

The upper end of Ocean street in early days was quite different than now, from the creek at Plymouth street on. Over the creek was a narrow wooden bridge crossing and along the stream were rows of willows.

On the north side, the creek bordered the Pryce farm. It was here that Elsa Russell Cardiff was raised as her mother was a member of the Pryce family. There was a large orchard reaching from the street to the willows bordering the San Lorenzo.

The sidewalks were all dirt and originally Ocean street from the stream to the Branciforte creek was a creek bottom as it was frequently called "Sand lane." The center of the street was filled in for a road bed with the sand remaining at the sides.

The home of the Mellos and Enos families still remains at the corner of Felker street. It was a typical farm within the city.

Adjoining grounds where until recently was the Felker place and the home of Miss Grace Andrews always attractive, was not the unusual garden and beauty spot that it is now.

CEMETERY WAS SMALLER

From there to the lower end of the Odd Fellows cemetery was the old Herbert home and for those days a wonderful garden, mostly roses. Now the greater part is covered with glass for growing cucumbers and other vegetables out of season.

It is the George Butler grounds.

The Odd Fellows cemetery was less than half the present size, with no perpetual care section. It was the day of monuments. The fence was of tall white pickets and at the edge of the dirt walks for the entire distance were the hitching posts, as it was horse and buggy days.

Across the street at the lower end was the Russell ranch which later was the Comstock ranch. It was another typical city farm, with orchard, hay field and back of it was the tall Russell hill used for pasturage. To this hill in the spring the girls would go to gather trembling grass, as dried grasses then had a place in every home. Beyond this hill the girls would go where quantities of rattle snake grass, with the blossom like the rattler is found to this day along Graham Hill road. Over the hill bordering the creek which flows in the gulch bordering Pasatiempo was a sylvan glade with the hillside covered with the delicate green from the growing wild maiden hair fern.

BRICK YARD

At the corner of Crossing street was a brick yard and where from the earth was burned the red brick used about the city for buildings, chimneys and foundations. Now a fine cherry orchard stands there.

At this place John Vici who followed hog raising had his pens. In the morning he would go about the city and remove from barrels the garbage to feed the animals. Many hogs raised were not corned as now. Across was the Salter place.

From Crossing street on some distance beyond to the Pedemonte gardens were several acres, a hay field. It was a beautiful spot, here and there ascending toward the heavens were tall sycamore trees. Now this, like the Pedemonte gardens, is a cherry orchard.

ITALIAN GARDENS

The Pedemontes, whose place was even then known as Italian Gardens showed what hard and persistent work would do. The main families were the Pedemontes and Monteverdes.

The hardest work was clearing the hillsides, reaching up toward Graham Hill, covered mostly with oaks. In the spring these hillsides of green were a beautiful example of what could be accomplished by labor. As trains moved along the old Southern Pacific Coast narrow gauge, the passenger's eyes would be attracted to the green hillsides across the canyon. In the fall it would change to rich tones of yellow with here and there touches of red. The fall was given over to grape picking and wine making. Most of the houses were at the base of the hill.

OLD TRADITION

The original ones who came from Italy are gone, but members of the families remain to keep up the tradition. Many remark when in this section, "I could think this is like Italy."

The writer as a boy when out for a drive up that section well remembers when what is now the cherry orchards was given over almost entirely to truck gardening.

At the upper end a road to the south of the tall board fence which enclosed the lower end of the California Powder Works was a road which crossed the creek. It was while crossing on this road in

this cart Ed Gilleran was struck by a flying section during the big powder mill explosion and was killed. By that explosion at the time of the Spanish-American war 13 were killed and part of the propaganda and a San Francisco Examiner story was that it was suspected that the explosion was the result of the work of Spanish spies.

TRUCK GARDENS

In those days of the seventies the property between the road and the San Lorenzo river was given over to truck gardening, irrigated by the water from the river. Along the road some feet above the gardens was a flume carrying the water for irrigation purposes. At the bank bordering the stream was a picturesque water wheel. The truck gardening was continued for numbers of years and gradually gave way to orchards and finally given over almost entirely to cherries, mostly royal anns, bings and republicans. Along the road at the upper end it was most picturesque with, on one side a row of quince bushes and on the other side the olive trees with their silvery green foliage.

Where is now located the memorial hall left by Frank Pedemonte were the huge fig trees and under a shed close by were the bocci alleys, a pastime greatly enjoyed especially on Sunday. Besides the fig trees close by were spreading Italian chestnut, English walnut, lemon, orange and olive trees that added greatly. It was here the grapes were crushed in the winery.

The fig trees were planted early and attained a wonderful growth and those at the bottom of the hill especially at the Rossi place are about the most beautiful in this city.