

JAN 21, 1951

Santa Cruz Yesterdays

Pacific Avenue Horse Car Line

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)



Gas lamps furnished street illumination but were thriftilly turned off on moonlight nights. The third floor had not yet been added to the Pacific Ocean House. Horse cars ran up Pacific avenue from the beach, turned up Mission street and ended at the Pope House on the hill.

The horse car tracks, about 10 years old at this time, had been the first line on Pacific avenue. Before the Mission Hill tunnel was completed, horse cars met the Santa Cruz & Felton railroad trains at River and Mission streets—foot

of the hill, at the lower Plaza. This was the main connection to the beach.

When, in 1876, a tunnel was run through Mission Hill the railroad moved over to Chestnut avenue. The Pacific avenue tracks were extended up Mission street hill.

The Pacific Street Railroad company had been formed, with James P. Pierce of San Jose, owner of the Pacific Mills at Ben Lomond, as one of the stockholders. E. J. Swift, proprietor of the Pacific Ocean House; Charles B. Younger, the attorney; A. P. Hotaling, the owner of the St. George hotel, all put money into the enterprise. The tracks ended originally at the lower

Plaza. In 1877 they were extended up the hill to the Pope House. In 1880 they were extended for half a mile along the beach.

Oldest Business Building

Oldest building when the picture was taken, about 1885, was the Hugo Hihn brick of 1860, in the point formed by Pacific avenue and Front street. It still stands, oldest business building in Santa Cruz today.

In the right foreground can be seen a tiny portion of the sign of E. Briody's grocery, where McHugh and Bianchi are now. Next to it is the saloon of George Mitchell, who had just moved there from the basement of the Hugo

Hihn brick, under J. G. Tanner's drug store.

Several of the buildings which lined Pacific avenue 65 years ago still stand, including a part of the Pacific Ocean House, although the north end of that structure of 1867 was razed to erect the present Coast Counties Gas & Electric Co. offices.

Santa Cruz' first town clock, erected in the mid-70's, looms in the distance, destined to be destroyed by fire 14 years later.

Lower Plaza's "skyscraper" hotel, the 3-story Swanton House, then the tallest building in town, was to the left, facing the plaza just out of the picture.