

• • By Ernest Otto

Fair Enough

In the earliest days of Chinese in Santa Cruz in the early fifties, a group of fishermen settled in this county as in Monterey. It was always said that these were Chinese who lived on houseboats and fished in their own country around Canton.

Their houses were not much of a collection of anything but shacks and were up against the bank at what is known as China Beach at the upper end of the long stretch of beach reaching from Aptos to the dividing line between Capitola beach.

This is now a state park adjoining the New Brighton section.

The houses were about six feet above ground and the bluffs were picturesque with its growth, especially when the evening yellow primroses were in bloom.

The boats were usually beached in front of the village and gave it a real touch of China as they were pointed at each end with a graceful curve.

The village and the boats would be a subject sought by the present day artists with the sandy beach with the boats, the shacks and bluffs in the rear.

They came to town and peddled from house to house. They fished where one of the choicest fish here were caught, the pompano, and folks in town then knew more than those of the present day of that fish.

They did considerable fishing when schools of fish would run close to shore.

With their long nets with large pouches at the end, pulled ashore with ropes, the Chinese would pull in the pouches filled with fish.

The main fish caught in that manner were smelt, herring, sardines, and anchovies. Much of the catch was salted down for bait.

Chinese, the railroad builders of the west, worked in the construction of both the first two narrow gauge roads on the Santa Cruz-Watsonville road and the Santa Cruz-Felton road.

When there was excavating, laying ties, and placing of rails along Chestnut avenue, great crowds were there daily watching their work including, in the middle seventies, the writer.

On the bank of the flood control ditch they had dug out earth and there with the firewood was placed in the section dug, and above, the large metal bowls, where they cooked their rice, meats and considerable of their own food.

Like other Chinese laborers, practically all wore trousers and blouses of the same material as the present day Levi's, and they were workers never wasting time.

Their hats are still worn by workmen in the field made entirely of straw with very broad

FAT PENSIONS FOR CORPORATION CHIEFS

Tucson, Ariz — This time of the year, George Spelvin, American, in his millions, receives notices of "stockholders' meetings" from the big corporations in which he has invested the remnant of money left him after many taxes, the expenses of existence, charities and luxuries.

Actually, the Spelvins never do attend such meetings and many of them do not even take the trouble to sign the proxies which the directors send them, soliciting permission to go ahead and use their own judgment.

There are a couple of interesting characters in New York named Lewis D. and John L. Gilbert who make a practice of attending as stockholders and needling the brass.

I observe in the current notice from AT&T that the Gilberts intend to press a resolution on April 10 which would limit to \$25,000 all future pensions to officers of the corporation.

They say their purpose is to prevent "future \$91,000 pensions or other pensions described in the last proxy statement as being potentially as high as \$72,000."

Gifford's Contribution

I assume that the \$91,000 pension is the one paid to Walter Gifford who took down and served a hitch as Truman's ambassador in London and is now vegetating.

Gifford certainly contributed a great deal to the development of AT&T and its subsidiaries, altogether a vital "facility" as the New Dealer jargonarians called things which they wanted arbitrary power to seize under the pretext of national emergency.

He had to stand off a malicious attempt of the Roosevelt cabal to dissipate the company as an illegal monopoly after he turned down Jimmy's solicitation of AT&T's insurance business.

That took nerve and character.

Ham Fish, of all people, and he a genuine Republican, wanted a personal introduction of the Bald Eagle of the dynasty to Gifford and frankly admonished Walter in Jimmy's presence that it would do no harm "to have a friend at court."

That is Ham's own version of his very words.

This was wierd conduct by a Republican who hated our leader's stripes and vice versa but Ham said he took Jimmy in because Baldy had gone to Harvard, too.

The anti-trust suit cost AT&T more than a million and the interruption of normal progressive business and loss of efficiency imposed a further penalty that nobody could calculate.

Pension Fixed

There is no sense arguing whether Gifford earned his big

tives really deserved whatever.

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workmen in the field made entire-
ly of bamboo with very broad
brims and with a small cap-like
center. These hats protected them
from the sun. Few allowed their
queues to hang down their backs,
but curled them around their
heads.

The eight tunnels over the
mountain branch were practically
all built by Chinese labor. Two
were over a mile long, between
Glenwood and Laurel and Laurel
and Wright.

While excavating the latter tun-
nel there was a big gas explosion
and around 20 were killed.

It was near the latter tunnel
that the first oil wells in Cali-
fornia were drilled. They all
produced with a paraffine base
and at Moody gulch wells are
still producing.

During the earthquake the
two tunnels along the line of the
San Andreas fault caved in.

Chinese worked at the Cali-
fornia powder works, now Para-
diso Park. At the village they
had their own small Chinatown.
They were employed in manufac-
turing the wooden powder kegs.
These were mainly for the blast-
ing powder.

The "Chinese Must Go" cam-
paign headed by Dennis Kearney
finally meant they went from the
plant.

The great day there was dur-
ing Chinese New Year when the
Chinese from Santa Cruz would
make the trip by bus to the ac-
companiment of the three-piece
band, cymbals, drum and gong,
and along the way they exploded
firecrackers.

When Chinatown was on Pacif-
ic avenue, there always was a
cigar factory before there ever
was one operated by Caucasians.

They could be seen by the
passerby as they work in front
near the windows.

The Chinese were most liberal
and their friends would always
receive a cigar or more likely
special home-made ones of home
production.

About the only other kind of
work there was for Chinese with
machines was to turn out wrap-
pers, underwear, aprons, etc.
These items found a ready sale.

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