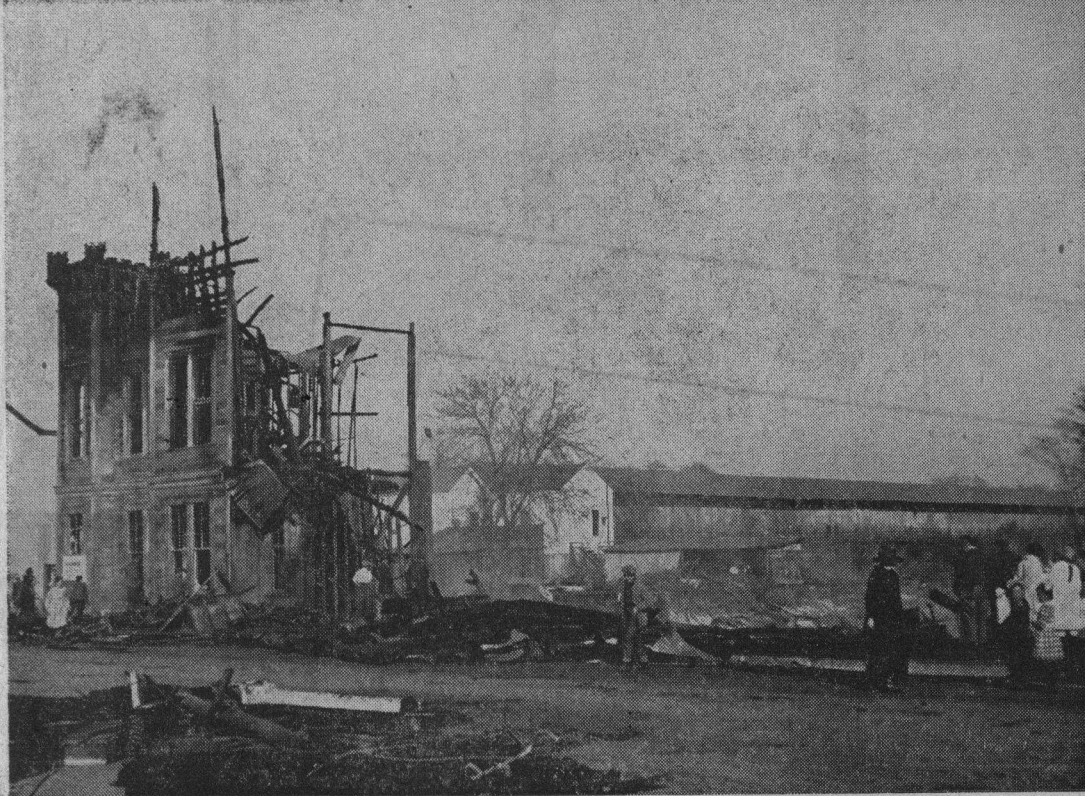


Santa Cruz Yesterdays

Fires & Fire Protection



ARMORY DESTROYED BY FIRE JAN. 16, 1920. (From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

Many Santa Cruzans tumbled out of bed earlier than usual on the morning of Friday, January 16, 1920, alerted by the old fire bell and the flames and glow from downtown which lighted up the pre-dawn sky.

In one of the larger fires of the past the community lost that morning what had been the "civic auditorium" of the period. For 37 years the Armory had been the public gathering place, located near the heart of town, in the Front and Soquel area.

The conflagration lasted something over an hour, starting at 2 a.m. As the last sidewalls were falling into the roaring furnace of flame, thousands of rounds of ammunition belonging to the naval "militia" and stored in the structure, exploded at intervals with rattle of musket fire, heightening the excitement among the onlookers and causing great clouds of smoke and cinders to shoot skyward.

A Hot Fire

The great heat, felt even by onlookers lined along the walkway of the Soquel avenue covered bridge some distance away, caused the walls of the Leonard & Hendricks blacksmith and repair shop across Front street and the roof of the Gaba & Magidson warehouse, almost adjoining, on the north, to begin smoking.

W. T. Newcomb's small meat shop just to the south, was burned. But the Chinese wash house 100 feet beyond was saved. Vincent Avilla was credited with saving the building by soaking its steaming walls with a steady stream from a garden hose.

\$10,000 Loss

Loss was fixed at \$10,000 for the Armory structure. G. A. Willey, caretaker, lost books and personal belongings and the naval militia (reserves) considerable equipment.

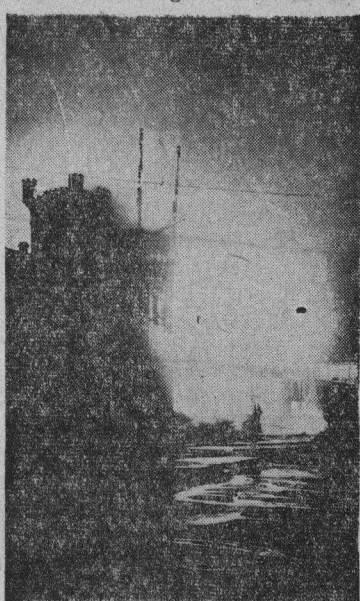
The Armory had started as a great structure 100x150 feet, generally known as the Pavilion. A group of local businessmen formed the Fair Building association, a stock company, headed by F. A. Hihn, L. K. Baldwin, R. C. Kirby, Duncan McPherson, and others. Purpose was to create an appropriate place for rose fairs, meeting and exhibitions.

Original site was at the southwest corner of Soquel avenue and Front street (as of today). But in the summer of 1883 when the hall was built, that part of Soquel avenue was known as Arcan street, and Front street had not yet been cut through to Cathcart. When the street was cut through in 1895 the Pavilion, then facing north, was shunted to its final setting, facing

west on Front street, its back to the river not far from the bank.

"Armory" Is Born

Here it received its turreted front and became the "Armory" when the naval reserves became tenants. It was the scene of sporting events, dances, etc., but became indelibly historic to Santa Cruz on account of important political meetings held there. It was the official center for local registration for the



At the height of the fire. Photo made before daybreak, by firelight.

Rolland Hoffman To Attend Red Cross Conference

Rolland W. Hoffman, local chairman, will represent the Santa Cruz chapter of the American Red Cross Wednesday at a fund campaign meeting to be held in Oakland.

E. Roland Harriman, volunteer president of the organization, will outline current and future service programs. He is at present on speaking tour throughout the state prior to the opening of the campaign in March. Target campaign is \$85,000,000.

Highlight of the meeting in Oakland is likely to be a presentation of the blood bank program which the Red Cross has been collecting for 18 months collection for use by the disaster service.

SIDNEY C.

Oath public Cl

World War I draft, later for physical exams. In July, 1911, Gov. Hiram Johnson of California inaugurated Geo. W. Stone as Mayor of Santa Cruz, there.

The picture, showing what few ruins remained after daylight came and the fire was out, also shows Soquel avenue's old covered bridge across the background. The bridge was destined to leave the scene also. A year later it was torn down to make way for the concrete bridge still in use.

Commissioner Frank Mattison had died the day before the fire. Will Rogers and a motion picture company were here making a movie. On Lincoln's birthday, February 12, the New Santa Cruz Theatre was first opened to the public.

Aptos Community Church To Hear Missionary Today

Mrs. Ivan de Longpre of San Francisco, who served as a missionary in Korea during the Japanese regime, will be the speaker at the 11 o'clock service this morning at the Aptos Community church.

The Woman's Society of the Christian Service is sponsoring the program and will give an annual thank offering.

The public is invited.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE

In the Superior Court of the County of Santa Cruz, California.
In the matter of the estate of LEEN J. KAHN, deceased.
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In...