tentacles of a huge wiring loom whose imaginative installation is a model of neatness and discretion."[31] (Figure 15)

By 1929, the first leg of the Angeles Crest Highway had been constructed, and in 1934 the modern two-lane highway, wide enough for any type of vehicle or any amount of weight, was completed as far as Red Box Junction. Until the turn of the millennium, transportation to the summit ceased to present difficulties.

When Georgia State University was granted the opportunity to build a large interferometry system on the observatory grounds, equipment and materials once again rolled up the mountain. This time it was easy. That is, until the telescopes had to be placed. The Center For High Angular Resolution Astronomy, the CHARA Array as the system is called, is a series of six 1-meter optical telescopes contained in small dome enclosures set in a Y-shaped pattern, in which the resolution is the sum of the baseline distance among the telescopes, in this case 350 meters. That means that the resolution, but not the light-gathering capability, is equal to that of a thousand-foot mirror. Such clarity is unparalleled for the study of binary and triple stars; measuring the distances, diameters, masses, and luminosities of stars; the detection of other planetary systems; the study of low-mass cooler stars; and the study of stellar nurseries. The resolution detail is the equivalent of two hundred micro-arcseconds, or the angular size of a nickel seen from a distance of 10,000 miles. It is currently among the most powerful interferometry systems in the world, having forty times the angular resolution of the ten-meter Keck telescope at Mauna Kea, and one hundred times the resolving detail of the Hubble Space Telescope. As with the original Mount Wilson telescopes, the site was chosen for its stable air and number of clear days in the year.



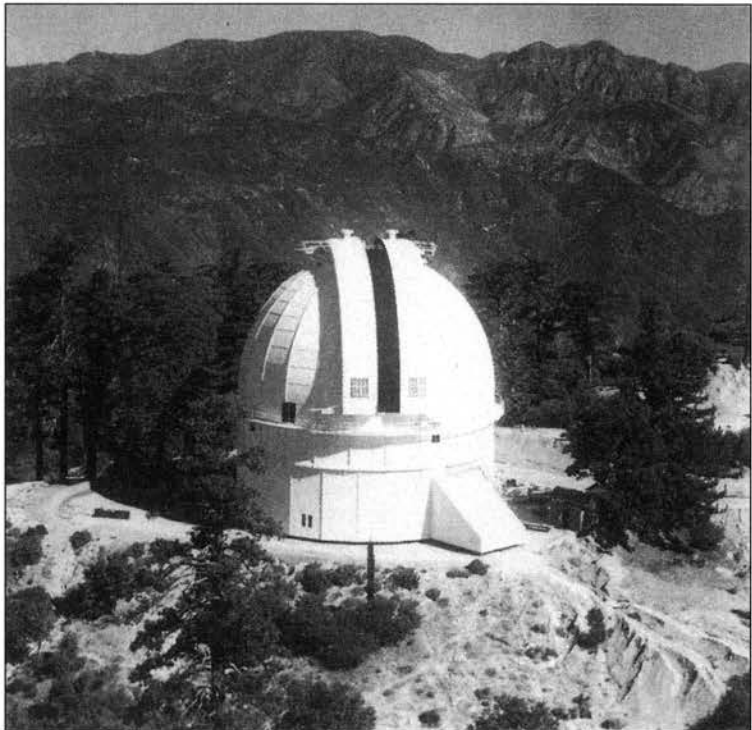


Figure 14. For over thirty years the 100-inch telescope was the largest in the world.

Figure 15. The completed magnificent 100-inch telescope dome.

After carefully mapping the position of the six domes in order to maximize the area of sky that could be seen by each telescope on the mountainous terrain, the crew poured cement to form the base of each enclosure dome. This time it was not the condition of the road that posed a problem, but the expense, wear and tear, and the lengthy timeline of using the road to transport the six heavy pre-fabricated enclosure domes. Figuring out a way to get the enclosures on the bases in the shortest time, at the least cost, would be the contractor's quandary. Sea West Enterprises, awarded the contract for designing and engineering the housing components, as well as fabricating and installing the enclosure domes for the telescopes, furnished a unique solution. By using helicopters, they argued, the impact on the local terrain and forest growth would be minimal, and the requirements for remote-site staging of heavy transport and large cranes or other high lift equipment would be eliminated.

Sea West Enterprises joined the bidding war late, but their competitive price won them the contract for first phase construction of the Array. Eric Simison, CEO, orchestrated a production as precisely tuned and as beautiful to watch as a ballet. A prototype enclosure was fabricated at Sea West's plant in San Dimas. It was disassembled and taken to the large Mount Wilson parking lot. Closed to traffic for two months, the lot became the construction site of the remaining five enclosures. The Y-shaped pattern where the bases stood flanked the 100-inch dome, with two bases along each arm. Access roads along the Y were mere trails, a familiar story, and would require widening in order to use trucks for transport. Furthermore, trucks and heavy equipment would disrupt the ecosystems. The necessity of taking several trips to construct each enclosure would risk mishap. Using helicopters was an inspired solution. (Figure 16)

On a still, crystal-clear January morning the crews assembled before daylight for the spectacular airlift. Nerves were as taut as any Hale's team felt the day the Saurer labored up the mountain with its massive load. "We were keyed up waiting for daylight so we could begin," said Simison. "We expected success but the waiting was tough, though we were pleased the morning was so cold. We knew the helicopter would ride the air."[32] Cold air is dense air, making it possible to lift the weight of the 7½-ton enclosure dome, something that could not be accomplished in warm air. The helicopter was the Erickson version of the large, old Sikorsky "Sky Horse" used for military purposes. Erickson had bought the patent and redesigned the helicopter into the present day "Sky Crane" used in the

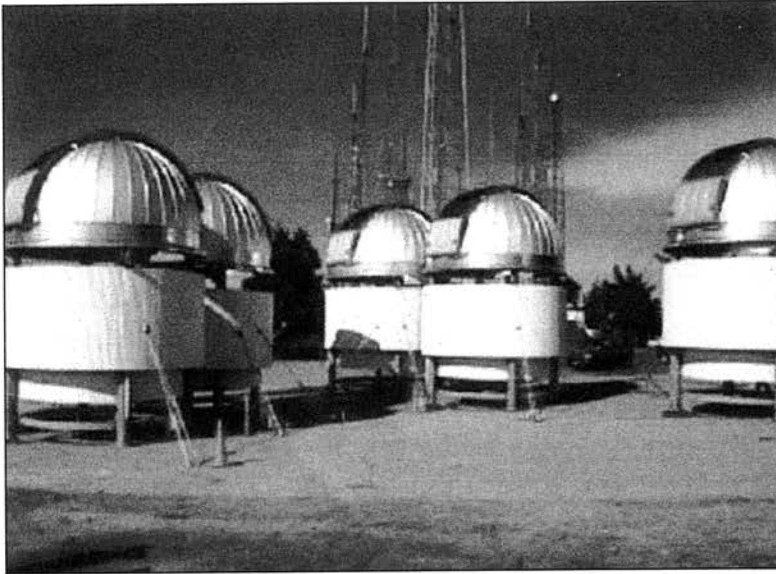


Figure 16. (*above*) Domes stand ready to be lifted to the summit for CHARA (Center for High Angular Resolution).

(*right*) Dome successfully airlifted to base on Mount Wilson.

transport of heavy equipment and as a water tanker in firefighting. The type engaged by Sea West allowed for a rear-facing pilot who would be able to visually guide the machine to its exact placement on the base. The helicopter would carry fewer than ten minutes' worth of fuel. Weight considerations precluded taking on any more fuel. Simison figured the transaction to deliver and install each enclosure would take about seven minutes, including refueling. When he had first advised Dr. Harold McAlister, director of the CHARA project, that the operation would be completed in an hour, McAlister thought it implausible.

As dawn broke, the helicopter hovered above the first enclosure as the rigging crew attached the helicopter lift cables and threaded two trick-lines attached to the helicopter through a bolt hole on the bottom column of the enclosure. The pilot cautiously lifted his cargo off the ground and flew to the first base. When the helicopter had the enclosure roughly twelve feet above the base, the catch crew grasped the free-swinging trick-lines and hand-threaded them through the corresponding bolt holes on the base, bringing some control over the flying, rotating, bouncing dome. Forty-eight bolts per enclosure had to match perfectly with forty-eight bolt holes on the base and each time the pilot was able to set down the enclosure in exact accord with the base. The helicopter lift cables were electronically released and the trick-lines lifted out of the perfectly-aligned unit. The catch crew secured several of the forty-eight bolts before rushing to the next base to await delivery. A third crew anchored the remaining bolts. In all, a cast of thirty worked in stunning synchrony to complete the placement of all six enclosures in fifty-four minutes.

As in previous Mount Wilson installations, risk and pain were present. The risk came from the certainty that a helicopter's rotors will cone up with weight. If the pilot reads that the coning is at a critical point, he must dump his cargo or the blades will bend beyond their capacity to keep him airborne. The pain came from the unhappy creation of an electric field. A helicopter's rotors with trick-line attached will generate a field, and the first person to touch the line becomes the ground, experiencing a nice low-amp, 110-volt hit. The Sea West crew democratically distributed this honor by taking turns! No one was more pleased with the operation than McAlister, whose own mania for painstaking detail accounted for the ultimate success of the CHARA Array. Like Hale a century earlier, McAlister is on the cutting-edge of new technology.

Once starlight falls on the six telescope mirrors, it is transferred to alu-

minum tubes from which the air has been evacuated and taken to a stadium-length building where the light rays are bounced between mirrors until all are exactly cued up to meet at one location, where they will interact to produce a series of wave patterns, called fringes. This technique of simulating the properties of a single large instrument by combining the light from several smaller ones is an inexpensive way to build a gargantuan mirror. McAlister's first budget forecast of $11.5 million is a fraction of what it would cost to build and launch a space-based telescope, the only other feasible method of obtaining definitive clarity.

The Hale-McAlister comparison does not end with their mutual forays into uncharted astrophysical frontiers and concomitant transportation problems. To risk as much as these men did takes large sums of money. In each case the scientist took on the role of fundraiser, siphoning precious time into a disagreeable but necessary pursuit; in each case these modest, hugely talented men combined the two disparate activities with uncommon grace and success. Dr. Robert Laughlin, who shared the 1998 Nobel Prize for physics, vowed he would use his award as a forum for public support of research. "I owe a debt of gratitude to the taxpayers in my parents' generation," Laughlin said. "I accuse my own generation of not living up to their responsibility to support basic research for future generations."[33]

For nearly four decades, the Mount Wilson Observatory was home to the world's two largest telescopes. The phenomenal output of research changed forever man's view of the universe. It was here that Seth Nicholson discovered another four moons of Jupiter; that Edwin Hubble demonstrated the astonishing expansion of the universe; that Harlow Shapley proved our solar system was not the center of our Milky Way galaxy; that Walter Adams and Alfred Joy discovered a new distance scale using spectroscopic parallax. Much of the progress in astrophysics during the first half of the last century sprang from the countless "firsts" that took place on the hard-won summit of the mountain.

"The art of research makes difficult problems soluble by devising means of getting at them," observes Peter Medawar in *Pluto's Republic*, but it is easier to acknowledge this in the more accessible sciences such as biology and chemistry.[34] Astrophysics may seem remote from everyday life, but what could be more intriguing than understanding how our universe is organized; where its margins are; what it consists of; what existed before our solar system; how it was formed; how it will end; and if there is other sentient life? These were the large questions that Hale set out to answer at

the turn of the twentieth century and that Harold McAlister is attending to in the nascent years of the twenty-first century. The intersection of search, discovery, and interpretation is a triad beguiling to all, and wherever it occurs, powerful instruments and methods will be the means. Constructing, transporting, and placing these marvels will be the obstacles.

Notes

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Municipal Auto Camps

To a great Westerner
Willis Osborne

by Willis Osborne

In the years preceding America's entry into World War I, more and more Americans began to vacation by traveling in their automobiles instead of by train. There was a sense of adventure traveling in the family machine that the train could not equal. What kinds of roads families would encounter and how their contraption would hold up were part of the adventure. There were sights to see along the highway that rails did not reach. Further, auto vacationers had greater freedom of when and where to go, since they were not constrained by rails or timetables. To lessen expenses, many families touring by automobile brought along camping gear. In the earliest days of auto trekking, many vacationers would stop and set up camp wherever they could, sometimes in a farmer's field, often along a riverbank, in a city park, or any other handy spot. Downtown hotels were too expensive for many families, and motels were still more than a decade in the future. An alternative was needed.

That alternative came when a few enterprising towns began offering special camping areas in city parks or other convenient locations in their communities. The idea was to encourage campers to stay overnight in town, shop there, and maybe even come back and stay. The idea caught on. Soon there were many municipal campgrounds throughout the United States, especially in the West and the Midwest. Most were free; some charged a small fee. By 1919, dozens of California communities boasted

municipal auto camps, including several southern California cities, among them Long Beach, Santa Monica, Redlands, San Bernardino, and Pomona.

In the early years of the twentieth century, southern California was considered primarily a winter vacation destination, but by 1920 increasing numbers began visiting the area during the summer months, many by automobile. There was much to do around Los Angeles. Besides enjoying a surprisingly pleasant summer climate, tourists could visit Gay's Lion Farm in El Monte, Cawston's Ostrich Farm in South Pasadena, and Busch Gardens in Pasadena. They could gawk at movie stars in Hollywood, go up and into the mountains on the Mt. Lowe Railway, cruise to Catalina, swim in the Pacific at any number of sandy beaches, check out the amusement piers from Santa Monica to Long Beach, or enjoy driving through orange groves beneath towering mountains.

Hollywood Boulevard was becoming an attraction itself, and motion picture stars were beginning to build mansions in the nearby hills. In 1920, Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford completed the reconstruction of an old lodge in the hills and named it "Pickfair." Using maps purchased from Street hawkers, searching for the homes of movie stars became another area attraction. Downtown Los Angeles, centered along South Broadway from Third to Ninth Streets, was a busy place with department stores, restaurants, and a booming theater district. Nevertheless, one visitor, writing on a postcard dated December 7, 1920, was not impressed. He wrote: ". . . my first impressions haven't impressed me much. It's not the town Frisco is. The streets seem full of farmers from Iowa, Kansas, and Indiana—like myself. May stay here a week and form a better opinion."

If the writer did form a better opinion, he was not alone, as tourism blossomed in southern California throughout the 1920s. The growth in tourism was aided by the founding of the All Year Club of Southern California in 1921. The impetus for the club's beginning was a visit by an apartment house owner to Harry Chandler, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*. The owner complained that her apartments were filled during the winter by eastern vacationers but stood vacant during the summer. Pushing for increased summer tourism, the club advertised with the slogan. "Sleep under a blanket every night all summer in Southern California."

Factors other than All Year Club advertising may have played a part in expanding tourism in southern California, including increased ownership of autos and more money available for travel. But this much is known: total visitors to the Los Angeles area was estimated to be about 250,000 in 1921 and was estimated at close to 660,000 by 1928.

The era of the municipal auto camp was short. Beginning with the postwar expansion of auto tourism in 1919, the camps were almost out of existence by 1928. Furthermore, the heyday of the auto camps was even shorter. Their greatest popularity began in 1919 and by the mid-1920s middle class vacationers, the camps' major tenants, were already looking for other alternatives.

Two major reasons led to the demise of the municipal auto camp. First, the camps were originally operated for affluent travelers with the expectation that they would spend money at local businesses. As time went by, others began to use the camps, including salesmen, transients, and less affluent trekkers with little or no cash to spend locally. Further, as these lower income travelers came to the camps in larger numbers, the more prosperous families began using the privately-owned camps or left the camping scene altogether. Some campers became annoyed at the noise produced by those loading their cars and leaving before dawn and those who arrived late at night.

Second, the American free enterprise system began to work here. Beginning mainly in California, inventive proprietors saw an opportunity to make money by opening auto camps with better facilities at a price travelers could afford. The private camp idea first grew in southern California because the local camps were often overcrowded; some enterprising observers, seeing an opportunity to make money, opened small camps throughout the area.

Warren James Belasco, in his excellent book, *Americans on the Road*, wrote of a couple, the Bearl Sprotts, who traveled from Memphis to Los Angeles. Noticing the pleasant lifestyle at the Los Angeles camp, its overcrowding, and a seven-day limit, the Sprotts purchased a lot near Lincoln Park and rented tent space to auto campers. Business was brisk and they were able to expand their camp each year. By 1933 they had over two hundred units, mostly cabins. As the earliest private camps became successful, the idea spread throughout the nation. The era of the municipal camp was coming to its end.

Los Angeles County Municipal Camps

A Bakersfield *Californian* survey, published August 5, 1922, found there were 1,850 municipal auto camps in the United States, with California far in the lead with 168. A year earlier, the Auto Club of Southern California magazine, *Touring Topics*, had listed twenty-one towns and cities in the Los

Angeles area with municipal auto camps. It would be too lengthy to discuss all of those camps. Therefore, brief studies of three camps follow as examples of those offered by a small town (Glendora), a bustling little city (Pomona), and a metropolis (Los Angeles).

Glendora

Glendora opened its campground in 1921. It was located just east of Glendora's main street, Glendora Avenue (then known as Michigan Avenue). It was located a half-block north of Foothill Boulevard, at that time the major east-west highway through the town. In the late 1920s Alosta Avenue, a half-mile south, became the major highway through the foothill community. Today, it is known as Route 66. On the south side of the camp was the Big Dalton Wash. Today the site is occupied by Neufeld's Glendora Promenade, a firm dealing in fine jewelry and gifts.

The camp was free and provided visitors with ovens, a cooking stove, a covered kitchen, and dining room. The fireplace for cooking was built of granite cobblestones. The covered dining space could accommodate several families and was located in the shade of a large live oak tree. Running water was available and a comfort station was close by.

In January 1923, the local newspaper, *The Glendora Gleaner*, stated that over one thousand visitors from almost every state had spent at least a night at the camp and reported that "all campers were high in their praise of Glendora and the camp." AUTOIST DELIGHTED WITH PARKING GROUNDS heralded an earlier *Gleaner* headline in its February 25, 1921, edition. "The many pretty compliments passed upon the auto camping grounds ought to be highly gratifying to the city fathers," the article began, and then added that "the grounds were as clean and as hard as a brick yard."

The *Gleaner* reported there were many positive notes left by campers upon leaving the grounds. A long-time Glendora resident, as a child, recalled staying at the camp in 1925, along with another family that followed the harvests up and down California. While his family returned to stay, migrant use of the camps was a factor leading to the demise of the camps. Glendora's camp closed in 1926, according to Don Pflueger's outstanding local history, *Glendora, Annuls of a Community*. At the same time, a larger privately-owned camp opened along the main highway on the east side of the town. Here we see the two major reasons for the demise of the municipal camps at work: their use by travelers less affluent than the camps were originally planned for, and the proliferation of better-equipped, inexpensive private camps.

Pomona

The Pomona campground opened in 1919 and was located in Ganesha Park at the Preciado Street entrance. Unlike the Glendora, Los Angeles, and other community campgrounds built specifically for tourists, it appears as though the Pomona camp "just happened." That is, campers began using Ganesha Park as their stopping place before it became a camp and the city decided to make it more convenient for overnighters and added facilities later.

In the April 22, 1919 edition of the *Pomona Progress*, park master J. M. Paige stated:

> When I took my trip to San Francisco by automobile several months ago I realized as I never have before the value of a camp site for automobilists. It is something that few cities have provided and yet automobile parties touring the country will go miles out of their way to get a desirable campsite, and it is seldom that they remain overnight near any city that they do not spend considerable money with the merchants of the place.

Paige must have done a fine job setting up the campsite. By mid-April the Automobile Club of Southern California had set up signs along prominent highways directing motorists to the Ganesha Park site. By mid-June of 1919, the *Progress* crowed that the campground was said to be one of the best in the land. The camp had nine stoves with available fuel, water, light, and sanitary conditions. Fuel for the stoves was supplied from trimmings from the park's many trees.

A *Pomona Progress* headline, "FREE CAMPING GROUND ASSET FOR POMONA," introduced an article bragging of the camp's success. The article told of the many campers who praised the city for its facilities and who promised to tell friends when they got home. One happy camper told Superintendent Paige, "He had only praise for what Pomona is doing for motorists passing through this city and desiring to spend a day or two here while looking at the various attractions which the city offers to eastern tourists."

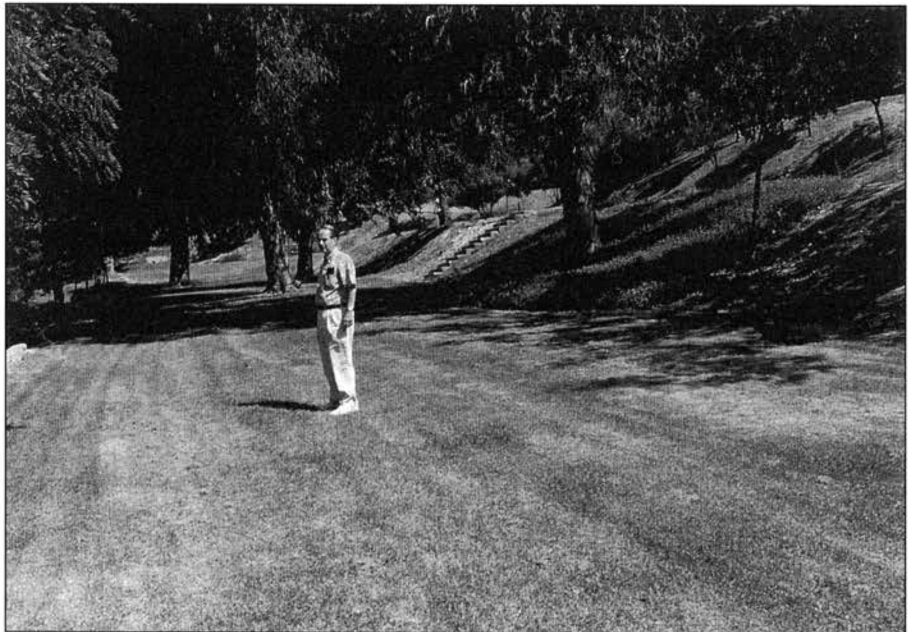
Finally, one advantage Pomona's camp had over many others was the nearby plunge. What could be better than a cool dip after a busy day? The camp was a success. The location of the former camp is today a pleasant, shady area at the Preciado entrance. The writer was unable to find the date when the Pomona camp closed. Like most other camps, it just faded away.

Los Angeles

In the July 1916 issue of *Touring Topics*, the Automobile Club of Southern California implored the city of Los Angeles to open an auto camp for

(*above*) Los Angeles Municipal Auto Camp, Elysian Park, ca. 1921.
U.S.C. Special Collection.

(*below*) Writer standing in the same spot today.



tourists. The article stated that Los Angeles and the larger cities of southern California had "something to prove in the matter of hospitality to visiting motorists." It continued:

> Los Angeles is included in the itinerary of so many auto travelers that some such provision (i.e., an auto camp) for the comfort of the city's transient should be made. The establishment of such a free camping park would further advertise the hospitality of Southern California and would help to induce travelers to journey by way of Los Angeles on their summer outing trips.

Feeling that the City of Angels might be losing out to other nearby communities, *Touring Topics* again pushed for a Los Angeles camp in its January 1919 issue:

> What's the matter with Los Angeles? Here is the greatest motoring center in the United States. . . . Here is everything to make glad the heart of the visiting motorist except one thing—and that one thing is a well appointed, conveniently located automobile camp site.

The Auto Club then suggested Elysian Park as the site for the tourist camp, citing that markets and gasoline stations were close and the camp would be only two miles from the center of the city.

Finally, on July 14, 1920, the grand opening of the Los Angeles municipal campground was celebrated. *Touring Topics* proclaimed the camp as the finest in the country. It offered tourists running water, gas for cooking, dressing rooms, shower baths, and washtubs. It was near the edge of Elysian Park, "high above smoke and noise of the city and sheltered by enormous trees." In order to avoid conflicts over camping space the *Touring Topics* article stated, ". . . the new campground has been provided with mathematically laid out stalls in which flivver may be tethered just like old dobbin used to be on the farm."

The campground was labeled "an outdoor hotel" by some because of the many amenities. Because of the spreading popularity of the municipal campground, regulations covering their use had to be adopted, some of them statewide. Some of the rules included the following:

> Campgrounds to be open at all hours, day and night.
> No repair work on cars.
> No traveling motor salesmen to be permitted to use the camps as headquarters and that no sales of any article except provisions be allowed in the camp.
> A maximum of two weeks for any one visit, with privilege of renewal under local control.

> The essential facilities are: telephone service in custodian's house, gas for cooking, electricity for lighting public comfort stations, water showers, or bath.
> Too many facilities bordering on luxury should not be installed in the campground competing with hotels, restaurants, etc.

"CARS FROM ALL STATES PARK HERE" boasted a *Los Angeles Times* headline in January 1923. The Chamber of Commerce reported that 6,141 cars registered at the Elysian Park camp, totaling 18,271 persons. Campers were occasionally turned away. Despite the popularity of the Elysian Park and other camps, the handwriting was on the wall for the continued existence of the municipal camps. Private camps like the Sprott's near Lincoln Park began sprouting all over the country. Later, entrepreneurs began building cottages to rent to travelers, which eventually led to the motel. The era of the municipal camps was short, lasting from about 1919 to the mid-late 1920s. Much searching among archives and newspapers has not revealed to the author the exact dates of the closing of the Glendora, Pomona, and Los Angeles camps. The Los Angeles campsite is shown on the 1927 Auto Club of Southern California map of Los Angeles, but is not found on later Auto Club maps. The Pomona campground probably closed around the same time.

The Los Angeles campsite is easily identified today. By driving east on Broadway from Chinatown or driving west over the North Broadway Bridge, turn up the hill at Casanova Street. A short drive up the hill, with homes on the left and Elysian Park on the right, the seeker will find a park road going to the right. Just above the park road one will notice three grass-covered terraces parallel to Casanova Street. Park the car and walk around the area shaded by huge trees. Imagine early campers swapping their tales of the road. In the short lives of the Los Angeles, Glendora, and Pomona camps, I am certain many tales were told.

More Camps

Specific information about other municipal camps in Los Angeles County is hard to come by. However, a listing of campgrounds throughout California appeared in the May 1921 issue of *Touring Topics* with the following local campgrounds:

Alhambra: This camp was located in a eucalyptus grove at the corner of Main and Poplar Streets. Fifty cents per day per "machine." It had hot and cold showers, a laundry, a gas-equipped community kitchen, and tables.

Los Angeles Municipal Auto Camp, Elysian Park, ca. 1921.
U.S.C. Special Collection.

Long Beach: Open all year. Located twelve blocks east of Pine Avenue in the Belmont district. No further information could be found.

Pasadena: Located in Brookside Park. Old maps seem to locate it south of today's Rose Bowl by the picnic grounds. The twenty-five-cent-per-day cost included water and wood.

Redondo Beach: The listing stated, "Free for limited time but may fix small charge. Comprises two blocks and has plenty of shade. On Sapphire and South Helberta streets, just opposite wharf three."

San Gabriel: This campground was located next to the mission on the east side. It had tables, a community stove, water, and lots of shade.

Santa Monica: Located at Ocean and Colorado. Cost was twenty-five cents a day and the camp offered ovens, shade, a "woman attendant," and a location close to the beach.

Other communities in the greater Los Angeles area but outside Los Angeles County that offered camps for auto tourists included Anaheim, Chino, Corona, Fullerton, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Redlands, Rialto, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Santa Ana.

Finally, despite the accolades for the Los Angeles campground, the largest in all of California was located in San Diego's Balboa Park. It was located at the north end of the California-Panama Exposition grounds and could accommodate 500 campers at twenty-five cents per day per auto.

So the age of automobile travel has advanced from the day when travel weary vacationers set up their tents to spend the night at a convenient spot along the road, later in municipal camps. Today there are modern campgrounds complete with swimming pool, hot tub, laundry, and other amenities for "campers" traveling in recreational vehicles, some as large as a Greyhound bus. I wonder what's next.

Sources

Warren James Belasco; *Americans on the Road, From Autocamp to Motel, 1910–1945* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1979). Also available in paperback (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1997), it is an outstanding account of America's touring habits covered from a national viewpoint. Anyone interested in this subject should read this book. The author has indicated in the text when specific information was taken from this work.

Newspaper sources are indicated in the text. The author wishes to acknowledge help from Morgan Yates, corporate archivist, Automobile Club of Southern California, who provided me with maps, which helped me locate the Elysian Park camp; Dace Taub, curator of Regional History Collection, University of Southern California; and Hynda Rudd and staff, Los Angeles City Archives Center, for their help in my lost cause in finding the date and official reason for the closing of the Los Angeles camp.

The Authors

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Willis Osborne was born in Los Angeles and has had a lifelong interest in southern California history and culture. Following discharge from the U.S. Navy in 1946, he attended USC, where he received his B.A. and M.A. degrees in education. He taught in the public schools for forty-four years, the last forty in Glendora. He was a yearbook advisor for thirty years. Following retirement, Willis began working on his long time goal of writing about historical items of personal interest. His numerous articles have appeared in the *California Territorial Quarterly*, the *Glendora*, the Los Angeles Corral's *Branding Iron,* and the San Dimas Corral's *Pony Express.* He has presented slide programs on the Old Ridge Route, Curry's Camp Baldy, and Old Glendora to many historical societies and service organizations. He is a former Sheriff of the San Dimas Westerners and has been a Los Angeles Corral member since 1994.

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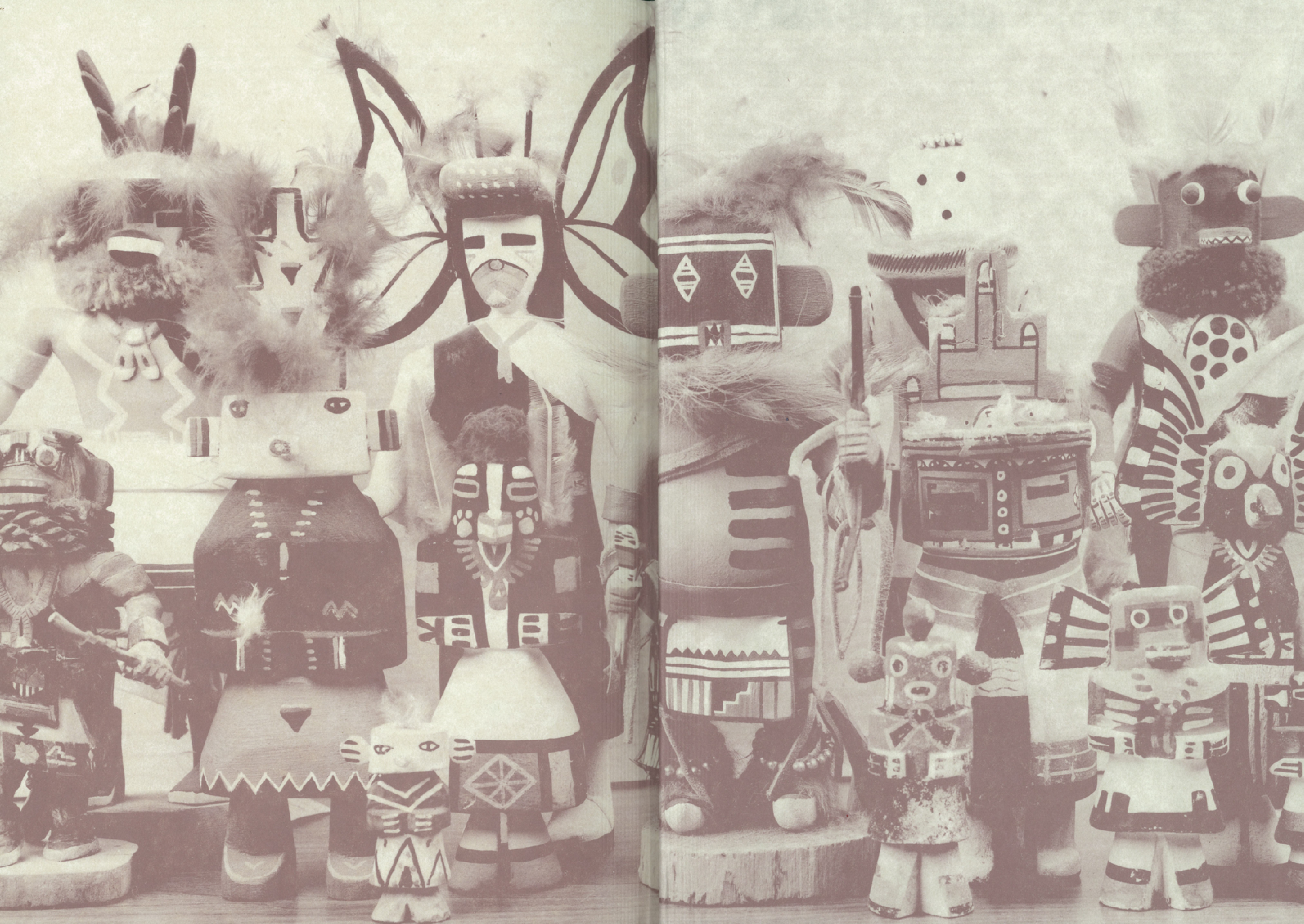

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