

# SANTA CRUZ YESTERDAYS

Sawyer Preston

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(From the Preston Sawyer Collection) S. F. NEWSPAPER STUNT HERE IN EARLY '90s

It was just before the end of horsecar days in Santa Cruz (the electric were but a couple of years in the future) when this picturesque "coach and four" was photographed about 67 years ago.

The scene is within the heart of the downtown business district. And the occasion is related to the "paper train" promotion of the San Francisco Examiner, then reaching out to adjacent communities available by train for distribution of their publication the day of issue.

Arriving via Watsonville, as pictured in the January 20 Sentinel, the bannered first train

was met by the above equipage at the depot with true fanfare. For George Hastings and his Santa Cruz Concert Band filled the conveyance. And how they could fill the air "when they made with the music!"

## Banner Bearers

As the train had been, so were the horses carriers of banners boosting the metropolitan daily. The outfit was the Pacific Ocean House bus, probably hired for the occasion, with Sam Miller of the Miller and Lincoln Stables, driving. (Site of the stables was the Drennan building, present location of Byrne Bros. Hardware).

Presumably H. E. Irish was the local Examiner agent, for the scene was made at the Irish store (now Bowman-Forgey), and the well-known stationer himself is in the center of the group standing. Actually, the Irish store was at the extreme left, from the photographer's angle. Adjoining it at the time, was the Great Eastern Tea company's store, with its large "T"-shaped sign, illuminated at night.

The era of "gingerbread" ornamentation in architecture is evidenced by the fancy decoration of the simple wooden awning in the background and the more substantial porch at left, over the sidewalk.

## "Flour Depot"

Under the porch was then the produce exchange and "Santa Cruz Flour Depot" of A. M. Johnston, who later moved to the Farmers Union building, a large and imposing business block at Pacific and Soquel avenues, where the Bank of America stands today.

Coincidentally, A. A. Taylor moved his Santa Cruz Surf also to the same building from one of several other locations (seen in

the near background), behind the horses.

For many years a photograph gallery was upstairs over the Irish store. About where the tea store was, later was McCarrier's cigar store. Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Sherer, who conducted the studio for many years, are still local residents, but have been sometime retired from active business.

In a door window of the "Daily Surf" office back of the lead horses is a poster advertising a Shakespearean tragedian appearing at Knight's Opera House here.

Almost directly across the street, for some time, in the middle Teens, the H. D. Whites conducted one of Santa Cruz' popular movie theaters of the flicker era. It was called the "Princess" and featured film fare of an earlier, pre-sound period.