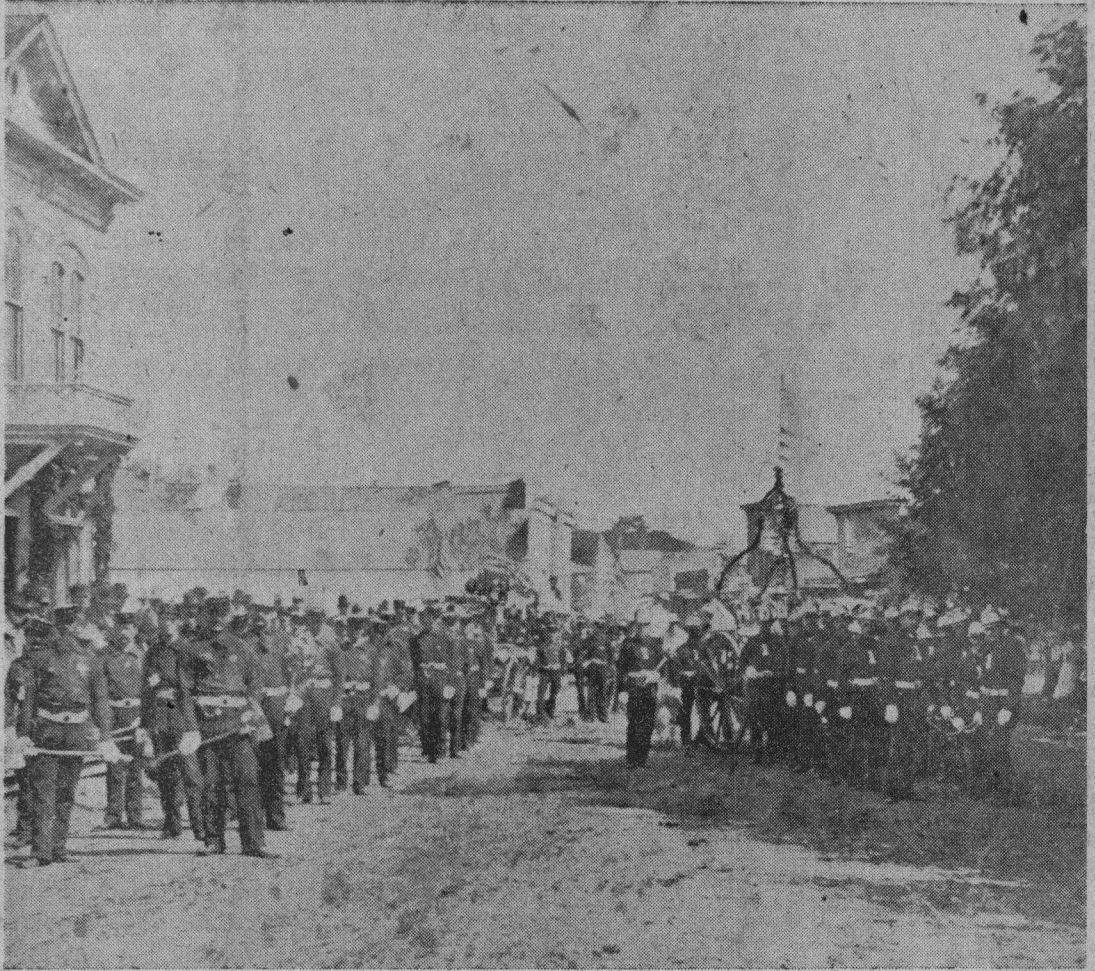


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Santa Cruz Yesterdays



LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS ON DISPLAY, JULY 4, 1881

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

When the Fourth of July rolled around in 1881, Santa Cruz had three groups of firefighters participating in the traditional parade. There were two hose companies and a hook and ladder group.

The first and foremost hose cart outfit, the Alerts, had been formed only four years before. June 22, 1877, marked the date of organization.

Alert Hose company, No. 1, had as first foreman and president, J. H. Manor, a prominent grocer of the time. Assistant was Charles Hunt, second assistant, O. Y. Bradley. George Hoadley was named secretary.

Three prominent businessmen, Frank Pray, William T. Cope and C. W. Waldron were appointed as a finance committee and to draft a constitution and by-laws. Waldron was then newly with the Morning Sentinel as business manager and for many years thereafter was a partner of the late Duncan McPherson, grandfather of the present publisher.

Alerts Came First

The Alerts started with 20 of the community's most promising young men as charter members. They received their new uniforms in time to march in splendor as a feature of the '77 Independence Day procession.

Expanded to three groups by the "Fourth" in 1881, the smoke-eaters participating in the annual celebration consisted of the Alerts, the Pilots and Santa Cruz Hook & Ladder company. Most of these are in today's picture.

All decked out with their finest outfits the local teams have assembled in front of the four-year-old city hall on Front street, which then housed most of the local firefighting equipment. The city fire-bell, cast in San Francisco in 1875, was then on the roof of the building. Later it hung on a special tower built behind the city hall.

Before the Parade

Presumably it is morning, and rather early, before the 10 a.m. parade started (note long shadows

on the unpaved street). The view is looking north. Not yet has the 1882 Hall of Records been constructed on the Cooper street corner, to the right of the two-story "hall," nor the 1890 city jail between.

Directly back of the Alerts' hose cart at right which is surmounted by a decorated frame and flag, is the original Garibaldi hotel, then at the line of Front street. It burned in the 1894 fire; was rebuilt afterward at its present location, then known as "the island," near the river.

The trees at right stood near the blacksmith shop corner so long the Foster smithy. Almost opposite was the Bowman Carriage Works.

Line of march of the parade that day was:

From Church street down Pacific avenue to Laurel street; counter-march on Pacific avenue to the Lower Plaza; down Front street to Arcan (now Soquel avenue); Arcan to Pacific, back to the Plaza, where the procession was dismissed.