

Santa Cruz Beautiful Antiques

Many Original Pieces Found In Furnishings

Editor's Note: This is No. 36 in the Sentinel-News' regular Wednesday visits to "The Homes of Santa Cruz."

By Jewel E. Woods

To mention antiques in a conversational group invariably is to embroil oneself in an exchange of opinions between two sharply divided camps of thought.

On the one side will be those who profess an inordinate fondness for anything that has survived at least 100 years of existence; who dote on the satin finish given fine grained woods by many decades of dusting and polishing by finical housewives; who point to the historical events which have taken place while the furniture stood patiently by; and who feel it must be cherished and preserved in homes, as records of man's cabinet-making development.

Holding down the other camp are individuals who want first of all, furniture that is functional, that is made to cope with today's hurried pace, and the American love for lounging. Small settees and small chairs, with taut, horse-hair coverings, are for the days of full-skirted women and genteel men who listened sedately to afternoon musicales, they say. They were made for the days when the parlor was closed, except for special gatherings; not for today when the living room is open at any and all times for friends who drop in, and when the only conceivable way of listening to the radio is to drape oneself in a deep, spring-filled chair, or stretch out on a wide, long chesterfield.

Well aware, therefore, that the mention of the word may bring on a barrage, we take you, nonetheless, to a veritable "treasure house of antiques," on this week's visit to the home of Mrs. Allan C. Rennie, 714 Third street.

We dare to do this, because we have a feeling that even violent "anti-antique-ists" will find the interesting pieces in her home so gracious, so easy-to-look-at, that her residence might be accepted as an exception to long-nurtured beliefs.

To begin with, the brick and redwood house was built in 1918 by Allan Rennie, on one part of what was then the block-large, triangular piece of property, from Third to Cliff to Leibbrandt streets, owned by the pioneer Rennie family. It was built substantially, with beamed ceilings, two fireplaces — one of them in Rennie's den, which is lined, walls and ceiling, with highly polished burl redwood — and with an extra-large kitchen.

Mrs. Rennie recently had some remodeling done — the living room was made larger through removal of a wall of an entrance hall; the double doors were taken leading to the dining room, shelf sections were built into sides of the archway, to display her collection of glass; a new wood floor was laid in

Antique Pieces Furnish Large Living Room



Small piano, seen in the view of the living room, above, was made in Paris, and came around the Horn by sailing vessel. Small screen, in front of the tiled fire-

place, was made by Mr. Rennie's sister Mrs. Allen Robertson, during a stay in Scotland. The 14x28-foot living room, and the dining room are carpeted with matching

American Oriental rug. The painting above the piano is another of Mrs. Huebner's works. The piano has attached holders for candles.

pieces, many of which had been handed down from one generation to the next in either hers or the late Mr. Rennie's families, stand out in new beauty.

As can be seen by the accompanying picture, the beams, the high, gleaming gumwood wainscoting, the built-in buffet (with its shelves filled with Haviland and Spode china, cut glass, and fine examples of late 19th century pressed glass), were left with their original finish, to enhance further the antique furnishings of the dining room.

Outstanding of these is the sectional, dropleaf mahogany table, made in England in the last of the 1700's by that last of the great furniture designers, Sheraton. The straight lines which are a predominant feature of Sheraton's work, and which were much copied by American cabinet makers after his famed "Drawing Book" of furniture designs was issued before the turn of the 19th century, are to be found in this table, which Mrs. Rennie secured just after it had arrived by ship at British Columbia.

It is composed of a central table, with drop leaves nearly to the floor, and two semi-circular tables (pictured, placed together, in the center of the room). For a large number of guests, the leaves of the central table are supported on gate legs, and the semi-round halves are added at each end.

The chairs are of the same period, with the exception of three which are 1810 Georgian.

On the dropleaf section, which Mrs. Rennie has placed against one of the dining room walls, stands

Dining Room Has Original Sheraton Table



Portion of the antique dining room table, made by the famed English cabinet maker, Thomas

piece is a berry bowl of fire-polished pressed glass, which came from the home of Mrs. Rennie's parents. Double French doors

brick walls, are ferns from the greenhouse kept by Allan Rennie's mother. Portrait of Mrs.

child and \$150 attorney fees.

bedroom, with its chintz-like paper, four-poster bed, and another antique chest of drawers, is a large bathroom, with an extra-large bathtub.

What originally was a roomy "pantry" now is the roomy breakfast room off the big, light-yellow kitchen. From the window here can be seen a garden of flowers and shrubs, and the now-tall redwood tree, which Allan Rennie planted in 1906. There also is a view of the San Lorenzo river.

Every room in the house has antique furniture, or glassware, or mementoes (such as the leather-topped nail from the original Santa Cruz mission, and a crude, iron, trough-type wick lamp, on the mantel of the brick fireplace in the den).

Each is a conversation piece and, antiques being the incentive for discussion that they are, they, or at least the period from which they came, invariably creep into the conversations of all who visit Mrs. Rennie's attractive home.

RENTALS

SEWING
McCall's E
119 Locust St. "TOM McCALL



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Open All Day Satu
HAYFORD BROS.
320 FRONT ST.

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Mrs. Rennie recently had some remodeling done — the living room was made larger through removal of a wall of an entrance hall; the double doors were taken down, leading to the dining room, and shelf sections were built into the sides of the archway, to disher collection of glass; a new wood floor was laid in the front bedroom, which opens into the living room; and the living room was given a lighter, brighter atmosphere.

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On the dropleaf section, which Mrs. Rennie has placed against one of the dining room walls, stands an original Sheffield silver tea service. Sheffield silver, it may be remembered, was manufactured between 1745-1820 by what was then

place, was made by Mr. Rennie's sister, Mrs. Allen Robertson, during a stay in Scotland. The 14x28-foot living room, and the dining room are carpeted with matching

American Oriental rugs. The painting above the piano is another of Mrs. Huebner's works. The piano has attached holders for candles.

Dining Room Has Original Sheraton Table



Portion of the antique dining room table, made by the famed English cabinet maker, Thomas Sheraton, who lived 1751 to 1806, is shown in the above view of the dining room. The center-

piece is a berry bowl of fire-polished pressed glass, which came from the home of Mrs. Rennie's parents. Double French doors from the dining room lead to a sun room. Among the potted plants, arranged here against

brick walls, are ferns from the greenhouse kept by Allan Rennie's mother. Portrait of Mrs. Rennie, seen hanging on the living room wall, was painted by her sister, Mrs. Lillian Huebner.

and the two were welded together, with the silver on the outside. This bar was rolled to the thickness desired and then fashioned into silver pieces. Edges of Sheffield plate needed special treatment, and con-

sequently a large share of it has gadroon edges of solid silver. Its manufacture died out with the advent of electro-plating.

From her father, T. A. Grooms, who now operates an upholstery shop here, Mrs. Rennie learned all the fine points of covering furniture, and the occupation intrigued her so she now re-upholsters her antique pieces as a hobby.

In the living room are two Victorian settees, more than 100 years old and purchased in Kentucky by grandparents when "Victorian-line" furniture first was being introduced in this country, in the early 1840's. These, as well as two oval-backed, walnut-framed chairs which had belonged to her husband's parents, other antique occasional chairs and a large channel back chair, she recovered or re-upholstered herself, sometimes over the original horsehair cover-

bedroom, with its chintz-like paper, four-poster bed, and another antique chest of drawers, is a large bathroom, with an extra-large bathtub.

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