

A Builder Built Majestic Home

Editor's Note: This Sentinel series appears in conjunction with efforts by SCOPE and the Santa Cruz Historical Society to preserve local history of old and interesting buildings.

By Margaret Koch
Sentinel Staff Writer

Sedgwick J. Lynch was one example of a rolling stone who made good: He got rich.

And when Sedgwick retired to Santa Cruz in 1876, he built himself a fine big home. He was a builder by trade and that was how he made his fortune.

For his home he wanted only

the best; he built it on West Cliff with a picture panorama view of Monterey Bay. The house also looked out for many years over Cowell's Wharf, a picturesque reminder to Lynch of humbler days. He had built the wharf for Davis and Jordan in 1854.

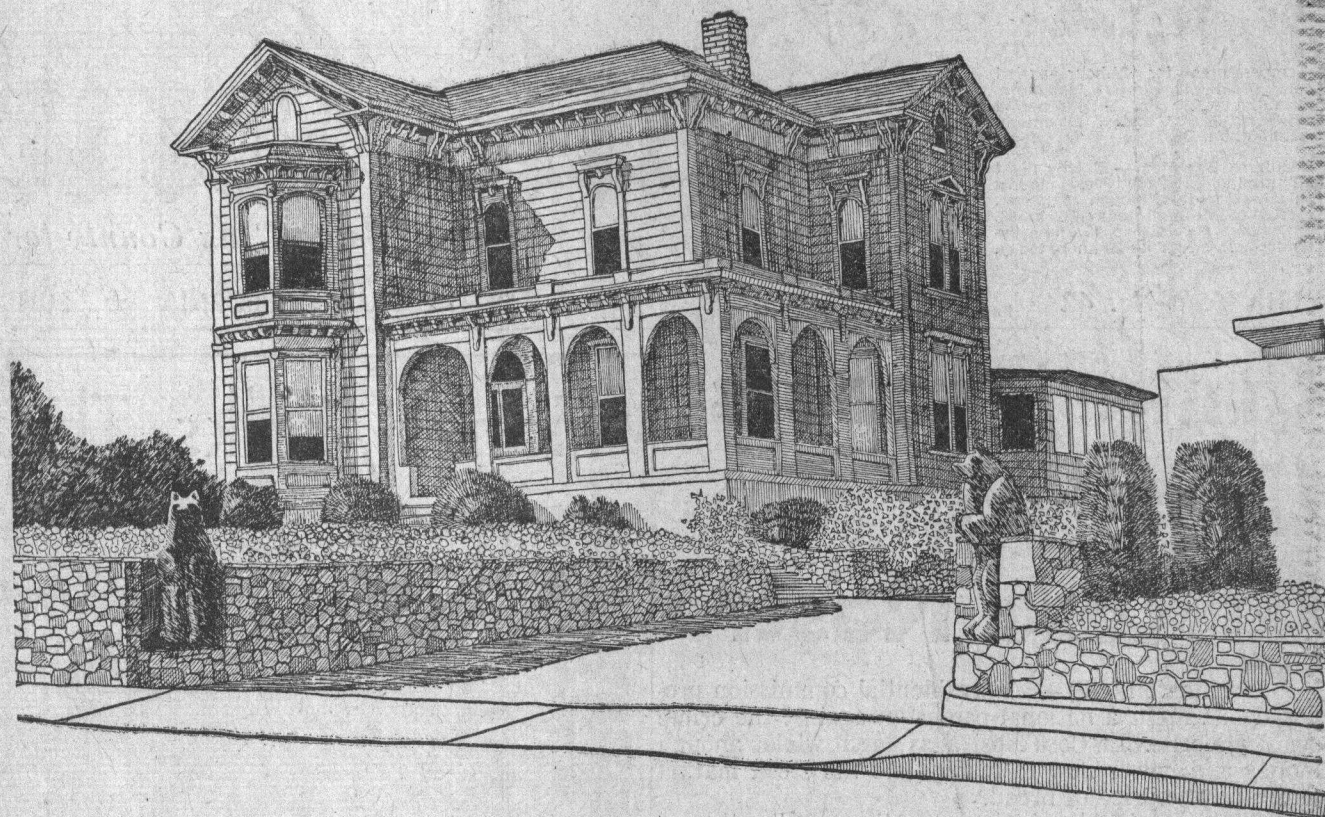
Lynch was in and out of Santa Cruz during the 25 years between 1851-1876. During one of his sojourns here, he and his partner, George Gragg, built the county's first courthouse to be located "down on the flat." That was in 1867. The two-story brick building burned in the fire of 1894. By then Lynch had been dead for 13 years.

Lynch was born in Pennsylvania in 1822 and learned the trade of carpentry. He traveled to Ohio and Tennessee, building things like flour mills before he decided to try his luck in the California gold fields.

Coming west via the Panama Isthmus, he arrived in San Francisco in 1849. Here he found it true that "it takes gold to make gold," because food, lodging and other necessities of life were very costly. He got a job on a steamer running the San Francisco-Sacramento route. He also served as a mailman of sorts, carrying letters and packages—for a fee. His regular job was to keep the old steamer running and in the course of his duties he met two engineers—Albion P. Jordan and I. E. Davis.

After a brief time in Sacramento at carpentering for \$20 per day, Lynch started for the gold field on the Yuba River. With pack mules he slogged over six feet of snow and got trapped in a two weeks' snow storm, almost starving to death in the process. When he got around to mining, however, he found a rich deposit which yielded two and one-half pounds of gold per day.

Back in San Francisco in 1850, Lynch joined the Vigilantes. He was in Santa Cruz briefly in 1851 to farm the land where Sisters' Hospital now



The Court Calendar

Larry Thomas Bethany, 22, of Watsonville, pleaded guilty Friday in municipal court to a felony burglary charge.

Bethany is accused in an entry of the Pacific Telephone central office at Scotts Valley. Deputies said copper wire valued at \$2000 was taken.

Bethany joins another suspect, Robert James Meyer, 21, of Watsonville, in facing superior court sentencing. Meyer pleaded guilty in earlier proceedings. A third suspect, Jack Junior Meyer, 24, of Santa Clara, is to enter a plea February 23.

Sheriff detectives said the arrests have broken up a five-county copper theft ring.

Kenneth Harrison, 19, of Santa Rosa, pleaded innocent Friday in municipal court to a felony motorcycle theft count.

A preliminary hearing was set for March 7. Harrison is accused of taking the motorcycle of Gerald Wiedemann of Santa Cruz on February 11 while the cycle was parked in the beach area. Officials said Harrison was arrested in Santa Clara.

BUY U. S. SAVINGS BONDS

stands on West Cliff drive. Then he opened a planing mill — the first — in Oakland.

In 1853-54 this peripatetic fellow joined a party making a survey of California but in 1854 he was back in Santa Cruz on his farm. He also was employed by Davis and Jordan to build the wharf for their thriving Santa Cruz line business.

But Lynch didn't seem to

settle long in one place. He started a lumber business in Los Angeles, Compton and Wilmington, prospered mightily and returned to Santa Cruz for the last time in 1876. He enjoyed his fine new home and its spectacular view for five years before he died in 1881.

The house, a handsome example of New England architecture, today serves as Clear

View Motel headquarters.

For a time during the 1920s it served as the Hanley Hospital. Later the hospital was built next door. Today it's known as Sisters' Hospital.

Another small note of interest, according to Bob Lincoln, long-time Santa Cruzan: Cathcart street was one called Lynch lane. The Lynch-Gragg construction warehouse stood there.

Artist Will Shepherd has captured the majestic lines of the old Lynch home in this pen and ink sketch. The home, today a part of the Clear View Motel, is located at 170 West Cliff drive.

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