

11-13-49

Santa Cruz Yesterdays



BAPTIST "TEMPLE" OF 60 YEARS AGO

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

When the Rev. T. M. Merriman came as pastor of the Baptist church in 1886 he did it with the proviso that the church building be moved from Locust street, near Mission, to "the flat." The move, on rollers down Mission and Walnut to the east corner of Center street was made the following year. Cost of moving and rebuilding was \$2500; new lot, \$1600.

The church, shown after the move but in about its original form, was remodeled to its present appearance in 1910.

The Baptists had organized on the morning of Sunday, October 24, 1858, in the hall of Henry Rice's Lorenzo hotel on Pacific avenue when three ministers gathered a number of Santa Cruz residents who were of that denomination into a congregation.

Webb First Pastor

The first official act was a "call" to one of the three ministers, James Webb, as the church's first pastor. Services were held in Rice's hotel until December when permission

was obtained to use the court room, a small hall in the Hihn flatiron building still standing at the upper junction of Pacific avenue and Front street.

When Temperance hall was completed, early in 1860, half way up the Mission street hill, the Baptists moved to it.

An opportunity to buy a lot on Vine street for \$200 was passed up and finally in 1867 Deacon Lawrence Pollard donated that on Locust street "on the hill" where John Morrow for \$2500 erected the 32 by 50 foot building with a square steeple.

Re-dedicated "Temple"

When the edifice was ready for dedication in its "downtown" location on Sunday afternoon, November 20, 1887, interior dimensions were 40 by 88 feet. Attached to the main building was an addition 24 by 38 feet, with two large classrooms. Above were living quarters of six rooms for the pastor and wife. The exterior had brown siding. The main lights by three

large hanging chandeliers, with 36 lights in all.

Back of the altar and choir stand was an arch bearing the words: "Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness."

Then called the "Baptist Temple," the church was crowded for the special ceremonies. Rev. Merriman was moderator of the day. Present and taking part were out-of-town as well as local

pastors.
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J. Finney
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Rev. J. I
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