

Overbrook Farm: Serving Santa Cruzans Since 1883

By MILDRED ANN SMITH
Sentinel Women's Editor
Hammond's Overbrook Farm is not hard to find.

Take the turn off Water Street onto Market, follow it as it meanders around the SCO clubhouse and, just before reaching the Market Street bridge, plunge to the left down a country lane, cross the rattly plank bridge and you're there on the "island" and in another older, peaceful world.

Generations of Santa Cruzans have been finding their way to Hammonds since 1883 to buy their fresh vegetables—they have come on foot, in horse and buggy, on bicycles and, of course, for many years in cars.

George and Susie Hammond, the present owners, are the third generation of the family to conduct the truck farm which is tucked away in a secluded hollow. Rectangular in shape, it is bounded on one side by the Freeway and on the other three sides by Branciforte and Carbonero Creeks.

Adding to the illusion of a farm miles away from civilization are the huge walnut trees which encircle the six acres, tall redwood trees, and the spacious lawn which runs down to Branciforte Creek. Then, of course, there's the silence, except for the murmuring of the creeks, the wind in the trees, the songs of the birds and the chattering of the squirrels.

The Hammond house has been there for a long time. George says his grandfather, R. G. Hammond, bought the place, then 22 acres, in 1883 and the house was new then.

Robert Hammond, George's grandfather, had traveled by covered wagon to California from Tennessee and settled down to farm in the San Joaquin Valley.

By 1883, however, he and his wife, Mary Ann, were ready for a smaller place and a better climate so they bought the farm and moved to Santa Cruz. They also owned acreage at the end of Redwood Drive for many years.

In those days, Santa Cruz

already was becoming famous as a bathing spa and the Hammonds' relations came from far and near to spend the summer on the island.

Prior to the Hammond ownership the island changed hands many times. First handwritten deed in their possession is dated 1862. John F. Kennedy sold to P. H. Hurd and Hattie Hurd that "tract or parcel of land situated, lying and being in the County of Santa Cruz, state aforesaid, bounded and described as follows: Known as the Island in Branciforte Creek, surrounded by said Creek and near the land formerly owned by S. Thompson and Jose Lorenzana and near the lands owned by George Anthony."

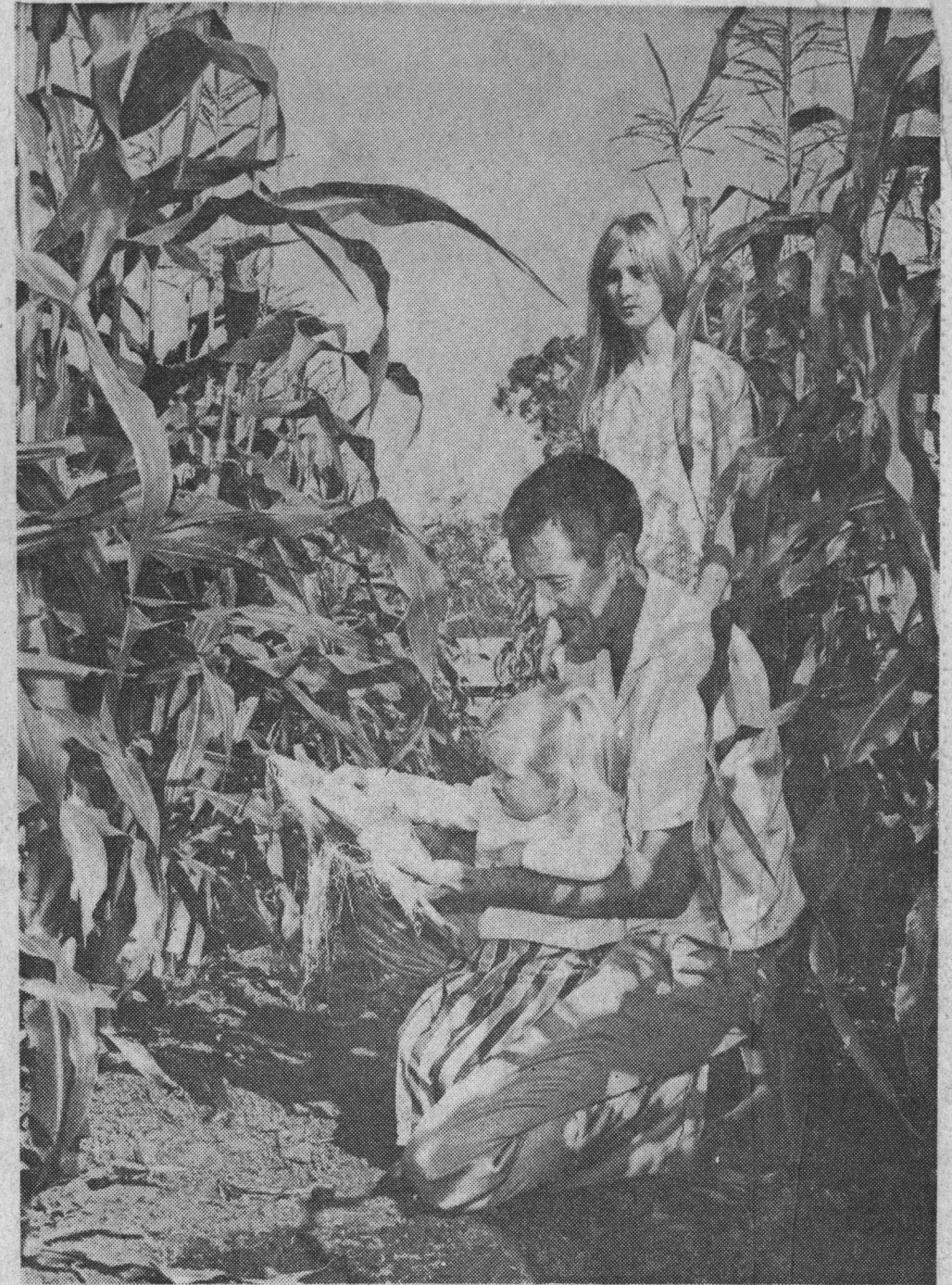
George's father, George M. Hammond, took over the island in 1894, and it was he who named it Overbrook Farm. His wife, Viola, continued to live there after his death until three years ago when she entered a nursing home.

George began managing the farm when he was still in high school and brought Susie there as a bride. That was 26 years ago and for many years now it's been Susie who is really the farmer, cultivating the raspberries, and planting and harvesting the vegetables, including squash, cucumbers, beets, carrots, onions and, of course, the famous Hammond corn. George carries on a general contracting business.

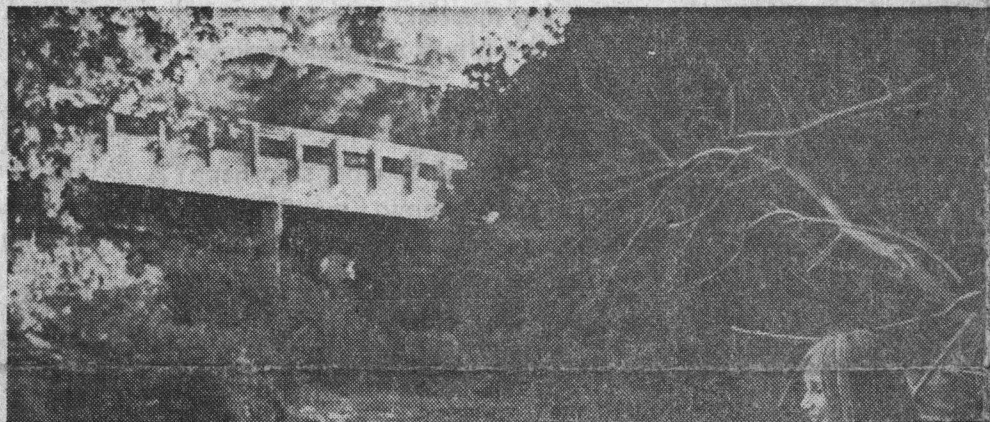
Just about as famous as the Hammond corn are the Hammond cats who also like the corn and pull it off the stalks for their kittens to eat.



Mrs. George (Susie) Hammond snaps beans on the porch of the old farmhouse at 503 Market street which is believed to be about 87 years old. Helping her is her granddaughter, 2-year-old Annette Tonkin. The house has been remodeled over the years but the same basic shape has been retained.



Santa Cruzans have been getting corn and other vegetables at Hammond's since 1883. Annette Tonkin, shown with her granddad, George Hammond, and his daughter, Nancy, is the fifth generation of the Hammond family to pick corn on the secluded "stand" just off Market street.



People and Places

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Sunday, September 17, 1967

Mrs. Wolner Feted On 95th Birthday

Mrs. Edith Wolner, who was born in London, England, on September 8, 1862, was honored by the Night Owls at a luncheon at Hack-

show her appreciation, she stepped to the piano and played a medley of numbers. She was three years old when she first began playing, she

Mrs. Wolner makes her home at the Clear View Trailer Court, 170 West Cliff Drive. Each week she walks downtown, does her shopping



THING

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Favorite wading spot of the Hammonds over the years has been the sandbar where Carbonera and Branciforte Creeks come together. Here the George Hammonds' granddaughter, Annette, gets her first taste of creek wading with her Aunt Nancy keeping a watchful eye on her. The spot also has been a favorite of many generations of neighborhood children.