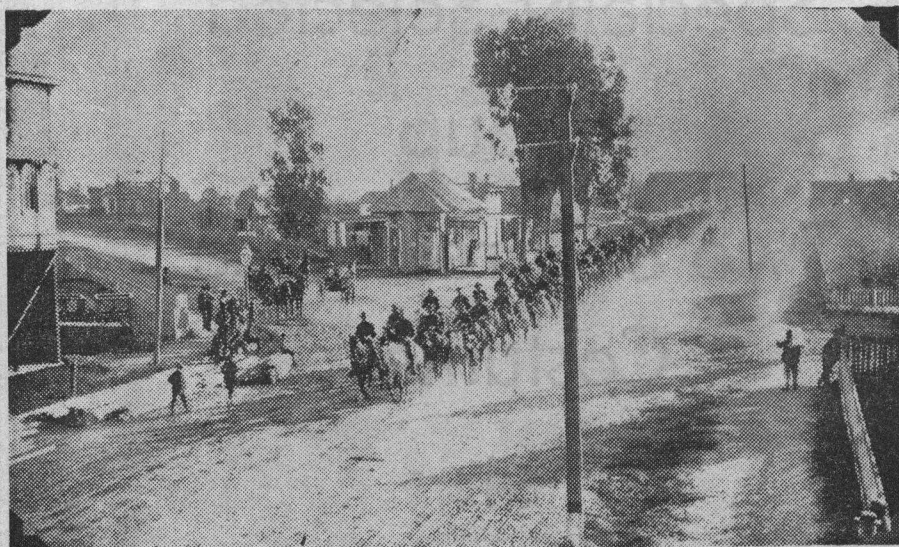


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# East Santa Cruz



## UPPER RIGHT:

Shopper's Corner used to look like this . . . Intersection of Soquel and Branciforte avenues in the 1880's. Company K of the U.S. Army cavalry was riding through on one of its annual jaunts between San Francisco and Monterey presidios. In the right foregrounds, the picket fence with man leaning on it marks the site of present Shopper's Corner. In the center of the photo the little frame dwelling, long-gone, marks the site of today's Dogs 'N Suds. Piles of lumber at the left mark location of present Ivory laundry.

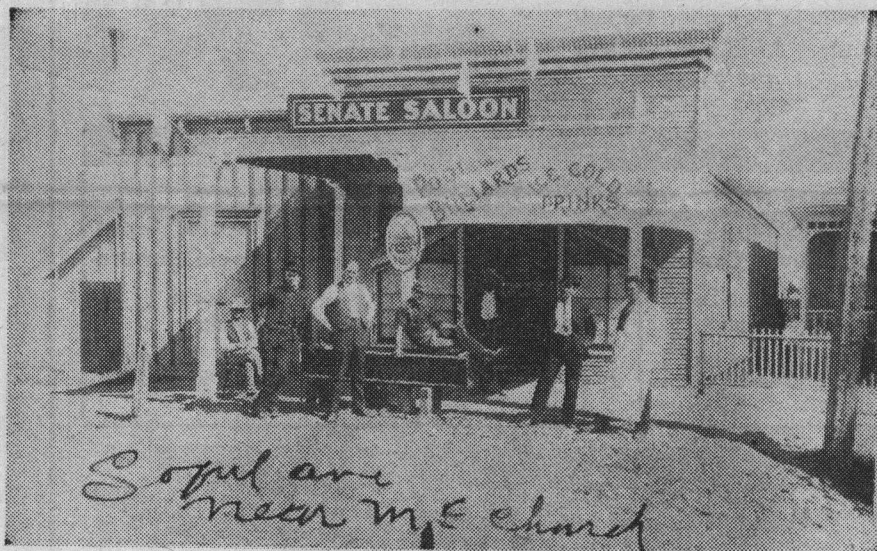
## ABOVE:

They rode the rails—behind a horse in the good old days on Soquel avenue. Horsecars took shoppers as far as this turn-around point, now the location of Eastside Fire House (right). In the back-ground may be seen the recently demolished Sauer's hardware store.

## RIGHT:

And in case they get thirsty along the way, they could stop off at the Senate saloon—now a vacant lot on Benito avenue and Doyle street. The horses could have a refreshing sip too—from the old watering trough in front.

# The Good Old Days



from the collection of  
John and Georgina Woodward



# VILLA de BRANCIFORTE

## THE VILLAGE THAT GREW AND GREW AND GREW

Villa de Branciforte, the forerunner of East Santa Cruz, was the village which just grew and grew and grew. Its history is rich in the material which makes California lore so fascinating to natives and newcomers.

Villa de Branciforte had its own municipal government in the early days as it spread from a compact little village along the east bank of the San Lorenzo river to an area of huge estates which spread for 40 miles along the Pacific coast. When American days succeeded those of the Spaniards, Branciforte slumped back to become a rural community under county rule.



But the Villa de Branciforte had the distinction of being one of three pueblos planned for establishment by Spain which had an eye on possible colonization by Russia, England or France, and had no intent of losing its foothold in the "new world."

The three pueblos were those of Nuestra Senora de los Angeles, de San Jose de Guadalupe, both of which should be readily recognized in their Anglicized names of today, and Villa de Branciforte, to be built on a site across the San Lorenzo river from the Santa Cruz mission.

In 1796 and 1797, Lt. Alberto de Cordova, a member of the Spanish engineer corps who selected the Branciforte site, and Governor Diego de Borica spent several weeks at the Santa Cruz mission, confirming their beliefs about the desirability

of Branciforte as a site, and eight settlers from Guadalajara arrived in July, 1797.

The problem of cost was too much, however, and Cordova's plans, which called for an expenditure of 23,400 pesos, were never carried out. The total population of Villa de Branciforte mounted to 120 by 1822, and they were told that since they were so few, they could no longer have an alcalde as their overseer. The edict required them to be subject to San Jose, to which they paid little attention.

Branciforte men received appointments as justices of the peace, but their fellow residents called them alcaldes just the same. And when Monterey took over naming the justices six years later, the appointees still were "alcaldes" to Branciforte.

When the mission was secularized in 1834, the communities of

Santa Cruz and Branciforte were merged and stayed that way until American days. Santa Cruz city granted a charter by the legislature in 1866, was incorporated in 1877.

The compact little village which was planned by Cordova had its center about where the Branciforte elementary school stands now, but the grants which were included in the Branciforte area ranged from the Pajaro to Point Ano Nuevo, about the same size as Santa Cruz county is now.

The person who wants to seek some vestige of the vanished village still can drive down to the flat between Branciforte creek and the San Lorenzo river and make a mental note that on that level more than a century ago, the first residents used to conduct bull and bear fights.

Compiled from the records of Leon Rowland and The Santa Cruz Sentinel