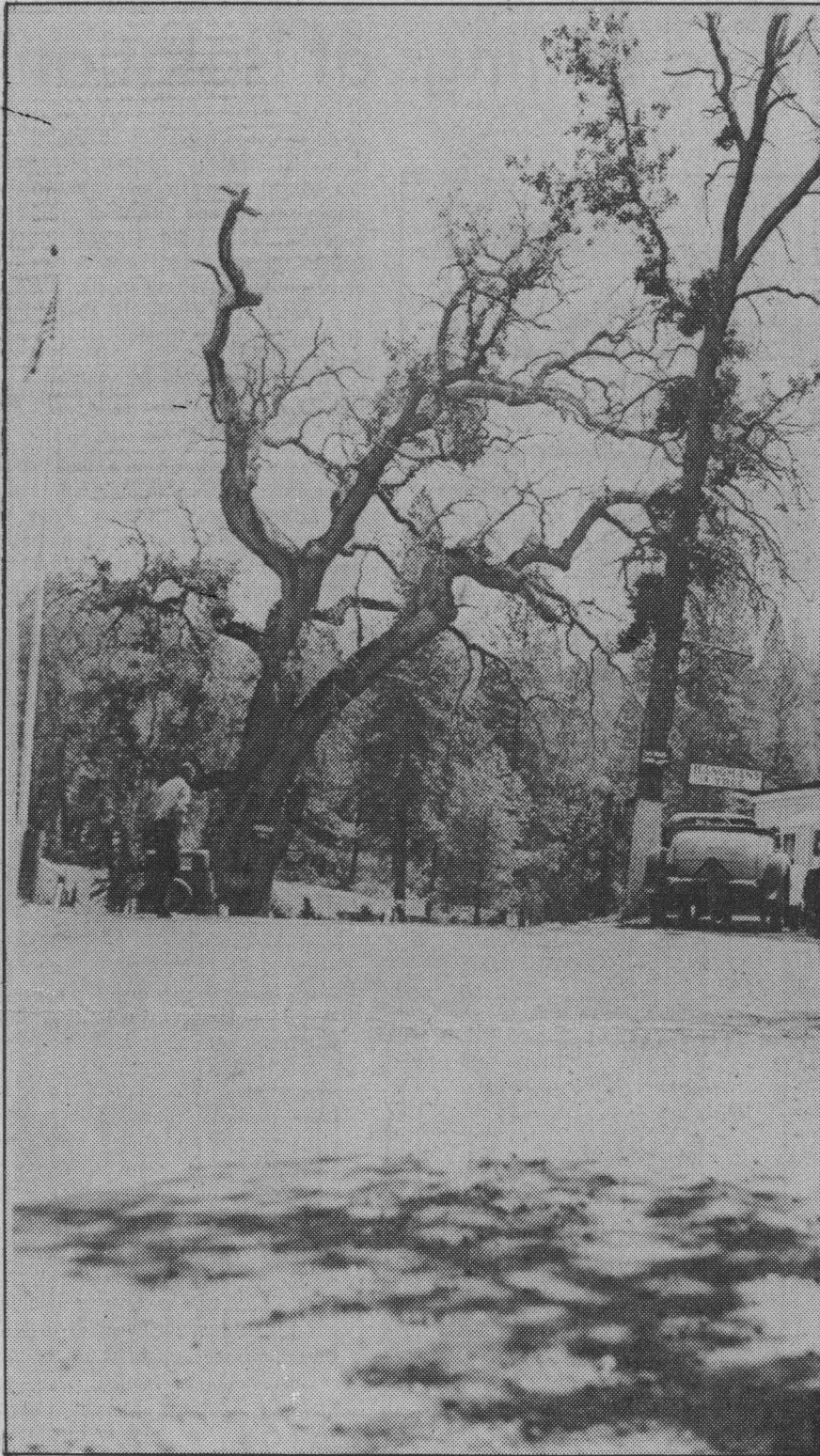


Bret Harte slept here



Harte tried mining but decided it wasn't for him. The infamous 'hanging tree' stood next to his house on Big Oak Flat Road near Sonora.

Church Street cottage was his hideaway

By MARGARET KOCH
Sentinel Correspondent

WAS Bret Harte ever in Santa Cruz?

Yes, he was. But unlike George Washington and the famous "he slept here" legends, Harte slept in one house only, at 81 Church Street.

For years after Harte left the United States and until the cottage was torn down, it was known by Santa Cruzans as "the Honeymoon Cottage."

Bret Harte and his bride, Anna Griswold, sister of the actress Mabel Griswold, spent their honeymoon in a modest cottage on Church Street. Local legend has it that Harte gave the first reading of his famous "Luck of Roaring Camp" by the fireside there. And there are those who claimed that he wrote it — or part of it — here in Santa Cruz. Chances are that he did, although today no one can prove or disprove it.

The little house where he stayed on Church Street is gone now. It was located opposite the present City Hall; a new law office building stands there today. The house was a quaint New England style place which stood beneath a large hawthorn tree and hid behind hedges of roses and shrubbery — almost impossible to photograph. Old fashioned windows reached from floor to ceiling. Rooms had been added at intervals and floor levels varied a step or two in places. Harte was often seen sitting in the garden under the hawthorn tree, reading.

Known first as the "old Boston House," it became the residence of the William Millers in the early 1900s and was torn down in the 1930s.

Harte spent several vacations in the house in the early 1860s when he was an employee of Wells Fargo Express Company in San Francisco, and later when he was editor of the Overland Monthly.

From the Church Street retreat he made frequent forays back into the Santa Cruz Mountains where he claimed to receive inspiration for his writings.

Francis Bret Harte was born Aug. 25, 1836, in Albany, N.Y. His father was a professor of Greek at Albany College. Harte tried his hand at poetry at an early age but became discouraged when his parents derided his writing efforts. After his father died in 1854, he and his mother came to California.



Harte lived in this house near Sonora during his years of mining.

ing room, selecting and placing the metal type to create the stories to be printed. Slow and tedious work compared to today's computerized process.

Harte went to San Francisco in 1857 and while setting type on the "Golden Era," a short-lived publication, he began to write anonymous sketches of his mining camp adventures. Soon they attracted attention and he was invited to join a group of writers. He became associated with the management of the "Californian," another short-lived venture in a weekly. In July, 1868, publication of "The Overland Monthly" began with Harte as organizer and editor.

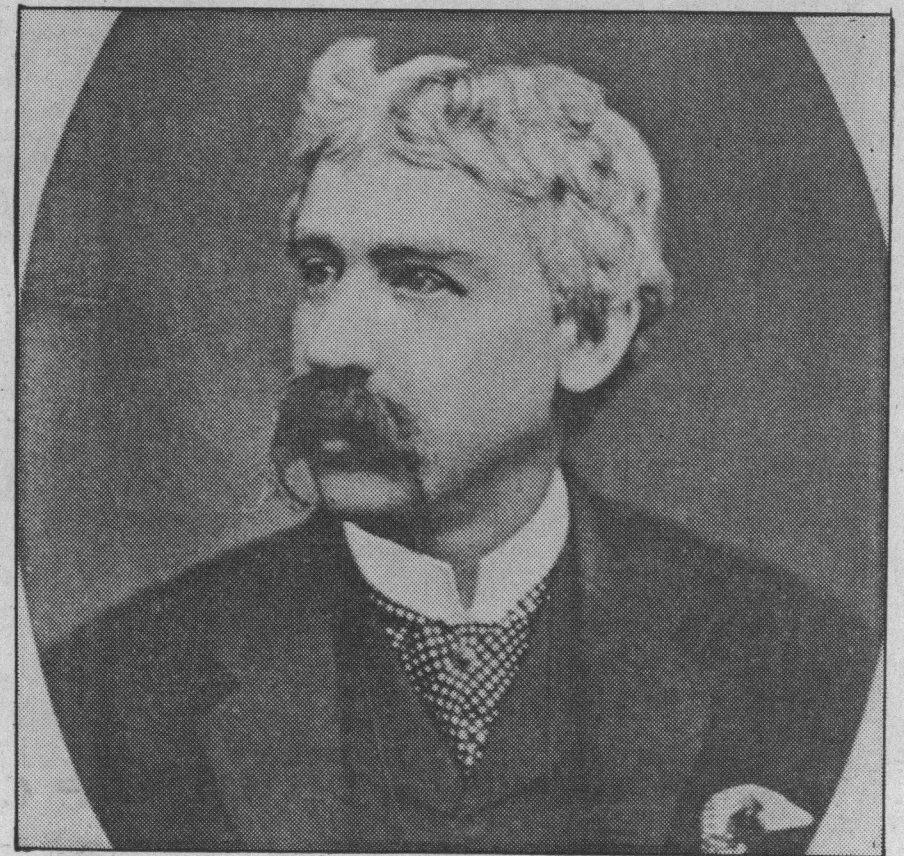
In the second issue, he printed "The Luck of Roaring Camp" which had been refused by several publishers. "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" and other stories followed, and Harte's reputation took wing.

In 1871 his "Plain Language From Truthful James" — also known as "The Heathen Chinee" appeared. This particular bit of writing caused him much sorrow because it led people to believe he was anti-Chinese, which he wasn't.

Harte went to New York in 1871 to work on the Atlantic Monthly but his stories in those later years never won the popularity of his earlier pieces.

In 1878 he was appointed consul to Krefeld, Germany, where he remained until 1880 when he was transferred to Glasgow, Scotland. In 1885 he moved to London where he led a social life and continued to write. He never returned to the United States and died in England in 1902.

A glance at history



Writer Francis Bret Harte visited Santa Cruz and is said to have spent his honeymoon in a cottage on Church Street.

Clothes collection tells of past

By SARA CASHEN

The Associated Press

THE CONNECTICUT Historical Society is plugging holes in its collection of historic garments —

The society is recording the condition, description, maker, year, style and source of each item.

With a \$22,470 grant from the Institute of Museum Services and \$10,000 in

By SARA CASHEN

The Associated Press

THE CONNECTICUT Historical Society is plugging holes in its collection of historic garments — but not holes like the one in Col. William Ledyard's shirt from the sword that killed him.

Since September 1983, the society has been organizing and dating more than 4,000 items that make up the collection, ranging from homespun diapers to silk gowns and dating from the early 18th century to the mid-20th century.

As many as half of the items have a documented history, but often those records are off by a generation or two, according to Nancy Rexford, the society's clothing consultant and until recently curator of costumes at the historical society in Northampton, Mass.

The Connecticut society has been collecting costumes since it was established in 1825, giving it an advantage over similar groups in other states.

"Many historical societies were not founded until the late 19th or early 20th century. Connecticut really has a big lead," Rexford said.

The society is recording the condition, description, maker, year, style and source of each item.

With a \$22,470 grant from the Institute of Museum Services and \$10,000 in matching funds raised by members, the society is working to ensure that the collection is properly stored so that it lasts longer and can be more accessible to staff, researchers and the public.

"Clothing is as yet an almost unexplored resource in giving a sense of how people live," Rexford said.

For example, when revolutionary soldier and congressman Jeremiah Wadsworth of Connecticut visited the French court of Louis XVI in 1784, he wore an elaborate ensemble that included a crimson velvet coat and an ecru silk vest embroidered with pastel flowers and tiny red sequins.

Such were the clothes diplomats used at the courts of Europe's royalty.

But the society's goal is to educate the public by striving for a varied, well-kept and documented collection, including everyday clothing.

Without such efforts, "people will have a crazy view of what people were wearing," Rexford said.

1836, in Albany, N.Y. His father was a professor of Greek at Albany College. Harte tried his hand at poetry at an early age but became discouraged when his parents derided his writing efforts. After his father died in 1854, he and his mother came to California.

Harte tried teaching briefly, and of course he tried mining with a view to a quick fortune. Most visitors to California did. However, his mining venture was short-lived. But his keen eye and ear absorbed everything he saw and heard, and his brain recorded it all for his future literary projects.

All the nuances of the rough and ready mining camps he lived in, and their characters, both native and foreign, were imprinted vividly on his brain. He spent time in the vicinity of Sonora and Mariposa, witnessing several hangings and he lived for a time in a two-story "house" next to the ill-famed "Hanging Tree" on Big Oak Flat Road. He pitched his tent beside camp fires, rode the swaying stage coaches between camps, and met a friendly young writer named Mark Twain and a bitterly caustic one named Ambrose Bierce.

Finally Harte took a newspaper job in Sonora where he worked in the compos-

Glasgow, Scotland. In 1885 he moved to London where he led a social life and continued to write. He never returned to the United States and died in England in 1902.

Writer Francis Bret Harte visited Santa Cruz and is said to have spent his honeymoon in a cottage on Church Street.