

East Santa Cruz

Another Landmark Comes Down

Long a landmark in East Santa Cruz, Carlson's Grocery store at 1002-1004 Soquel Avenue, is gradually coming down.

It is being taken down carefully, in order to preserve as many of the virgin redwood boards as possible, according to its owner, Kathrine Willson. She's the former Kathrine Carlson and her parents, Selma and Carl Carlson operated the grocery business.

More formally christened the "Crescent Grocery," the business was always known as Carlson's, she says. The store was built around the turn of the century, and the redwood boards came from the Olive Springs lumber mill from the old Frank Smith estate. Early Store owners were a man named Fletcher and O. Fightmaster, prior to 1922 when her father acquired the property.

"It was two businesses, a feed and fuel, and a grocery," she recalls.

Mr. Carlson ran both for while, then disposed of the feed end of it and operated only the grocery. When the grocery went out in 1958, the store housed various businesses including a bicy-



This is how a thriving grocery store looked 40 or 50 years ago. This is Carlson's, corner of Soquel Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenues, East Santa Cruz, for more than 30 years a grocery store operated by Selma Carlson, left, and her husband, Carl Carlson., at right behind counter. Standing in rear of store in dark coat is Mr. Leedham, a blind pianist who played regularly at Grace Methodist Church, according to Mrs. John Willson, daughter of the Carlsons.

cle shop, a bookstore, a real estate office, linoleum and carpets, a temporary drugstore, and finally, it served as storage.

Today, looking down Soquel Avenue, Mrs. Willson says she hardly recognizes it, so great have been the changes in the past few years.

The old Carlson family home still stands at the rear of the property, behind the store. Mrs. Willson has no future plans for the property.

