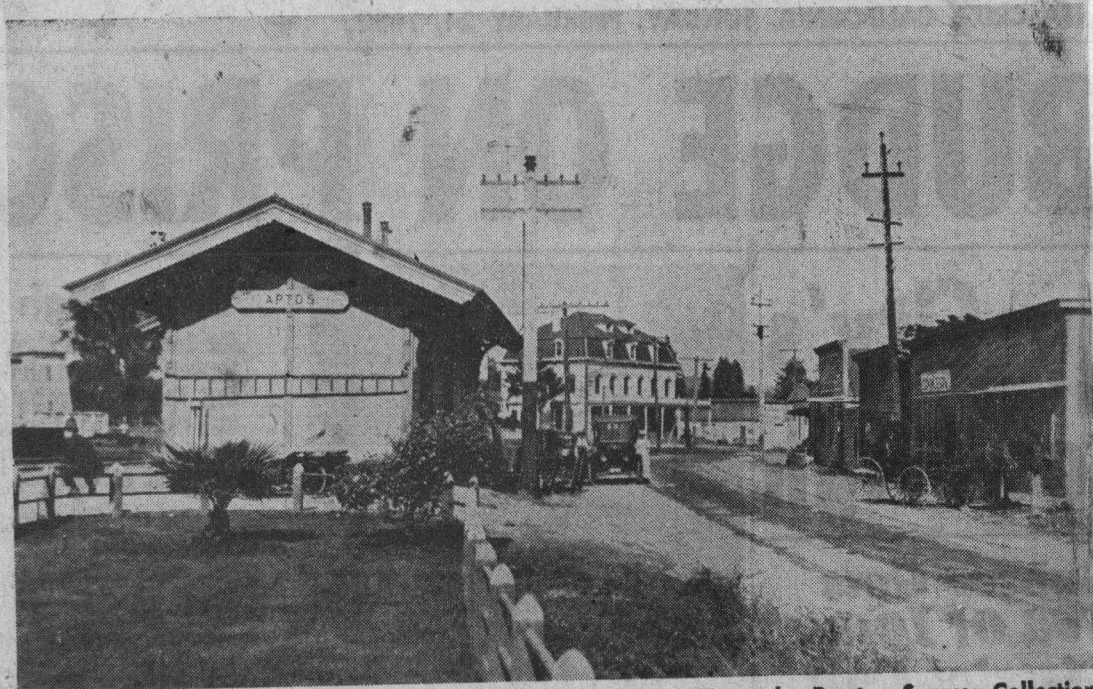


# Santa Cruz Yesterdays



OLD APTOS DEPOT IN 1918

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

Legend is that when Claus Spreckels contributed right of way across Aptos rancho for the Santa Cruz & Watsonville railroad in the early 1870's he received a guarantee that all trains would stop at Aptos station.

Spreckels also bought bonds in the railroad to help F. A. Hihn finance construction of its 21 miles of narrow gauge track. In 1882 he donated right of way to build the logging road into the hills to the Loma Prieta mill.

The Aptos station, kept busy with the lumber hauling traffic, was also scene of arrivals and de-

partures for Speckels' guests, for whom the sugar king built a hotel on the low level toward the beach, with a club house, dance pavilion, cottages and a stable for their teams.

Farther east, near today's entrance to Rio del Mar stood Spreckels' big two story wooden home and in the little valley just back of it, the stables for his thoroughbreds, his racing track and polo field.

At the Aptos station in 1881 King Kalakaua of the Sandwich Islands climbed down off the branch line train from Watsonville to ride in a neighbor's wagon to Spreckels' mansion. The king's stay was only a few hours. He returned to Watsonville en route to San Francisco the same night.

## Editor's Reaction

The royal visit, instead of being considered a major news or social event in Santa Cruz, was treated irreverently by Editor A. A. Taylor of the weekly *Courier-Item*. "His royal nibs, the king of the Sandwich Isles, spent a few hours in our midst Friday," wrote Taylor.

In the background is the Bay View hotel, built two stories high in the 1870s by Jose Arana, son-in-law of Rafael Castro, Mexican grantee of Aptos rancho, and in the eighties raised to three stories by its mansard roof.

The picture is of a later date (1918), as evidenced by the automobile waiting at the station, although a horse and buggy stands before the grocery across the road.