

Here Today; Gone Tomorrow?

The Home Of Lucas Smith, Indian Fighter And Lawyer

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of articles on old houses and buildings in Santa Cruz. The series appears in conjunction with efforts of SCOPE and Santa Cruz Historical Society to preserve local history.

By Margaret Koch
Sentinel Staff Writer

Lucas F. Smith fought Indians and sent a murderer to the gallows. His wife preferred to give tea parties.

Southern hospitality was a memorable feature of the Smith home in Santa Cruz. Lucas, soldier and one-time Indian fighter who became presiding judge of Santa Cruz Superior Court, also learned to trip the light fantastic. His wife, the former Della Gouldy, was a native of Louisiana. Her parties and social gatherings in Santa Cruz were news before the turn of the century.

The Smith home, located on the corner of Ocean View



Lucas F. Smith

avenue and Windham street, was built by Lucas to house their family of six children as well as serve as hospitality headquarters. It was constructed a few years after Lucas moved his family to Santa Cruz in 1888.

Today, no longer in the Smith family, the house is a prime example of sensible preservation and restoration. It is owned by Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Perkins, who have furnished it with their own fine antiques and have retained the Victorian atmosphere of the "Gay 90s." The old house is an eye-catcher as it stands gleaming in a coat of new paint behind its net picket fence.

Peaceful Santa Cruz of the '80s must have seemed a quiet backwater to Smith when he moved here. He was born in 1845 in Indiana where he worked on a farm and attended a country school until he was 15. He also learned the printing business by working on a small local newspaper.

When Lucas was 17 he en-

listed in the Indiana Volunteers, Regiment G, and served at Chickamauga and under General Sherman in his famed "march to the sea" as well as other notable battles.

After the Civil War ended, Lucas returned home to high school and later entered University of Michigan where he graduated in 1868.

Perhaps Indiana seemed tame after all the excitement of war and travel; who knows? Anyhow, Smith moved to Bonham, Tex., where he became district attorney.

In 1870-72 the young attorney served as prosecutor in one of that era's most notorious criminal cases: the State vs. Stephen M. Ballew. Ballew had murdered James P. Golden of Illinois, then had wed Golden's sister while wearing her murdered brother's clothes.

Lucas Smith pursued Ballew through the Texas courts and finally brought him to justice at the end of a rope. For this, Smith gained the gratitude of everyone (except Ballew, of course) and a complimentary resolution from the Illinois State legislature.

In 1874 Smith was appointed U. S. district attorney for New Mexico. It was there that he organized a band of Indian fighters. He led them against the Apaches who were wreaking havoc in the state. For three months Lucas fought Indians, then he went back to Missouri to accept a law partnership.

In 1876 this peripatetic lawyer was back in Texas to take on another law partnership. In 1882 he married Della—and in 1888 his restless feet brought them to California.

Here he finally settled down for good and became a superior court judge. Two sons, Stanford



This is the home of attorney, judge and Indian fighter Lucas F. Smith built a few years after he moved to Santa Cruz in 1888. It still stands today at the cor-

ner of Ocean View avenue and Windham street, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Perkins. (Sketch by Will Shepherd.)

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and Lucas Jr., also became attorneys. Both are dead now. Living in Santa Cruz are three daughters, Mrs. Lester Wessen-

dorf, Mrs. Malcolm Sinclair and Mrs. George Azbell. Another, Mrs. Lucile Moffitt, lives in Alameda.

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