

Santa Cruz Yesterdays



EARLY DAY LIVERY STABLE

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

At the turn of the century the San Lorenzo Stable on upper Pacific avenue was one of ten flourishing livery stables in Santa Cruz.

The San Lorenzo not only had the distinction of being a real local pioneer in its line, but was also one of the last to leave the field, prior to the twenties. The Elsom Stables on Soquel avenue, near Pacific, closed down in 1916, was the last to go.

Final location of the San Lorenzo

was on Front street where it moved late in 1905 to make way for erection of the two-story brick building of today for the Byrne Brothers Hardware store. The Front street site was several doors south of Post Office corner on the site of old-time business houses burned in the "big fire" of 1894. It was active at the time the post office was under construction in 1911-12, a long building extending eastward almost to the banks of the San Lorenzo river. One of the operators there was Col. A. G. Abbott. When the building burned in 1928, it had long since ended its career as a livery stable, being then in use by the Daniels Transfer company, mainly for storage purposes.

The San Lorenzo Stables (or its predecessor; just when the name was adopted is vague) got its start in 1850 when Hiram Imus put up a little building at Vine and Mission streets.

It was rented in 1856 by Charles Lincoln, a Maine boy still a youngster in his teens. He had come to California at the age of 13 in 1852 and was "the boy sheriff" when he was elected to that office in 1867 at the age of 28.

Lincoln had C. C. Martin of Glenwood as a partner for a time and was using the name of "San Lorenzo Stable" when they moved in 1864 to the new frame building erected for them on Pacific avenue. They were proprietors of the livery business but lessees of the building which was erected by Sam Drennan, an Illinois native who had come to the West coast by way of the Isthmus in 1852.

Drennan Was Constable

Drennan, like most of the early Santa Cruzans, found his first work here in the sawmills but in 1853 came in from Soquel to be constable and deputy sheriff, a job he held under O. K. Stampley and two succeeding sheriffs. His daughter Louise, married Walter C. Byrne, in 1899.

The Byrne brothers late in 1905

awarded the contract to put up the brick building, into which they moved their hardware store early in 1906. They had previously been in the McPherson building at Pacific avenue and Locust street.

The picture was taken in September, 1905, shortly before dismantling operations began on the old stable. The ancient building had survived the fire of 1865 which started close by and swept northward to Mission street taking with it the San Lorenzo Exchange, predecessor of the Pacific Ocean House.

In the window of the Postal Telegraph office are posters announcing the coming of Barnum & Bailey circus to Santa Cruz that year for the first of its two visits here. It called once again, in September, 1910, but Ringling Brothers came five times in all, before the two shows were combined.