

Santa Cruz Yesterdays



PACIFIC AVENUE (BEFORE AUTOS) 50 YEARS AGO

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

Half a century backward in the annals of time a modern Santa Cruzan would have to travel, to place himself in the scene pictured above.

He would find himself in the horse and buggy days. The automobile was still uncommon. Equine locomotion, was predominant, but electric transportation had arrived here ten years before. While only one track ran down Pacific avenue when the picture was made, the avenue was eventually double tracked, remaining that way until the electric cars gave way to buses in the middle twenties.

The area shown at left reveals the fine recovery made from the disastrous fire of a few years earlier, when so much of the uptown, together with the county court house, fell before the flames.

El Dorado Meat Market

Behind the four-horse wagon with

the high seat is the early Walti-Schilling El Dorado Meat Market, later on the west side of the avenue in the Pacific Ocean House block. The imposing new three-story St. George hotel building looms with its many-posted second story porch, from which band concerts were played by the Hastings and other bands, in the old days.

Next beyond the hotel is the Staffler building with the Minneapolis Furniture company of Wessendorf & Staffler. Beside it was the famed Saddle Rock restaurant of Carstulovich brothers. And down at Cooper street corner, the County Banks.

The new town clock (IOOF building), then "skyscraper" of the business district, had newly replaced the original clock and building destroyed by fire early in May, 1899.

Looking South

Vantage point of the photographer was about opposite Col. Abbott's

San Lorenzo Stables, where stands today's Byrne Brothers hardware. First business house partly visible at extreme right is the books and stationery store of John Brazier, with Henry Willey's hardware adjoining.

Going toward Locust street one of the next spots was the Nolan & Balsz saloon called "The Bank," which later was required by state banking authorities to desist from the use of "bank" in the name. For over a dozen years the place was later known as the "Banc!"

Beyond this was Hamilton Fay's drug store, and at the corner, the Whidden building, where stands now the Farmers and Merchants bank.

At the other corner of Locust the 1868 McPherson building then housed, upstairs, the headquarters of the old Morning Sentinel. On the ground floor was A. Cohen's cigar store for many years.