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O.Ho. Ernest

We need
legitimacy.

Old Santa Cruz By Ernest Otto

Big Lots, Spacious Gardens Early Made Ocean View Avenue One Of Show Streets Of City

Ocean View avenue lined with residences with the largest gardens and grounds of any single street in the city has much to do, owing to the size of the lots, with having the most beautiful grounds and with less trees cut down, than in any other street in town. When the DeLamater family moved from their Locust street home, around the early 80's, residences then on the street were few in number and there were rows of vacant lots with picket fences, long ago discarded but now coming back to their own. One on that street yet has the old time picket fence, that long the front of the home of Dr. Ethel Watters. There was some uniformity in the early days as to shade trees on that street then the tall and straight Normandy poplar trees and even today along this street are shade trees of many kinds, the row of English Hawthorne in front of the Grace DeLamater Williamson residence, beautiful with its pink blossoms in the spring. More have the dracena palms than any other. There are also the alder, weeping birch, camphor and chestnut trees, all started in the early days.

MAGNOLIA TREES

One tree, one of the most beautiful and which attracts attention wherever seen, was planted in nearly all the large holdings, the magnolias which have such beautiful blooms. At the present time those trees nearly all planted in the early days remain. About 20 of these trees are on that street at the present time. The largest orange tree in the city, one of the first planted, is now laden with the golden fruit—the Williamson grounds.

Two very old homes, one at the corner, likely built in the early eighties known for years as the Eggleston residence, was at the northwest corner of Soquel Ave., then Soquel road, in the early days, here is now the Dr. Sullivan's office building. At the corner of Broadway was another of the very early residences on that street with the grounds leading back to South Branciforte avenue. This was the Charles Steinmetz residence. Mr. Steinmetz was county treasurer here for a number of years and was a prominent banker. Three of the daughters reside here at the present time, Mrs. Alice Hobbs, Miss Louise Steinmetz and Miss Clara Steinmetz.

Another old family was the Rhoades. Numbers remember the cypress hedge over the gateway. At the end were the Labish and Soria homes, early families of the community. The thoroughfare ended then as now, but the camp grounds then were the Ocean Villa hotel. The carriage of the popular private boarding place was driven from the trains and steamers by George Bliss the proprietor, who was assisted by his family in caring for the summer guests who came year after year. Connected with the main building were many cottages and some of these remain. The guests crossed a pedestrian bridge to reach the crossing in connection with the trestle when they went to the beach.

OVERLOOK CITY

Following the moving of the DeLamaters around the early eighties with the view especially from the west side, those who purchased holdings did so that the home could overlook the city and the beach and the lots were large ones. Martha Wilson started the homes on the west side and like Mrs. DeLamater a lover of flowers it was, a large home and the grounds were landscaped and rare trees and plants beautified the grounds. Selling the first home she erected another. The True residence is still occupied by Mrs. True and daughter, Mrs. Otto Jensen. Others followed until there was a wonderful row of mansions and the finest grounds about them. Others who later came were the Robinsons, (she was a sister of the late Joseph Enright), the Goodspeeds from Illinois, and much later Mrs. Harriet Blackburn, the W. T. Forsyths and A. M. Johnstons.

At the corner of Ocean View avenue and Broadway was the M. Fitzgibbons home, a large one. It was occupied just before it was razed to the ground by Mrs. Virginia Parker.

The large Brannicke residence was diagonally across the street. On the east side between Soquel ave. and Broadway came the Fenton, the E. Foster and Pray residences. A niece of Mrs. Pray, Mrs. Grace Dodds, still resides in the home. Others who came to the south of Broadway on the east side were the Henry Frapwells, Dr. C. L. Bliss, the Bradfords, the J. L.

Everts, Mrs. P. V. Wilkins, the L. F. Smiths and others.

OLD CAMPHOR TREE

In front of the former Everts place are three old time huge beautiful camphor trees. In the shade tree about the Smith place are the native alder interspersed with dracena palms. In the rear for years was thicket of date palms. The Wilkins gardens were mainly planted to tropical trees, orange, lemon and citron trees.

Many other trees planted early include the pittisporum, weeping birch, English laurel, graceful pepper, guavas, English holly, monkey tree, several varieties of acacia, native redwood, the yew, cedrus odor, cedar, fan palms, chestnut and other rare trees and what is strange here, allowed to remain and more beautiful than ever.

The last of the large houses erected on the street was the picturesque stone and slate roof house of Emmet Rittenhouse at the end of the street.