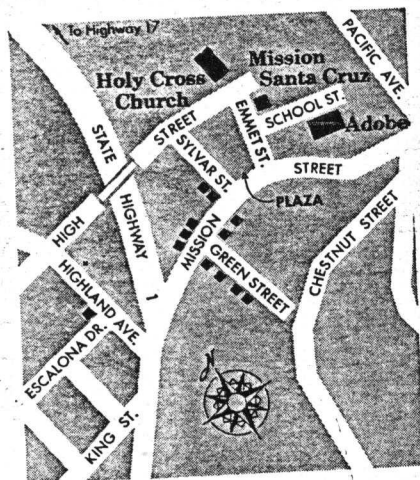


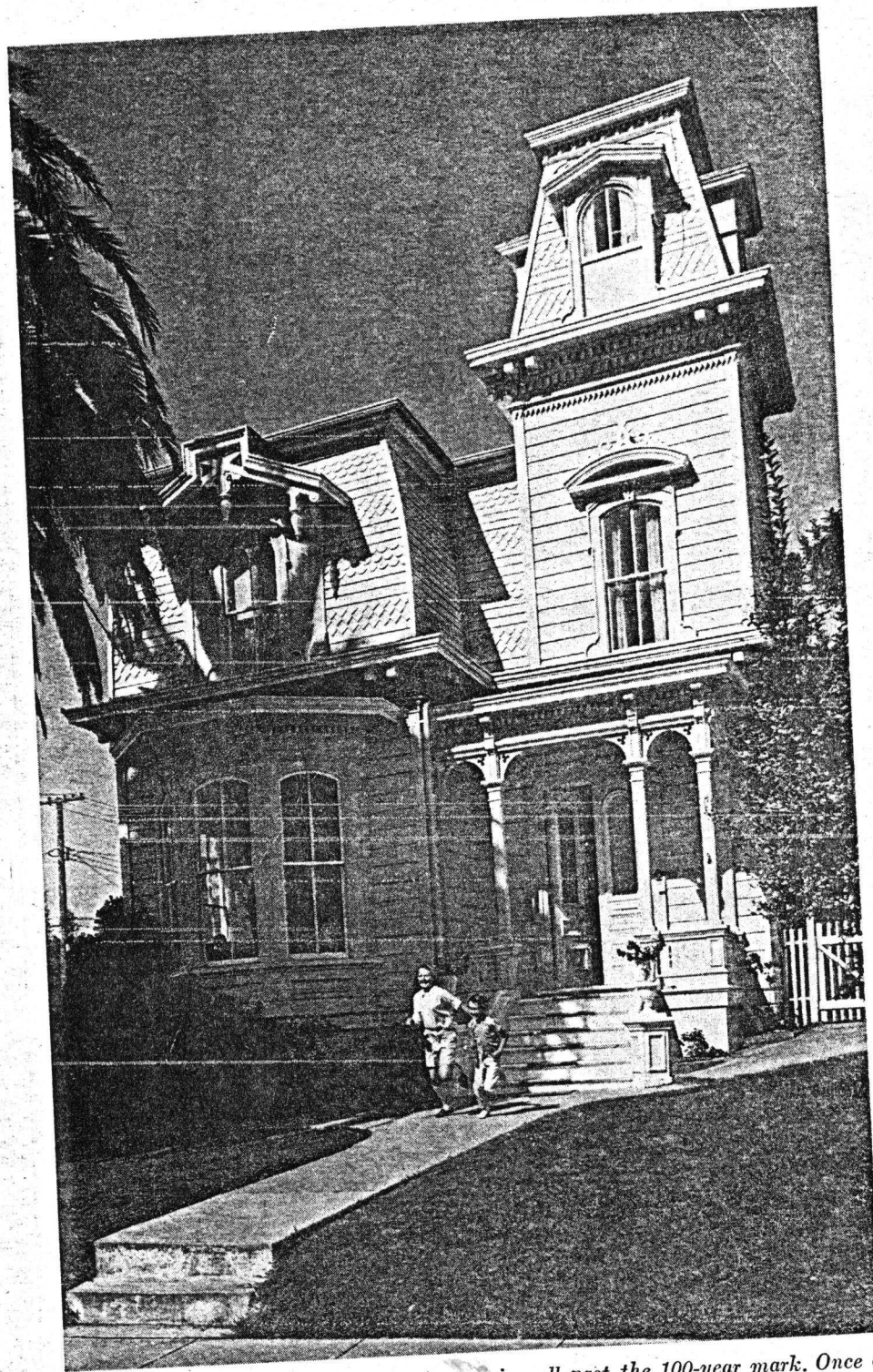
Santa Cruz - Historic houses, etc.



Replica of mission. Sandstone baptismal font (left) is from original church



Black blocks represent some of the interesting buildings on Mission Hill



Imposing Victorian at 203 Highland Avenue is well past the 100-year mark. Once a sedate cream and white, its venerable walls are now painted a livelier young pink

APR 23 '91

A gingerbread walk on Mission Hill in Santa Cruz

Santa Cruz in the fall shows its other face to visitors. Besides beaches and boardwalk, there is a lot more to see, and this is a good time to explore the attractive old town. You can usually count on warm, clear days and light traffic.

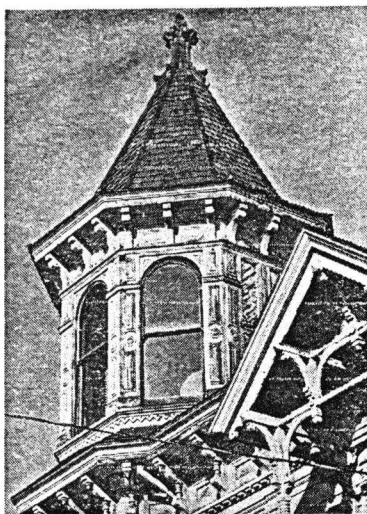
Here and there throughout Santa Cruz you will see the gables and eaves of fascinating Victorian houses rising above more modern structures. Mission Hill—site of California's 12th mission, founded

in 1791—is where the city began, and where you will find the largest concentration of “gingerbread.” Although many fine old houses have been razed, and more may be destroyed for a freeway, you can still see some carefully preserved ones on a short walk.

Entering Santa Cruz from the north on State Highway 17, as most visitors do, follow State 1 to Mission Street. Looking up the bluff to your left as you come into the city you will see the white towers of Holy Cross, the Catholic church erected 77 years ago on the approximate site of the first mission. Turn left on Mission Street and drive three blocks to the small plaza, where you can park your car.

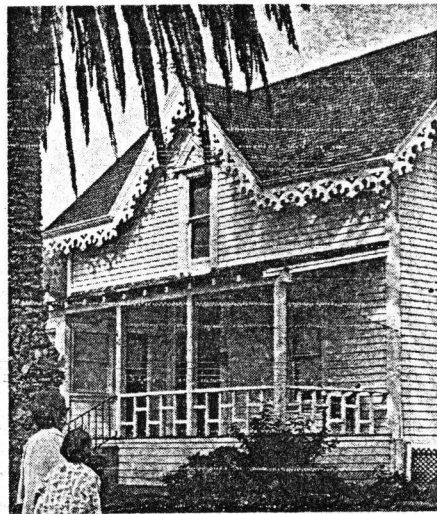
On the right side of the plaza, at the Reliquary (a small museum) attached to the replica of the mission, you can get a free copy of the history of Mission Santa Cruz and the surrounding buildings. Although the scale-model replica is only about half the size of the original mission, it was faithfully duplicated from early sketches after the original was destroyed by earthquakes in 1840 and 1857.

The bells of the mission were recast, and now ring out from the large church over-



Cupola complete with all sorts of carpenter's art adorns this old-timer

looking the plaza. A piece of original brick flooring is carefully preserved in the courtyard, but the tiny remaining portion of the burial ground in back of the church, surrounded by its crumbling adobe wall,



Sightseers are attracted by lacelike trim around roof line of simple frame house

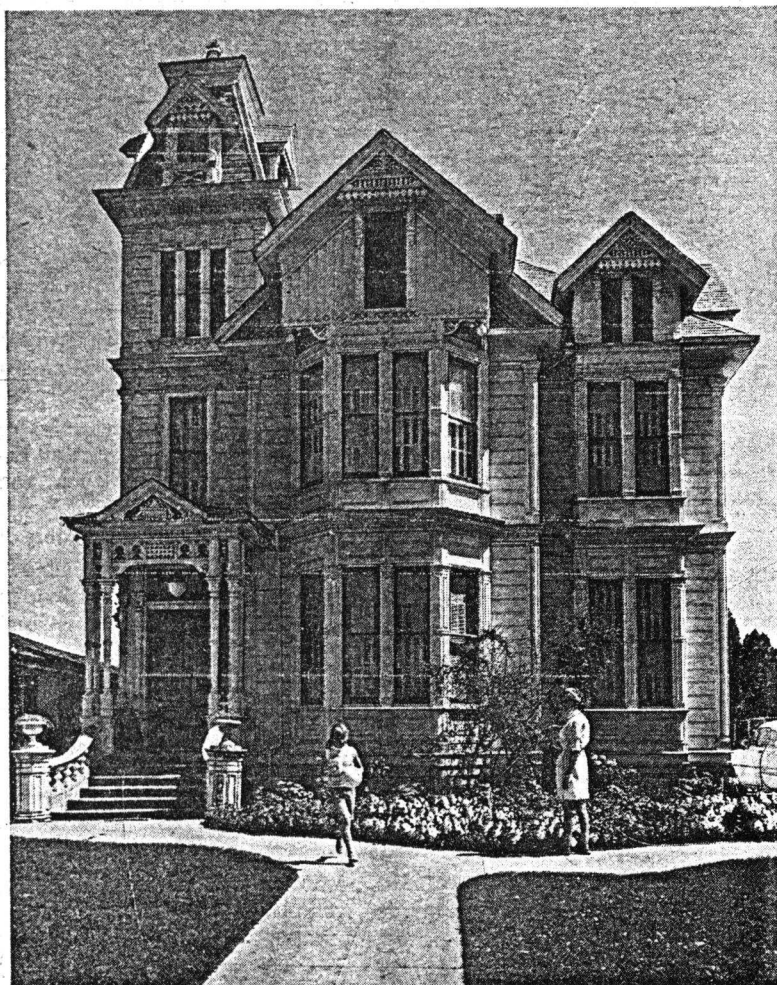
is not quite so well maintained.

Walk down School Street to the adobe duplex overlooking the city below. Once the guardhouse for Spanish soldiers accompanying the clergy, this was likely built before the mission. The only remaining building of the original compound, it has been continually occupied since the time it was built. On one side is an antique shop of sorts (open when the owner feels like it); if you get in, take a look at the gardens in back. Planted in the middle 1800's, they extend all the way to Mission Street and were the setting for many social events.

Retracing your steps and crossing the plaza, you will see the one-story frame house at 109 Sylvar Street believed to be the first wood frame dwelling in the community. Next door, a three-story Victorian beauty sits behind an iron fence and manicured gardens—on the site of the city's first hotel and tavern. If you turn right and walk down Mission Street you will see numerous nineteenth century houses on both sides of the street. Notice the crow's nest on the house at 207 Mission. Stop at the Gingerbread House at 218 Mission, and browse through the items on display. Ask the owner about the ghost who inhabits this house.

Cross over and walk down one-block-long Green Street, once called “church street” because the town's first Protestant church was established in 1850 on the southeast corner. A part of the church was moved in the 1860's to 123 Green and forms the nucleus of the house there.

A short detour on the way back to your car—one block west on Mission Street to Highland Avenue, and one block north on Highland—will give you a look at the pink Victorian now being restored by new owners to its original beauty. Turn right at the next corner (High Street) to cross over the freeway and return to your car.



On Mission Street, this tall white house has been completely restored by the new owners. Shutters date from time house was originally built