

Santa Cruz Yesterdays



HEAD OF PACIFIC AVENUE 40 YEARS AGO

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

The date of "1848" on the Anthony building, pictured in the horse and buggy days of 1908, was a reminder by the pioneer, Elihu Anthony, of the first building he erected on that site. The structure shown was the second, put up for him in 1873. On the ground floor were store-rooms, while above, in earlier days was a meeting hall, (36x60) for social gatherings and theatrical attractions. When this

was superseded by the Bernheim hall it became a rooming house.

Early Nickelodeon

When the picture was taken the "Electric Theatre" was still operating in the main ground floor business space. It had opened in mid-October, 1907, as "Irwin's Nickelodeon"; operated as a promotion of E. H. Irwin, who came here from San Francisco's "Chutes." H. E. Irish, Santa Cruz stationer, was associated with him, but withdrew in January of 1908. He was followed by W. H. Sherer, who with Irwin, redecorated the interior, which seated around a hundred people. By this time it had been re-christened the "Electric." The shows given ran for an hour, featuring three reels of moving pictures, slides and an illustrated song. Later in 1908 the theatre was discontinued.

Cut and Moved

During April and May, 1909, the two-story building was cut in half by the house-movers, McIntyre Brothers, shunted back and angled over onto Bulkhead street at Water, near the old bridge. There it remained until it was razed about 25 years later.

When Pacific avenue was finally opened northward from the plaza 10 years later, the two smaller buildings seen to the left were torn down. At the old River street corner was the Ponsano grocery and bakery, with the Golden West saloon occupying the other old building between.

Old St. Charles Hotel

Beyond the narrow River street of 1908 is the St. Charles hotel. It was erected in 1867 as a two-story building by William Anthony, a cousin of Elihu. William leased part of his space to Field & Brown for their general store, used part of the ground floor for his own hardware establishment and had a tinsmith shop upstairs. It was bought in the seventies by Charles Brown who added the third story with the mansard roof and named it the St. Charles. It operated as a hotel and rooming house until it burned on the night of May 7, 1919, then known as the Waverly. The property had been taken over years before by Henry Cowell. It still rested in the hands of his heirs at the time of the fire.

Post Office Corner

At the right, the corner of a board fence hides a vacant lot which is the site of today's post office. The corner in the early

fifties had had a little building which Lucius Sanborn had a blacksmith shop, after him, Steve Mead a butcher shop. It had been the site of A. P. Swanton's Bonner Stables which he razed in 1884 to build his two-story hotel, the Swanton House, which burned three years later. It was owned in 1908 by Senator James G. Fair who at one time planned a hotel which never was built. Three years later it was bought by the federal government and the first part of the present post office building started.

Other Landmarks

On the extreme left is a corner of C. D. Hinkle's Cash Store (now McHugh & Bianchi), in a building still standing. This was erected in 1886 by A. P. Hotaling on the site of an earlier structure which had housed the C. D. Elden general store in 1850.

Just above the St. Charles (Waverly) hotel can be seen the top of the home built in 1890 for Dr. S. M. Sargent. His niece, Mrs. J. T. McGeoghegan, has long resided there.

To the right of this can be seen the old Anthony home, since dismantled.