Early Settlers of Old Los Altos/Mountain View

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A project of the Los Altos Chapter of the DAR 2020- 2021

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Early Settlers of Old Los Altos/Mountain View

A Collection of Profiles

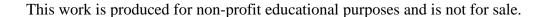
An assemblage of accounts of people who were active in Los Altos, Mountain View, and Los Altos Hills before 1900.

Compiled by members of the Los Altos Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution 2021



Principal editor: Martha Wallace Attributions editor: Susanne Martinez

by the Los Altos Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution



Front cover: Family of Cyrus P. Berry Back cover: Mountain View Grocery and General Store 1890

The DAR is a non-profit, 501 (c) (3) charitable organization dedicated to historic preservation, education, and patriotism.

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Evans, Sally	Sleeper, Frank by Sally Evans
Heldenbrand, Pamela	Harrington, John Augustus by Pamela Heldenbrand Bubb, Susan Eugenia by Pamela Heldenbrand Taaffe, William P., Murphy, Elizabeth Y. by Pam Heldenbrand
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Wallace, Martha	Giffin, Oscar Fitzgerald by Martha Wallace
Zeidman, Carrie	Castro, Maria Angela by Carrie Zeidman Castro, Crisanto Roque by Carrie Zeidman Lebrun, Charles by Carrie Zeidman Parker, Edwin Lewis by Carrie Zeidman

Introduction Early Settlers of Old Los Altos/Mountain View

For the past year members of the Los Altos Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution engaged in a project to learn about the life and history of early settlers in the Los Altos/Mountain View area. Due to the pandemic, the project was designed to be completed from the comfort of our homes. We investigated people whose names appeared on early maps, directories, census records, and more, and then created one-sheet profiles for the settlers. This document is an assemblage of the accounts compiled for that project.

<u>Goal</u>: So often we learn only about the famous people; this project helped us learn about the rest of the people, too. We concentrated on people who lived in or were active in early Los Altos, Mountain View, and Los Altos Hills before 1900 to help us understand the pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit that contributed to the commercial and civic evolution of the early San Francisco Bay Area. New Understandings.

<u>Choices</u>: Any *individual* who had lived in or contributed to the area prior to 1900 was eligible, having played a part in Santa Clara County becoming a major source of provisions for California, especially during the Gold Rush, and attracting thousands of people to settle here.

- Muwekma Ohlone Indians who were the first known residents of this area. They were part of a group of Native Americans who inhabited small villages throughout the Santa Clara Valley, fishing, hunting, and gathering.
- Spanish land grantees and priests, who cultivated the land and raised cattle using Ohlone converts as forced laborers during the Mission era (1770-1820).
- Mexican land grant recipients and Californios who continued grazing cattle and sheep during the Rancho Era (1830s-1848).
- The argonauts of the Early American Era (1855-1880) who came for gold and settled as farmers introducing grains and hay.
- The farmers and early entrepreneurs who promoted agricultural intensification and planted orchards of stone fruits beginning in 1880, leading to the end of the era that we studied. Participants in the project often chose to investigate the pre-1900 owner of the property where they now live, or a street or school named for a pre-1900 property owner, or just an interesting name on a pre-1900 map. Names could also be chosen from census records, city directories, voting records, and more, if they were in the area and active before 1900.

<u>Resources</u>: The resources that our group used were restricted by the pandemic – information we could find at home and online: maps, genealogy resources, internet articles, newspapers, books, and more. Local libraries are full of wonderful books about our area, but they were closed due to Covid. Several of us took advantage of contactless pick-up service, and we discovered many books we personally owned and could do look-ups for each other. The resources used for the profile of each settler are listed in the attributes. <u>The Project Experience.</u>

<u>Profiles</u>: This collection consists of one-page profiles: overviews of a settler or early resident. These are casual accounts, stories stitched together from a long list of resources. Two helpful starting points were *Pen Pictures from the Garden of the World* (Foote, 1888) and *The History of Santa Clara County, California* (Sawyer, 1922) which told the stories of many Santa Clara County residents. They are similar to what are often called "mug books," popular biographical sketch books written in the late 19th and early 20th centuries extoling the virtues of local

residents. If you've used them, you know you need to take them with a grain of salt and consider them clues to further research. Although the Foote and Sawyer books are remarkable, verification of some of the information led us to discover alternate stories.

<u>Content</u>: The aim of the profiles was to build a basic biography (birth/marriage/death) and learn where the settlers came from, when they arrived in the area, what kind of work they did, where their land was located, and what they contributed to the area. Images of the map, a building, a portrait, or a newspaper article were searched for and included. Summary about the Settlers.

<u>Attributions</u>: The attributions for the work contained in each settler profile are linked at the bottom of the profile to a list in a separate section at the end of the whole document. With different levels of experience among the contributors, formal citation format was not required. We kept to *fair use*; this work is produced for non-profit educational purposes and is not for sale. In order to ascribe the resources we consulted to the authors, the "can you find it again" method was employed, giving you enough clues to follow if you decide to track down more about a person.

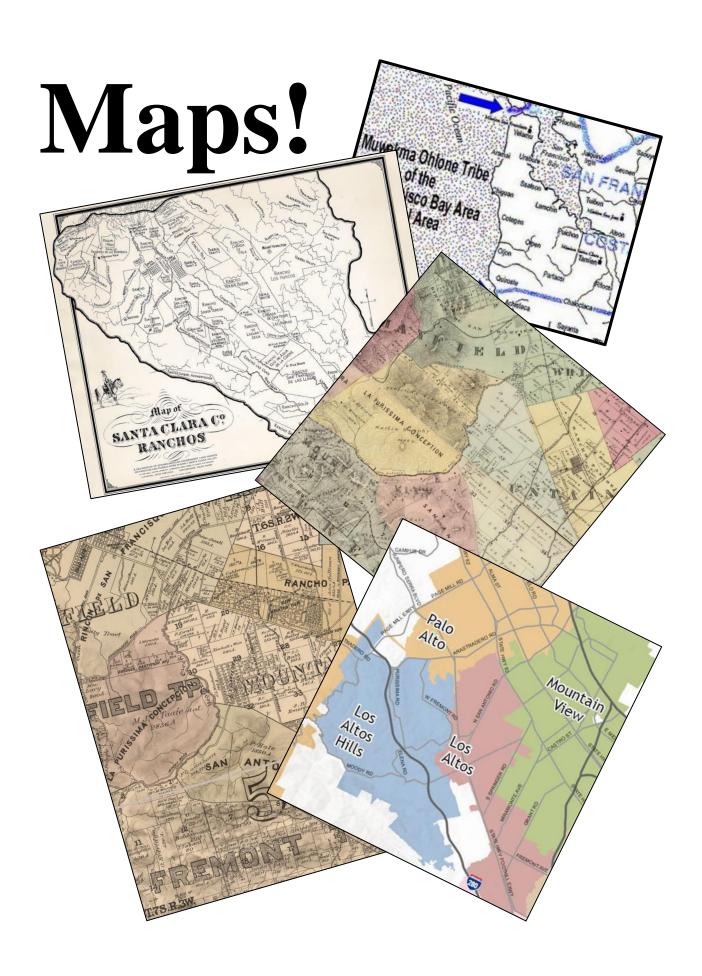
Martha Wallace August 2021

New Understandings
About the Settlers
The Project Experience
Attributions for the introductory sections are found here.

These compilations do not assume the guise and dignity of history or biography, but are submitted as material that may be used by the exact historian after verification.

- "Gentleman" John Perkins by W. W. Scott 1920





The Maps We Used

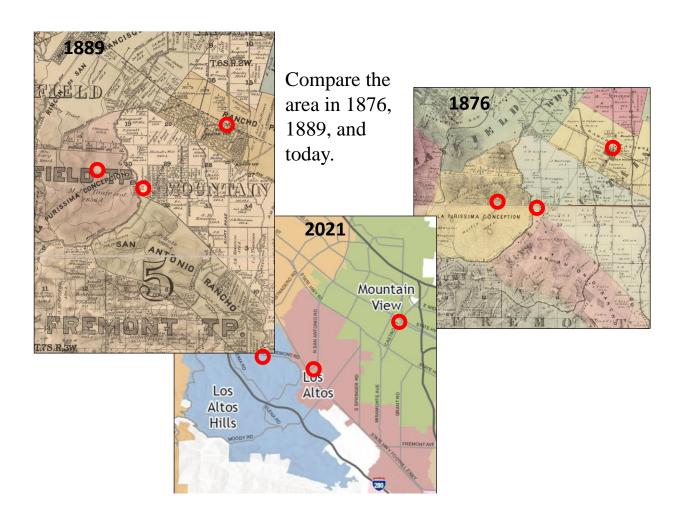
Our searches centered on the area between Adobe Creek and Stephens Creek: the land that is now Mountain View, Los Altos, and Los Altos Hills.

Fremont Township! A more accurate name for this area before 1900 was Fremont Township, used until 1940 to identify the area in census records. Fremont, across the bay, was incorporated in 1956 – by then they supposed that few people continued to call *this* area Fremont Township, although we do still have Fremont Avenue and Fremont Union High School District.

- Mountain View was an early center of activity, part of the Fremont Township. Although Mountain View was well-known, it wasn't incorporated until 1902.
- Paul Shoup purchased land from Sarah Winchester in 1906 to form a right of way for the Interurban Electrical Railroad, and named the area Los Altos. Los Altos was incorporated in 1952. If you search for Los Altos before 1900, you probably won't find it.
- Los Altos Hills, based largely on Rancho Purísima Concepción area, was incorporated in 1956.

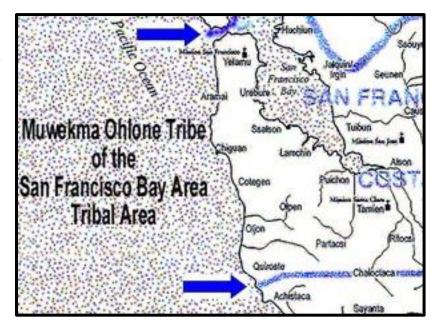
The key maps used in locating settlers to research and learn the history of the area were:

- 1. Muwekma Ohlone map of tribal lands
- 2. Ranchos of Santa Clara County
- 3. Thompson & West 1876; and Official County Map 1889

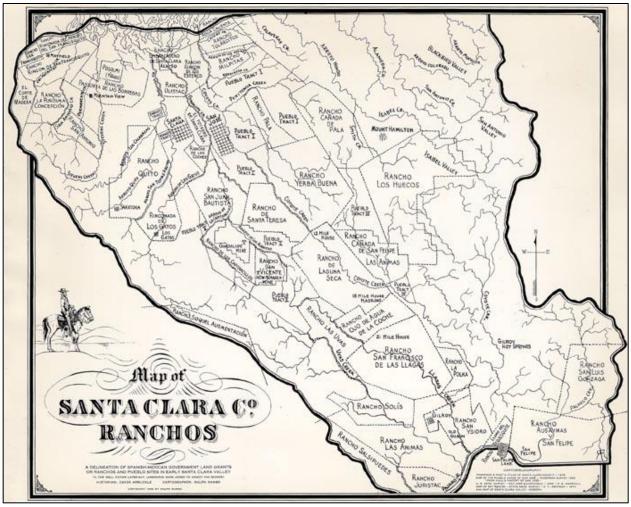


Ohlone & Rancho Maps

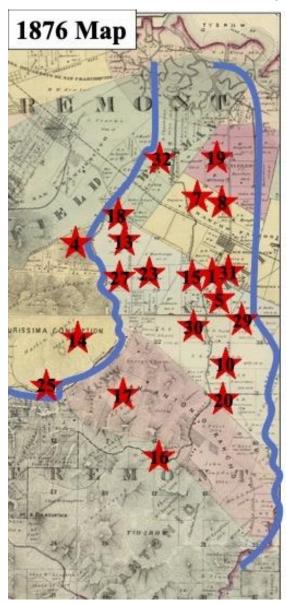
Map of Muwekma Ohlone Tribal Area



Map of Santa Clara County Ranchos



Locations of the Settlers The following pages show closer views.



Thompson and West 1876

Historical atlas map of Santa Clara County, California. Compiled, drawn and published from personal examinations and surveys by Thompson & West, San Francisco, Cala. 1876. Thos. Hunter Pr. Phil. N. Friend, Engr. Philad. C.L. Smith, Del. https://www.davidrumsey.com (search for "Thompson and West 1876 Santa Clara")



Official County Map 1889

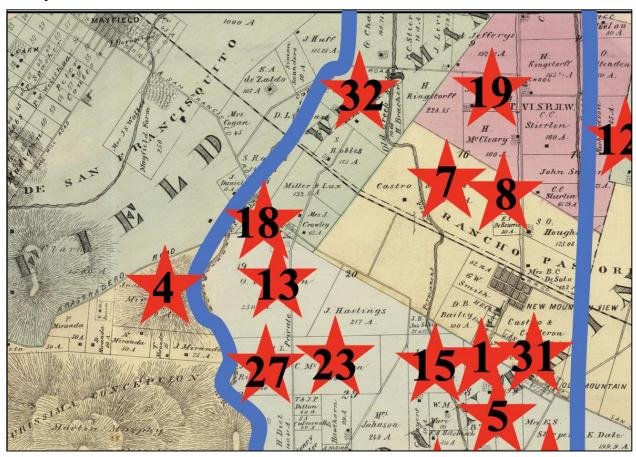
Herrmann Bros, and Britton & Rey. Official map of the County of Santa Clara, California: compiled from U.S. surveys, county records, and private surveys and the tax-list of, by order of the Hon. Board of Supervisors. San José, Calif.: Herrmann Bros, 1890. Map.

https://www.loc.gov/item/2012592102/.

To see the maps online and zoom in to see more detail, click on the url. The following pages show closer views of the maps.

1876 Map – North (Mountain View & Los Altos)

Thompson & West

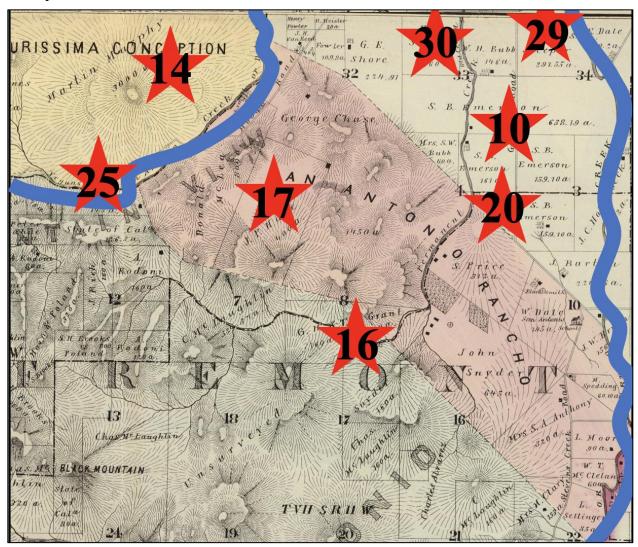


- 1 Doctor Bowling Bailey
- 4 Juana Briones
- 5 Benjamin T. Bubb
- 7 Crisanto Roque Castro
- 8 Maria Angela Castro
- 12 Daniel Benjamin Frink
- 13 Oscar Fitzgerald Giffin

- 15 Isaac Newton Graham
- 18 John Augustus Harrington
- 19 Frank Huff
- 23 Charles McLaughlin
- 27 James Lapsley Riddle
- 31 Thomas Stealey
- 32 Peter Swall

1876 Map – South (Los Altos & Los Altos Hills)

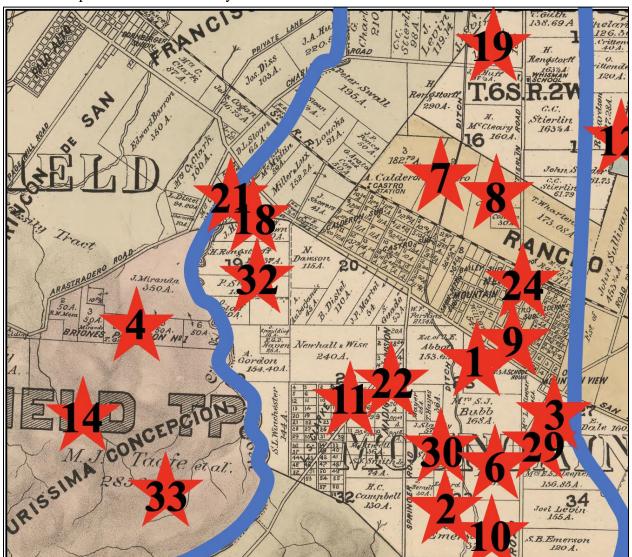
Thompson & West 1876



- 10 Silas Blake Emerson
- 14 José & José Ramón Gorgonio
- 16 George Henry & Theodore Franklin Grant
- 17 Joseph P. Hale
- 20 Shelby Hood Kifer
- 25 Martin Murphy, Jr.
- 29 Frank Sleeper
- 30 Elias Fulton Springer

1889 Map – North (Mountain View & Los Altos)

Official Map of Santa Clara County

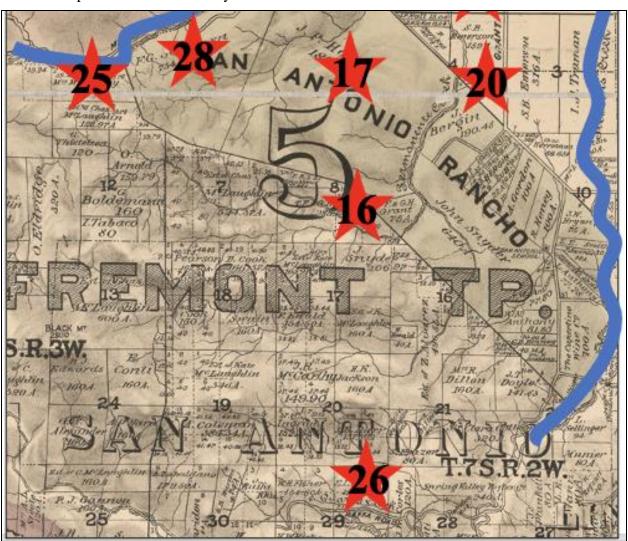


- 1 Doctor Bowling Bailey
- 2 Cyrus Philbrick Berry
- 3 Frank Philo Beverly
- 4 Juana Briones
- 6 Susan Eugenia Bubb
- 7 Crisanto Roque Castro
- 8 Maria Angela Castro
- 9 Louisa Maria Ehrhorn
- 10 Silas Blake Emerson
- 11 David L. Farnsworth

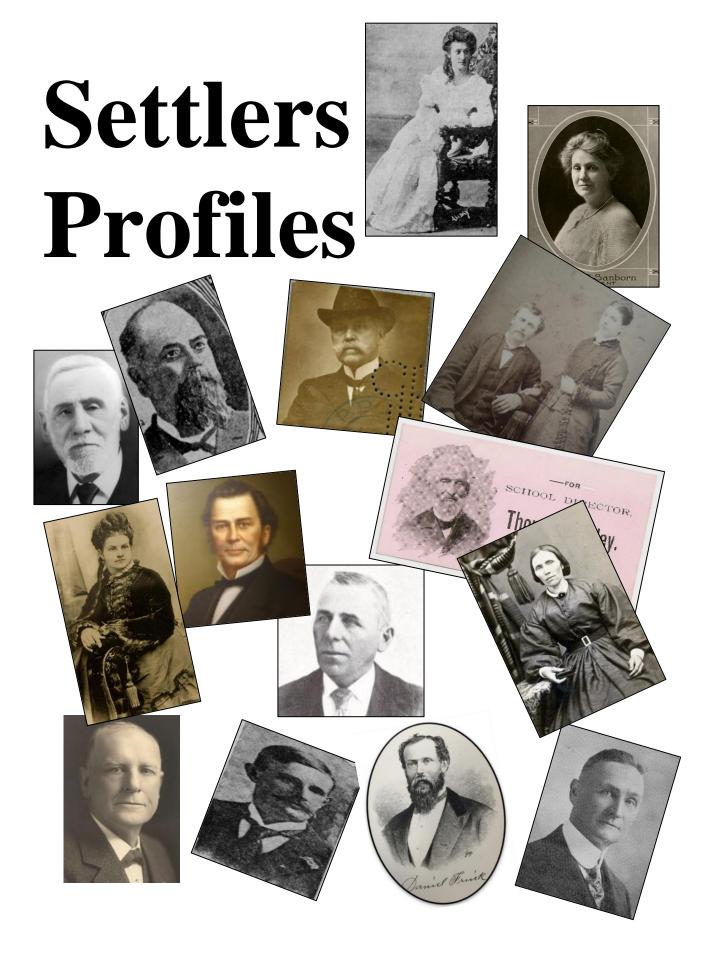
- 12 Daniel Benjamin Frink
- 14 José & Ramón Gorgonio
- 18 John Augustus Harrington
- 19 Franklin Lester Huff
- 21 Charles Lebrun
- 22 Garrett Madigan
- 24 Jacob Mockbee
- 29 Frank Sleeper
- 30 Elias Fulton Springer
- 32 Peter Swall
- 33 William Post & Elizabeth Yuba Taaffe

1889 Map – South (Los Altos & Los Altos Hills)

Official Map of Santa Clara County



- 16 George Henry & Theodore Franklin Grant
- 17 Joseph P. Hale
- 20 Shelby Hood Kifer
- 25 Martin Murphy, Jr.
- 26 Edwin Lewis Parker
- 28 Frederick George Sanborn



Bailey, Doctor Bowling "D.B." by Susanne Martinez

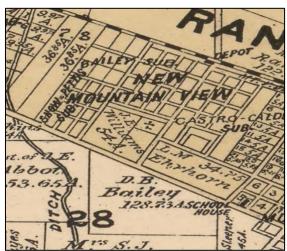
Doctor Bowling Bailey, known as D.B. Bailey, was not a medical doctor, but he was an important early Mountain View pioneer. At one point, he owned a one-third interest in the San Francisco Examiner, which he later sold to William Randolph Hearst. He was elected in 1859 to represent Santa Clara County in the California Assembly where, in 1860, he introduced legislation to create the University of California. His 1888 obituary described him as "one of

the most influential and prominent men" in Santa Clara County.

D. B. Bailey was born on the Kentucky-Tennessee line on April 1, 1831 and came to California around By Mr. Bailey of Santa Clara, An Act to establish the University of California.

Read first and second times, referred to the Committee on Education, and ordered printed.

1850 with his brother, Boanerges Bailey. They joined the thousands of gold miners rushing to California and apparently had some success. In 1853, Bailey settled in the Fremont Township area of Mountain View. At one point land owned by Bailey included core sections of the current



downtown Mountain View, which was later subdivided as Bailey's Subdivision. In 1868, Bailey fought off efforts of the newly formed town of Mountain View to claim part of his land.

Bailey served as a school trustee for a number of years and was a generous donor to his community. One of his last wishes was for his widow to transfer some of his valuable land to the Methodist Church, which she did in 1893, donating a fifteen-acre parcel for the creation of a home for the Clergy of the Methodist Society, to be named "D.B. Bailey Memorial Home."

D.B. Bailey married Margaret Harmon in 1858 and left two surviving children at the time of his death in 1888. He and Margaret are buried in Oak Hill Memorial Park in San José along with two of their children who died in early childhood. In his will, he left what was described as "a large fortune" to his widow.

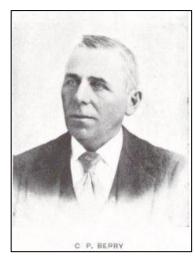
Places in Mountain View named for Bailey. A Bailey Avenue which ran along the edge of D.B. Bailey's property in Mountain View was named for him. In 1968, it was widened and renamed Shoreline Boulevard. A small shopping center, Bailey Park Plaza, located on Shoreline Boulevard remains today.



Berry, Cyrus Philbrick by Ann Hepenstal

Cyrus Philbrick Berry was born 26 September 1842 to Sewell Berry and Mary Emerson in Biddeford, Maine. Sewell Berry had eight children with his first wife, Lydia Steel, and three children (including Cyrus) with Mary, his second wife. Cyrus grew up in Maine, graduated from Biddeford High School in 1857, and was living with his parents and two siblings in Biddeford in 1860. On April 27, 1861, he enlisted in the Union Army in Company B, 5th Infantry of the Maine Volunteers as a Private, serving as a machinist and later promoted to Corporal and enlisting for a second tour of duty. He fought in the Battle of Bull Run and was wounded in the right arm by a shell shot.

Cyrus married Mary Jane Phillips in Biddeford, Maine, on 4 June 1865. They had two children, Ernest Leroy and Elizabeth May,



both born in Maine. Cyrus worked as a machinist in Biddeford, served as the City Clerk, served as the Inspector of Customs in Portland, Maine, and worked as a machinist in the Biddeford water power shop. The Berry family's lives changed forever on 13 October 1889 when Cyrus' uncle (Mary Emerson's brother) died in Santa Clara County, California. Silas Blake Emerson named his brother Carlos Emerson and nephew Cyrus to inherit his estate valued at some \$7 million in 50/50 shares. The family traveled to Santa Clara County by train, with Mary Jane's mother insisting on accompanying them.



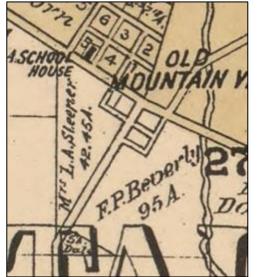
The Berry Family (Cyrus, standing)

Cyrus Berry built a home at what is now 965 Berry Avenue in Los Altos and soon after, gave that home to his son Ernest Berry, who raised his family there. Cyrus was a director at the Memorial Baptist Church in Mountain View in 1891. Cyrus represented the 54th Assembly District (then in Mountain View) in the California State Assembly for a two-year term starting 1895. His wife Mary Jane died in 1919, and by 1920, Cyrus lived with his daughter's family in San Francisco. He lived in the Veteran's Home in Yountville, and drew a veteran's pension from 1918 until his death on 20 December 1923. He is buried at Alta Mesa Memorial Park in Palo Alto.

Today's Berry Avenue in Los Altos is named after Cyrus Berry, and is the road he cut through his 80 acres along which he built the Cyrus Berry House at 965 Berry Avenue (on the list of Los Altos Historic Landmarks). His descendants include Cyrus Philbrick Berry, son of Ernest Leroy Berry, and his son Cyrus Philbrick Berry who is known as Robert or Bob and currently resides with his wife in Los Altos (and notes the family no longer holds Silas Emerson's millions!).

Beverly, Frank Philo by Susanne Martinez

Frank Philo Beverly was born in San Francisco in 1855 to the Reverend Philo Lewis Beverly and Ruth Mayo Higgins, who had migrated from Maine to California with a number of small children during the California Gold Rush Era. Tragically, the Reverend Beverly died in 1854, before his youngest son, Frank, was born.



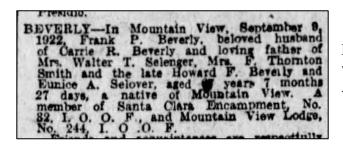
By the 1860 census, five-year-old Frank was living in Mountain View with his paternal aunt, Eunice Stevens Beverly Sleeper, along with two of his sisters, Victoria, age 16 and Margaret, age 14. In the 1870 census, Frank was listed twice – once as a student at Santa Clara College and a second time as a member of his aunt's household in Mountain View.

In 1880, Frank married Carrie R. Hartwick and the two continued to reside in Mountain View. The 1880 census lists his occupation as "farmer." In 1881, however, he was appointed by the Santa Clara Board of Supervisors as a Justice of the Peace, a position he held for a number of years.

His name

appears as a Justice of the Peace in numerous judicial records over the years, but most interesting is a 1915 case in which he sued trustees of the estate of his aunt, Eunice Sleeper, challenging the designation of a spiritualist organization as her principal beneficiary. Justice Beverly, however, lost the case.

F. P. Beverly, as he was commonly known, was an active member of the Republican Party, serving as an officer of the Mountain View Republican Club (the McKinley Republican Club).



Attributions and Sources



Frank Philo Beverly died in 1922, leaving his wife and several children. He was buried in Alta Mesa Cemetery in Palo Alto.

Briones, Juana by Beverly Schreiber

Juana Briones lived an unusual life and has been described as "one of early California's most successful women." Juana's family, who were of Mexican-African descent, traveled over 1600 miles to colonize California with the De Anza expedition in 1802. They settled in Monterey County where Juana was born in 1794.

Later, while living in San Francisco, she married a soldier from the Presidio, Apolinario Miranda. Together they had 11 children, 8 of whom lived to adulthood. They also adopted an orphaned Indian girl. Their marriage apparently was not a happy one. Juana tired of her husband's abusive behavior and failure to provide for their family. She received a church-sanctioned separation and she and her children moved to a small adobe house in San Francisco.

Juana supported herself and her children by selling milk and produce to the families at the Presidio and to the anchored ships that were in the harbor. She was also a visiting nurse and a midwife. Her kindness and knowledge of medicinal herbs made her revered by sailors around the world.

In 1848 Juana moved her family to the Peninsula where she bought a 4400-acre ranch in the Palo Alto foothills. There she became a cattle rancher, medicinal healer, and a humanitarian.



Although there are no surviving diaries related to Juana, details of her life are derived from the accounts of early travelers to the San Francisco Bay Area as well as from legal papers, newspaper articles, maps and deeds, and old history books. Her generosity and reputation as a healer established her legacy.

The State Department of Parks and Recreation honored Juana with a plaque placed at one of her homesites in San Francisco. In Palo Alto there is a park and school named in her honor.

After a long legal battle with preservationists, her rancho home in the Palo Alto foothills was demolished in 2011. Fortunately, parts of the construction were retained and preserved by the California Historical Society.

Juana died in 1889 at the age of 87 in a cow stampede. She is buried at Holy Cross Cemetery in Menlo Park, California.

Bubb, Benjamin T. by Melanie Ercoli

Benjamin T. Bubb was born in Washington County, Missouri, on February 15, 1838. He was brought up on a farm which served him well in future years. He moved at twelve years of age with his family that included seven brothers and sisters across the plains from Missouri to the mining district at Fremont on the Sacramento River, arriving there on the 25th of August, 1850. The family started across the plains with an ox team that carried their household goods and a number of cattle, some of which made it through the journey. The family moved in March of 1851 to Downieville, Sierra County, where they established a boarding house.



In October of 1851, the family moved to Fremont Township in Santa Clara County where they continued in the boarding house business. There Benjamin attended the public schools of the district during the day while doing farm work outside of school hours. He was a good student and a great reader, retaining what he read.

After the death of Benjamin's father, he remained on the homestead with his mother who afterward made her home with him until her death.

In 1864, Benjamin purchased his own ranch of 168 acres in what is now Mountain View which he farmed until his death. He married Sarah J. Smith on June 28, 1871, by whom he had seven children. Sarah was also from Washington County, Missouri, and came to

California in October of 1870. Mr. Bubb was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church

of Mountain View for 17 years and was an Elder in the church at the time of his death. His parents were Baptists and reared their children in that faith, but there were no churches of that denomination at that time so he joined the Presbyterians. He was a practical man.

About four years before his death, he became a member of the A.O.U.W. (Ancient Order of United Workmen) of Mountain View. Mr. Bubb was a Democrat and took an active part in the



political matters of the township, including acting as a poll judge during elections. To his family, he was kind and affectionate. As a member of the church, he was faithful, active, and liberal, believing that other men should enjoy the same liberty he possessed. Benjamin died on February 23, 1888, at the age of 50.

Mr. Bubb was well loved by his community as seen from a current local school and main thoroughfare named after him: Benjamin Bubb Elementary School in Mountain View, California, and Bubb Road, in Cupertino, California.

Bubb, Susan Eugenia by Pamela Heldenbrand

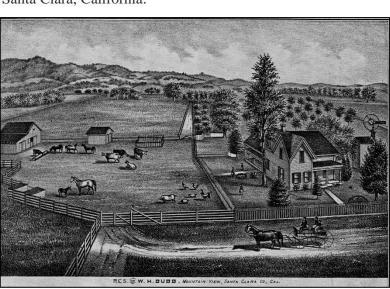
Susan Eugenia Farrar was born 30 Mar 1847 in Missouri. She was raised by her grandparents, Thomas Pate Shore and Isabella (Hyde) Shore. Susan Eugenia Farrar is enumerated with the Shore family in the 1850 US Census in Washington County, Missouri, and again in the 1860 US Census in Santa Clara County, California. She married William Henry Bubb in Santa Clara County, California, on 16 Oct 1867. Together they would have four children: Mary C, who died at age one, Leora Isabella, Susan Louisa, and Effie who died at two years of age.

Their farm is noted on the Thompson and West 1876 map No 4 on the northeast of section 33, bounded by Grant Road and Permanente Creek. William died on August 11, 1882. On August 24, 1882, his will was introduced for probate, naming his wife Susan as "executive," valuing the real property at \$30,000, including the 145-acre homestead, a parcel of land and half ownership of a warehouse near the Mountain View Depot, 160 acres in Fresno County, and personal property at \$5,000. It specified that his children were to share the estate equally upon Susan's death. William Henry is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in San José, Santa Clara, California.

On the Herrmann Bros. 1889 map, Mrs. S. E. Bubb is listed as the owner of the 145-acre property.



Susan Eugenia (Farrar) Bubb died on 19 Dec 1913 in Mountain View, Santa Clara, California. She was buried in Oak Hill Memorial Park in San José, Santa Clara, California.



Bubb

168A.

145 A.

136.85 A

B. Emerson

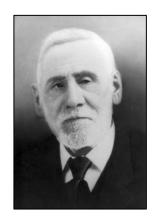
Places named for the settlers:

None known. Bubb School and Bubb Park are named for Benjamin Bubb, William Henry's brother and Susan Eugenia's brother-in-law.

Castro, Crisanto Roque by Carrie Zeidman

On August 15, 1828, Crisanto Roque Castro was born at the Mission San José, the eighth of nine children born to Mariano de la Cruz Castro and Maria Trínidad Peralta. Both the Castro and Peralta families were pioneers with long roots in California. On September 9, 1857, Crisanto married Francisca Armijo in Alameda, California. They had ten children and lived all their lives in Mayfield (Fremont Township) or in nearby Santa Clara.

The Castro family goes back to Crisanto's great-grandfather Joaquin Castro, a soldier who came to California from Sinaloa de Leyva, México, in 1775 with Juan Bautista de Anza. Joaquin was granted several ranchos for his service to the Spanish crown.



The Mountain View land owned by Crisanto and the neighboring lot owned by his sister Angela Castro were originally part of the Rancho Pastoría de las Borregas granted to Francisco Estrada, son-in-law of Mariano Castro, by Governor Juan Alvarado in 1842, 9,066 acres of what is now Sunnyvale and Mountain View. Francisco's wife Inez Castro Estrada died in 1844 and Francisco died in 1845. Francisco's father, José Mariano Estrada inherited the land and transferred it to Inez's father, Mariano Castro, father of Crisanto and Angela.

In 1849, Mariano Castro sold half the rancho to Martin Murphy, Jr., (1807–1884), the son of Martin Murphy Sr., who brought his family to California with the Stephens-Townsend-Murphy Party in 1844. Crisanto and his sisters lived on the other half of the land after their father's death.

The end of the Mexican American War, the transfer of California to the United States in 1848, and the Gold Rush of 1849 brought a sudden influx of newcomers to the region. Many of these settlers squatted on the Castro family's rancho. From 1852 to 1871 the Castro family fought a protracted legal battle to secure the title to their land. They were forced to sell off large portions of their land to pay attorney fees, including the area that became Downtown Mountain View, with its main street, Castro Street, named after the family. The Castros also donated land to the city, including the town's cemetery, now Pioneer Memorial Park.

In 1899, at the age of 82, sister Angela sued Crisanto. He was accused of taking advantage of her advanced age and infirmity by defrauding her of over \$55,000 in property and rental income in Mountain View. A similar suit filed by heirs of Angela and Crisanto's sister Mercedes Castro de Calderon was still pending in the courts when Angela died in November 1902, but went forward with the administrator of her estate, Peter A. Davidson, as the new plaintiff.

In 1911, Crisanto built a beautiful new Mission-style home for his family, named Villa Francisca



in honor of his wife, who died in 1907. The home, located on the land that is now Rengstorff Park, became a symbol of the Castro family and Mountain View's ties to California's Spanish and Mexican eras. Crisanto died in Santa Clara on April 9, 1912, leaving the Mountain View property to his daughters Mercedes and Susana, and the rest of the estate equally to all of his children.

Places in Mountain View named for the Castro

family: Crisanto Avenue, Castro City, Castro Street, Castro City Market, Mariano Castro Elementary School, and Castro Park.

<u>Attributions and Sources</u>

Castro, Maria Angela by Carrie Zeidman

On October 20, 1817, Maria Angela Castro was born at the Mission San José, the fourth of nine children born to Mariano de la Cruz Castro and Maria Trínidad Peralta. Both the Castro and Peralta families were pioneers with long roots in California.

The Castro family goes back to Angela's great-grandfather Joaquin Castro, a soldier who came to California from Sinaloa de Leyva, México, in 1775 with Juan Bautista de Anza. Joaquin was granted several ranchos for his service to the Spanish crown.

The Mountain View land owned by Angela and the neighboring lot owned by her brother Crisanto Castro were originally part of



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ALLEGES FRAUD AND SUES FOR PROPERTY

Cristanto Castro Charged With Having Deceived His Sister to Gain Her Land.

SAN JOSE, Oct. 24.—A suit involving about \$50,000 worth of property at Mountain View, this county, was filed in the Superior Court here to-day by Mrs. Angela Castro, an aged Spanish woman. The defendants are Cristanto Castro, the plaintiff's brother, and A. V. Fatjo, who holds, in escrow, deeds to the property made by Mrs. Castro to her brother. The property in question consists of 185 acres of farming land near Mountain View, valted at over \$30,000 and nearly 100 lots in town, worth about \$12,000.

Mrs. Castro alleges in her complaint that on November 16, 1896, Cristanto Castro induced her to deed the property to him as she was feeble and physically weak, being 81 years of age. She states the deeds were merely made in trust so that he could handle her business, but she alleges that her brother has placed the deeds on record, taken possession of the lands, usurped the rents and profits and threatens to sell the lands. She seeks to have the deeds canceled and set aside.

Similar action has been begun by Maria Josefa Castro de Davidson, Vicente Soto, Angela Castro and Mariano Soto against the same defendant, Cristanto Castro. These plaintiffs are heirs of Mercedes Castro, a sister of Mrs. Angela Castro of of Mercedes Castro, a sister of Mrs. Angela Castro of of Mercedes Castro, a sister of Mrs. Angela Castro of of Mercedes Castro, a sister of Mrs. Angela Castro of of property. SAN JOSE, Oct. 24.—A suit involving about \$50,000 worth of property at Moun-

In 1849, Mariano Castro sold half the rancho to Martin Murphy, Jr., (1807–1884), the son of Martin Murphy Sr., who brought his family to California with the Stephens-Townsend-Murphy Party in 1844. Angela and her siblings continued to live on the other half of the land after their father's death.

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Mountain View. A similar suit filed by the heirs of Angela and Crisanto's sister Mercedes Castro de Calderon was still pending in the courts when Angela died in November 1902, but went forward with the administrator of her estate, Peter A. Davidson, as the new plaintiff.

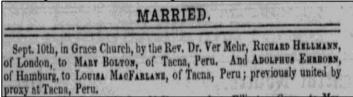
Angela never married and lived her entire life in San José and Santa Clara.

Many areas of Mountain View are named for the Castro family, including Crisanto Avenue which runs parallel to Central Expressway between Escuela Ave. and Rengstorff Ave.; Castro City, which is bordered by College Ave., Central Expressway, Rengstorff Ave., and California St.; Castro Street; Castro City Market (now La Plaza Market); Mariano Castro Elementary School; and Castro Park. **Attributions and Sources**

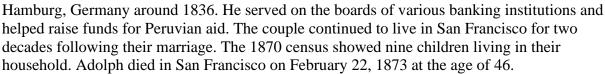
Ehrhorn, Louisa Maria by Susanne Martinez

Louisa Maria Ehrhorn was an early California pioneer. She was born in Peru in 1827 to a Scottish immigrant, Andrew MacFarlane, and a French mother, Louisa Maria Raffy. She arrived in California in 1852 when she married Adolph Paul Frederic Ehrhorn at Grace Church in San Francisco, following a proxy

marriage which had taken place in Peru.



Adolph Ehrhorn was a prosperous San Francisco merchant who immigrated to California from



Following Adolph's death, the young widow moved to Mountain View, California, and purchased large areas of land used for orchards. When she died at the age of 77 in 1903, Louisa left a large estate including forty-eight acres of fruit-bearing orchard land and forty acres of unimproved land in Mountain View.



Ehrhorn family members were deeply involved in agricultural issues in Mountain View and the surrounding area. Her son, Edward MacFarlane Ehrhorn, 1862-1941, studied entomology at Stanford University and became a world-renowned entomologist. He was appointed the Santa Clara County Entomologist in 1893 and became a Deputy Commissioner of Horticulture for the State of California in 1904.

Places named for the Ehrhorn family. A street in Mountain View near where Louisa Maria Ehrhorn owned land is named Ehrhorn Street. It runs between El Camino and Church Street, in the heart of Old Mountain View.



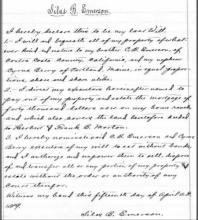
Emerson, Silas Blake by Ann Hepenstal

Silas Emerson born 17 April 1819 in Harrison, Maine, was the 10th child of 12 born to Jacob Emerson and Mary Thomas. He left the family farm in Maine as a young man and moved to Boston where he learned the builder trade. Silas fell in love with a woman who was also being courted by a lawyer—but her parents preferred the lawyer, and she married him instead. Broken-hearted, he swore off love and sailed to San Francisco circa 1849, where he spent 3 days digging for gold before giving it up as too difficult. He turned to building shacks for miners and land speculation in San Francisco. In the early 1850s, he bought land and owned large parcels of land along present-day Grant Road (including most of the Waverly Park and South Los Altos neighborhoods). He ranched shorthorn cattle, horses, sheep, and swine and grew wheat and other grains as well as orchards, winning livestock prizes at the California State Fair including 1859 Best Bull.

In 1887, a runaway team of horses owned by Emerson injured two people, killing one. Emerson's employee Thomas Berry was found criminally negligent for leaving the horses unattended, and Emerson was sued.

Silas died of cancer in San Francisco on 13 October 1889. Never married, he left his property to his brother Carlos Emerson and Cyrus P. Berry (his sister Mary's son). At the time of his death, his estate was said to be worth several million dollars. When it was settled in 1893, it was valued at \$197,733 (some \$5.7M in 2021 dollars). Silas and his brother Carlos were buried in the same plot at Mission City Memorial Park, Santa Clara, California.



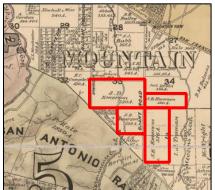


Home: Silas Emerson's nephew Edwin Emerson lived in a farm house constructed by Silas Emerson, but it burned in 1902 and they rebuilt at a new location at the corner of what is now Miramonte and Covington. [No record found of the location of Silas Emerson's home.]

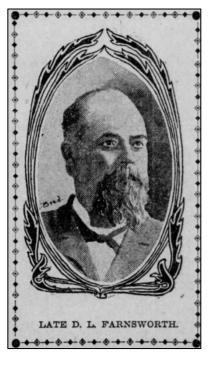
Contributions to the area: Silas Emerson was a leader in shorthorn cattle husbandry. He was a subscriber to the 1859 fund to purchase and improve the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds.

Places in Los Altos named for Silas B Emerson: None found in existence today. Records indicate that Grant Road or Covington Road were previously called Emerson Road. Attributions and Sources





Farnsworth, David L. by Elizabeth Lilly

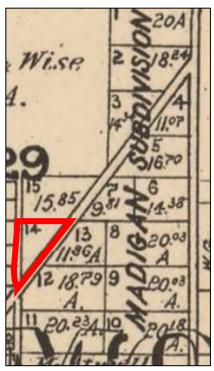


David L. Farnsworth was born on 15 November 1838, in Haverhill, Grafton, New Hampshire. He came to San Francisco around age 20 and found work as a waterman. By 1870 he married, had a two-year-old son, and was established as a drayman. He and his family shared a residence with two other couples, also from New Hampshire. His daughter, Lottie, was born in 1872.

He rose to prominence in San Francisco and became a senior partner in the firm of Farnsworth and Ruggles, a drayage business on California Avenue and had a home on Golden Gate Avenue. He served on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. His obituary in the *San Francisco Call* noted that he was "prominent in commercial and political circles" up until about 1890.

His influence reached to Mountain View, when, in 1887, he purchased 14 of the 15 lots of the estate of Garrett Madigan (in the neighborhood of Springer Road and El Monte Road). He may have seen this as a business opportunity to transport the produce of this area to San Francisco.

In February 1896, the Mountain View Notes of the *San José Mercury News* reported "Mr. Farnsworth will build a handsome residence this spring on his ranch on the Moody road." The home stands today at 439 Rinconada Court, Los Altos, off El Monte Road (Lot 14 in the



Madigan Subdivision) on land called Farnsworth Farms. He did sell portions of the Madigan tract and by the time he built his house some of his neighbors were C. J. Titus, A. H. Merrill, and F. A. Poland.



As the new century began David Farnsworth continued to invest in Santa Clara County. The *San José Heral*d reported in May 1900, that he, along with Walter A. Clark, C. J. Titus, B. Distal, and others, had signed articles of incorporation for a bank in Mountain View. He did not live to see this project completed. He died in his home in San Francisco on August 28, 1900. He is buried at Cypress Lawn Memorial Park in Colma.

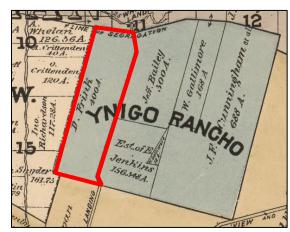
Frink, Daniel Benjamin by Elizabeth Lilly



Daniel Benjamin Frink was born in New York in 1827. When he was nineteen, he enlisted to fight in the Mexican War, and the army sent him to San Francisco by way of Cape Horn. When he was discharged he did some prospecting and then had a cattle ranch in Marin County. In 1852, he married Pauline H. Reynolds. In 1859, he moved to Santa Clara County, and settled on "four hundred acres of the best soil in the country." In 1860, he supported a household with four children, one servant, one carpenter and five farm laborers. He had horses and raised wheat and barley. Two more children were born in the next decade. The drawing of his home dates from 1876.

He participated in the beginning of the town of Mountain View and in its economic growth. In 1865, he and Mr. Shirley built the second building in Mountain View Station, a hotel. In 1888, he was a director of the Argonaut Land and Development Co. and the Mountain View Canning Co. Together with Walter A. Clark and Jacob S. Mockbee and others, he organized a Building and Loan Association in 1889.

The same was true for the social life of the community. In 1882 he was the secretary of the Mountain View Dramatic Club. The *San José*



Herald reported in December 1882 "Members and relatives of the family of Hon. Daniel Frink assembled at his residence on Monday evening, and a very enjoyable time was had. A Christmas tree, bountifully laden, stood in the front parlor, and at the proper time, 'Santa Claus' (Master Harry Frink) appeared and made his distributions of presents, forgetting none." And in 1888 he, with Mockbee, Castro, Calderon, and others formed the Olympic Hall Company to purchase a site at Castro and Front Streets for a hall for entertainment purposes.



While in Marin County, Frink had served as Justice of the Peace. His involvement in public service continued and in 1879 he was elected to the State Legislature.

The Hon. Daniel B. Frink died in 1891 at the age of 64 and was buried in the old Mountain View Cemetery (now Pioneer Park).

Giffin, Oscar Fitzgerald by Martha Wallace

Oscar Fitzgerald Giffin was born in Colchester, Chittenden County, Vermont, on 20 December 1825, the third of nine children of David Giffin and Almira Pierce. It was a busy household, with David's earlier six children making 15 in all! By 1833 the family and Oscar, age 8, had moved to Ogdensburg, New York, on the St. Lawrence River. There he grew to adulthood and became a merchant.



When the news of the 1849 California gold discovery spread around the world, Oscar was eager to go, but first had to sell his business for funds. Finally in

early 1851, he boarded a ship to Nicaragua, crossed the peninsula, and sailed to San Francisco.

San Francisco was an emerging marketplace in 1851. Oscar, an experienced merchant, launched a wholesale fruit business. In a year he made \$20,000, and \$100,000 by 1855 at age 30. "Everything he touched seemed to turn to money." Mining and banking investments led to vast income.

In 1857 he married Mary Ann Bevins in Ohio. In San Francisco they lived on Lower Nob Hill in an elegant mansion at 1120 Pine Street. One daughter, Bessie, was born before Mary Ann died in 1870. In 1872 Oscar married Helen Marr Hall. They lived in Europe for a couple of years and eventually there were four daughters, Marie, Edith, Alice, and Marguerite.

In 1864 the Bank of California was established by William Ralston and Darien Ogden Mills, and Oscar Giffin was one of the founding investors. The bank failed in 1875, Ralston committed suicide, and Oscar lost over \$300,000 in one hour. His property values shrank.

Within a few years, Oscar had recovered and invested \$200,000 in a sugar beet factory in Alvarado. Using German equipment, production began in 1879. In 1887 two boilers exploded, killing a fireman. Without insurance, the stockholders were ruined.





About 1886 the Giffin family moved to Pomona near Los Angeles where he headed a successful real estate

business, selling land in the Giffin Tract. He invested in many enterprises, including the splendid Palomares Hotel and a thriving nursery business. The Giffins were notable in Los Angeles social life, with regular newspapers reports of their travels and visitors.

Oscar Fitzgerald Giffin died 9 June 1908, in Pomona, and is buried in Colma, San Mateo County, California, remembered as optimistic amid discouragements, energetic, zealous, and generous.

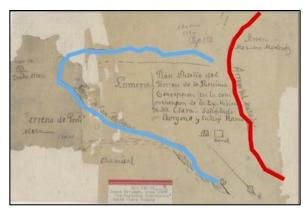
OF Giffind-to- H. Ringstorf stall

In Fremont Township in 1876, O. F. Giffin was

owner of most of S19, T6S, R2W, Rancho la Purísima Concepción, granted to José Gorgonio in 1840, sold to Juana Briones in 1844, with legal title proved in 1871. Briones sold portions of land to pay court costs. Giffin added this tract to his growing portfolio. No interim owners have been identified. Sold to Henry Rengstorff and Peter Swall in 1881, Los Altos records now list it as Giffin Tract and Swall Tract. Giffin Road near El Monte is named for him. Attributions

Gorgonio, José & José Ramón by Donna M. Santistevan

José Gorgonio was born in 1789 to Lulquecse and Seguem and brought to Mission Santa Clara from their Ohlone village near Stevens Creek (today's Mountain View). According to mission records, he was successful helping at the mission with agriculture activities and processing leather. Baptized at an early age, he later married an Ohlone convert, Salvadora. Between 1834-1840, he petitioned for the land he helped oversee of 4,436 acres (Rancho La Purísima) and it was granted to him along with his son José Ramón by then Governor Juan Alvarado. This rancho was one of the largest ever given to a native convert.



Plan Diseño del Terreno de la Purísima Concepción en la comprehensión de la Ex Misión de Sta Clara salicitado por Gorgono y su hijo Ramón, ca 1840

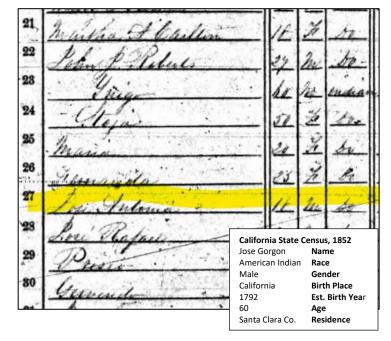
In 1844, they sold it to Juana Briones de Miranda for \$300.

Author Elias Castillo wrote in *A Cross of Thorns*, "In 1851, California Governor Peter H. Burnett signed an executive order to exterminate all Indians in the state." Estimates published in the book

place the pre-Spanish coastal California Indian population between 133,000 and 300,000. By 1890, it had fallen to under 17,000.

Gorgonio and his family lived in a three-room adobe on the grant until Gorgonio's death. His death date is unknown.

Not much can be found after the 1852 census that shows José Gorgonio (Gorgone), yet not Ramón. There is much history involving the Native Americans and the white people and much speculation as to why he sold the land, what his choices were, and what became of his family.



Graham, Isaac Newton by Liane Jensen

Isaac Newton Graham was born about 1823 in Kentucky. By 1844 he had migrated to Cass County, Missouri, where he married Elizabeth Wear. The couple had four children in Missouri by 1850. The family traveled from Missouri to Fremont Township, Santa Clara County, in 1852. Family tradition maintains the family crossed the country in a wagon train that took the Overland Trail, and that their son William died and was buried along the trail. Elizabeth's father William Wear and a number of her relatives came to Fremont Township the same year, settling nearby.

Isaac became a well-respected resident of Fremont Township. He was elected the township Justice of the Peace for two terms, 1855–56 and 1856–57. He owned about 154 acres of land just south of the San José and San Francisco Road, which is now El Camino Real, between current-day Springer Road and Miramonte Avenue. By 1860 he had improved 18 acres of his land for farming. His farm produced 175 bushels of wheat, 6 tons of hay, and 400 pounds of butter per year. His livestock included horses, cattle, pigs, and sheep. In 1870 he had 153 acres of improved land. He grew a barley crop as well as wheat, and no longer produced dairy. In 1880 the farm again grew wheat as its sole crop, and had returned to butter production.



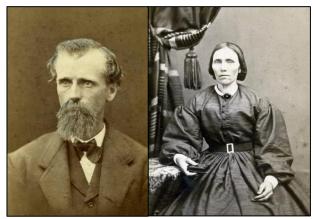
Isaac and Elizabeth had eleven known children: John M., Mary E., William W., Sarah Margaret, Martha A., Newton J., Laurabelle, Joseph, Virginia, Stonewall J., and Samuel J.

Education was important to Isaac and his family. Isaac served as Trustee for the Board of Education of Mountain View. Isaac's daughter Laurabelle Graham served as Mountain View Town Librarian from 1907 to 1914. In 1958 a middle school in the city was named after him.

Isaac Newton Graham died in 1899. His legacy in Mountain View lives on.

Places in Mountain View named for Isaac Newton Graham:

Isaac Newton Graham Middle School



Isaac Newton and Elizabeth (Wear) Graham

Grant, George Henry & Theodore Franklin by Liane Jensen

George Henry and Theodore Franklin "Frank" Grant were brothers born in what is now Boston, Massachusetts, George in 1826 and Frank in 1828. When George was only fourteen, he became a clerk for a large auction house in Boston. His brother Frank finished school and went further afield. In 1846 he opened a store in Portland, Maine, that sold lamps and lamp fuel. Two years later, gold was found in California. In late 1849 Frank closed his store and headed for California. He took a ship on a seven-month journey around Cape Horn to San Francisco.

Frank profited from the growing city. First, in San Francisco he helped run a storeship. Many ships were abandoned as crews headed for the gold fields, and it was more profitable to convert ships to warehouses, restaurants, and stores than to buy land in San Francisco. Frank then became a clerk for Montgomery House, a hotel located on Montgomery Street.

In 1851 George headed for California. He took the Panama route. He sailed to Panama, crossed Panama by mule and canoe, and then sailed to San Francisco. George worked for the George Shaw & Co. store about a year, and then helped run a grocery business.

About the time George arrived in San Francisco, Frank headed down the peninsula. San Francisco suffered several large fires while Frank was there. Perhaps the fires encouraged Frank to pursue his fortune elsewhere. Frank came to the city of Santa Clara in August 1851. He continued to work as a clerk, then opened a shop connected with the Santa Clara post office. He became Treasurer of Santa Clara. In 1858 he moved to San José, where he



was Treasurer and Deputy Recorder. Finally, in 1859 he moved to Fremont Township.

George stayed in San Francisco until about 1853. He purchased a fishing boat and land north at Point Reyes. On the trip there his boat was wrecked in a storm; he lost everything on board. George returned to San Francisco then headed for Fremont Township. His brother joined him six years later. They eventually owned about 360 acres.

Frank married Margaret Shaw in 1865. They had three known children: Isabella, Sarah, and



Theodore Franklin Jr. George continued to live with Frank's family. The Grant ranch produced lumber, butter, wheat, hay, and later apples.

George lived until 1898. George's estate was valued at \$10,000. Frank and his wife were married for nearly fifty years. They both died in the spring of 1924, Margaret just a week after her husband. They are buried together in Alta Mesa Memorial Park in Palo Alto.

Today the site of the Grant ranch includes Deer Hollow Farm, an education center with programs to teach children science, social studies, and history.

Places in Mountain View named for the Grant family: Grant Road

Hale, Joseph P. by Donna M. Santistevan

Joseph P. Hale was born 19 March 1836 in Easkey, Ireland. He immigrated from Ireland via Mexico to California and became one of the largest landowners in the western United States.

In 1859 he married Catarina Castro in Mexico and his daughter, Catarina Josephina Maria was baptized in San José del Cabo, Baja California. He had another daughter, Anna, born in Mexico.

Hale purchased 400 acres of Rancho San Antonio in 1869. The land that he purchased is today much of Los

Altos and Los Altos Hills. He brought over a few of his Irish relatives to help manage the ranch.

By 1873, he was listed as a merchant with an office in San Francisco. His wife died in 1876 and he married again to Anaïs of New Orleans. His youngest daughter, Anna, died in 1881. In 1883, Hale was naturalized in the U.S. Circuit Court in San Francisco and registered to vote in Santa Clara County, giving Mountain View as his address. He listed his occupation as "capitalist."

In the 1884 census he was listed as a capitalist and President of Flores Hale and Company on



Battery Street in San Francisco. With his company, Hale harvested orchilla, a lichen which produces a purple-blue dye, and then shipped it to Liverpool, via Panama.

ONCEPTION

In 1893 the Hale Ranch included the area south of Fremont Road between Loyola Corners and Adobe Creek, where the

country club is located today.

Hale spent much of his time at the

Occidental Hotel in San Francisco where he died on 13 April 1893 at age 56. He is buried in the Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in San Mateo Co. Newspapers at the time estimated his estate at \$2 million. There were numerous lawsuits concerning his estate after his death.



The *Examiner* said, "Few men on the Coast were better known" than Hale who, beginning as a young pioneer in the mines and engaging in various enterprises eventually made a fortune out of the Mexican dye stuff.

Places named for J P Hale: Hale Creek, Hale Ranch subdivision, and Magdalena Avenue, which he named after the Magdalena Bay in Baja California.

Harrington, John Augustus by Pamela Heldenbrand

John Augustus Harrington was born in Newfoundland in approximately 1834. He was naturalized as a US citizen on August 31, 1867, in San Francisco U.S. Circuit Court. How and why he traveled to California is unknown. A John A. Harrington born the same year in Newfoundland enlisted in the Merchant Marine in Boston in 1855, according to United Kingdom Merchant Navy Seamen Records. A John Harrington born in Newfoundland in 1834 enlisted in the in the U.S. Navy in Boston in July of 1860, according to the United States Naval Enlistment records. Perhaps this is the same John Harrington, but it is unconfirmed. It would have been an opportunity to travel and perhaps to forge a new life in California.

Among the Declarations of Homestead that were filed with the Santa Clara County Recorder during December of 1876 is the following: December 1 – John A. Harrington, 29.56 acres in Fremont Township adjoining Delanto, Giffin S. de Pabon, and the county road leading from Mountain View to Mayfield, valued at \$3,000 (value in today's dollars is about \$75,000). His name is spelled Herrington on the 1876 map, which

Declarations of Homestead were filed with the County Recorder during December, as follows:

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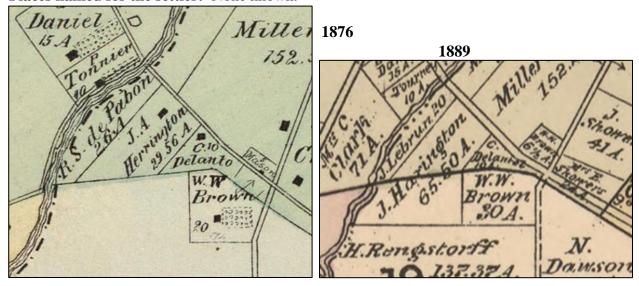
shows ownership on 29.56 acres. On the Hermann Bros. 1889 map his name is spelled Harrington and his property had increased to 65.5 acres.

He was listed as a farmer and orchardist in various city business directories.

John Augustus appeared on the Voter's Registration list for Fremont Township, Santa Clara County, in which he was listed as farmer from Newfoundland.

In the 1880 U.S. Federal Census for Fremont, Santa Clara County, Jon A. Harrington, age 46, was listed with the occupation of farmer. His birthplace, and both of his parents, was Newfoundland. His wife Delia, age 40, was born in Ireland, as were both of her parents. Their son J. F. (John Francis) was 13, attending school, born in California.

Places named for the settler: None known.



Huff, Franklin Lester by Anita Backus Chang, MD



Franklin Lester Huff was born on March 24, 1867, in Santa Clara County "two miles north of Mountain View" on his family's farm on Charleston Road. His parents were James A. and Emily F. (Gard) Huff, well-respected pioneer settlers of the area. James and his wife had arrived in the area in 1863 after a six-month journey from Michigan, their two young children having died en route. In the 1870 and 1880 US censuses Frank is found living with his parents and siblings in Fremont township, Santa Clara County. Frank's future wife, Mame Levin, was born in January 1878. In 1880 she was living with her farmer parents, Joel and Mary (Swall) Levin, and siblings in Fremont, right next door to the James Huff family. The Levins were also a highly-regarded

Mountain View pioneer

family. By 1900 Frank had married Mame L. Levin (in December 1898) and they were living in Fremont township with their 4-month-old son, William E. By 1930 Frank and Mame were living in Mountain View on Mercy Street. Their house, built in 1929, was moved to Diericx Street in Mountain View in 1962, and it still stands.

Professionally Frank focused early on on education.

He attended Washington College in Alameda County and enrolled at Stanford the year it opened in 1891, attending for a total of 3 years. He obtained a teaching credential in Santa Clara County. His first teaching job was a four-year stint as principal of Boulder Creek Grammar School in Santa Cruz, followed by 18 years as principal of Mountain View Grammar School. Huff resigned from this position in July of 1917 to serve as principal of the Washington School in San José. He left this job in late 1919 to return to his farming interests and devote his time to his wife's prune ranch in Mountain View. Frank was appointed postmaster of Mountain View in April 1922; he served in this position until he resigned on October 11, 1933.

Frank Huff died on September 23, 1938. As reported in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, his car was struck by a Southern Pacific train just north of Mountain View. He was trapped in the car as it was dragged beneath the train's cowcatcher for 500 yards before the train could be brought to a halt. He is buried in Alta Mesa Memorial Park in Palo Alto, California, along with many family members: his parents, four brothers and a sister. Mame Huff died on September 14, 1960.

Frank L Huff Elementary School in Mountain View was named for Huff. In concordance with the Racial Justice movement which began in the US in 2020, community backlash ensued with the revelation of Frank Huff's nativist views described in his biographical sketch in *The History of Santa Clara County, California* by Eugene T Sawyer (1922): "Mr. Huff...is strongly opposed to the immigration into our country of people who are out of harmony with American institutions and ideals, particularly those of such blood as cannot be assimilated by the Caucasian race to its benefit." The elementary school was renamed in 2021 for Amy Imai, a World War II Japanese internment survivor and local community activist and school volunteer. There is also a Huff Avenue in Mountain View where the Google Campus is located.

Kifer, Shelby Hood by Diane Oeh

Shelby Hood Kifer was born in Montgomery, Trigg County, Kentucky, on 9 November 1842, and was the youngest of eight children. His father, John Kifer, was 47 years old (1795-1873), a native of Pennsylvania and his mother, Lucy A. Martin, was 42 years old (1801-1880), a native of Kentucky. In 1845 they removed to Washington, Jackson County, Missouri, where his father bought a farm, operating it there for eight years. In 1853 they sold the farm and traveled overland with oxen to California.

Two of John's sons had come to California earlier, William in 1849 and Thomas in 1850, settling near Santa Clara. John and his family moved in with them for a while and eventually located at Mountain View, purchasing farm land.



Shelby lived with his parents until 1860 and then traveled to Montana for a short time for prospecting in the mines. On his return to Santa Clara County, he purchased land south of Mountain View where he cultivated wine grapes, a family orchard, hay, and grain.

On 10 March 1870 Shelby married Isabella Ruth Smith in Fremont Township, Santa Clara County. Isabella, a native of Nova Scotia, Canada, had come to California a few years before her marriage to Shelby Hood Kifer. They had six children; five of whom grew to adulthood.



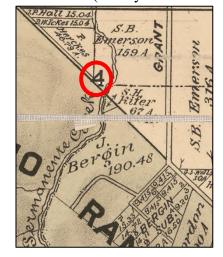
In 1868, John Keifer [sic] received a grant for 67.10 acres in Section 4 of Township 7 South, Range 2 West of the Mount Diablo Meridian. On the 1876 map, the land parcel of 63.58 acres of the Estate of J. Kifer was shown along Grant Road and Permanente Creek. This land was probably given to Shelby Hood Kifer over time as his father aged. The 1889 map replaced John Kifer with S.H. Kifer (Shelby Hood

Kifer) with 67 acres.

Shelby Kifer remained in Fremont Township, Santa Clara County, with farming as his occupation for the remainder of his

life. He died on the morning of 20 June 1910 in Santa Clara County. Funeral services were held in the afternoon of 22 June 1910 from his residence on Kifer Road near Mountain View with interment at the Alta Mesa Memorial Park in Palo Alto.

He was called "Doc" Kifer and was a Santa Clara Valley pioneer of 1856, widely known and highly respected throughout the valley as a successful orchardist and farmer.

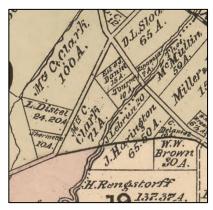


Places in the area named for Shelby Kifer: Kifer Road from Fair Oaks in Sunnyvale to Bowers Road/Walsh Road in Santa Clara.

Attributions and Sources

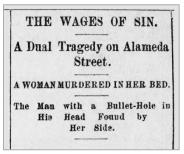
Lebrun, Charles by Carrie Zeidman

Mr. Charles Lebrun is a mysterious character. If one were to believe his biography in the book *Pen Pictures from The Garden of the World*, Charles was born in Loraine [sic], France, on October 28, 1841, to Louis and Marie Lebrun. His father was in the service of the French government. Charles grew up in France and became a decorative painter. He travelled through France and painted until emigrating to America in 1880, going first to New York and then to California. This biography states he married a Miss Sarah Levy, also a native of France and the two of them planted a vineyard on their 20 acres on the San Francisco/San José Road between Mayfield and Mountain View and lived happily ever after.



However, current research tells a different story. Charles was listed in the 1880 Fremont Township census as a 38-year-old painter, born in France, and married. However, no wife was listed in that census. Charles was living with two servants, a gardener, and a cook, which leads one to believe that he was at least moderately wealthy. No other census record is found for Charles Lebrun.

From records we do find, Charles led a life quite different from his *Pen Pictures* bio.



Research shows that on the 12th of April, 1889, a man and woman were found shot in their bed in Los Angeles. The woman was known as "French Anna," "Anna Scott," and "Hortense Vandoorne" but was actually Anna Lebrun, 38, wife of Charles Lebrun of Mayfield in Santa Clara County. Anna was living in a brothel in Los Angeles with a man named Charles Scott. Anna was dead at the scene, but Scott survived the shooting and was charged with Anna's murder. After two trials, he was acquitted. Charles Lebrun

was known as Pierre Lebrun when visiting Anna in Los Angeles; he was removed from the suspect list as he had returned to Mayfield a few days before the shooting.

In January 1893, Charles Lebrun was in San José where he filed a claim against Constable M. Coschina in court for furniture valued at \$150 which he claimed was unlawfully taken from him.

In the spring of 1896 Charles Lebrun purchased the House of Blazes, a notorious roadhouse on the shores of Lake Merritt in Oakland. He and his partner attempted to renew the liquor license

but ran into opposition from people living nearby. Charles was quoted during a city council meeting saying he had just lost \$30,000 down in Mayfield where he kept a resort for 14 years. In an attempt to clean up the reputation of the business, the name was changed to Rossi's Cottage. Opposition to the establishment continued until October 1898 when he and his partner were driven into insolvency and the business was closed down. The House of Blazes sat empty and decaying until torn down in May 1908.

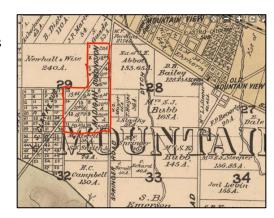


After 1898 the record on Charles Lebrun runs out. Where he went after his business shut down is a mystery.

Attributions and Sources

Madigan, Garrett by Elizabeth Lilly

Garrett Madigan, age 59, died on January 5, 1886, in Mayfield, Fremont Township, Santa Clara County. This area later became incorporated into the City of Palo Alto and was along California between the train station and El Camino Real. In addition to several lots and a livery stable in town he owned 240 acres "between Mayfield and Mountain View" on which he raised wheat and barley. This land, subdivided into 15 lots, is outlined in red on the map, with Springer Road on the east and the current Cuesta Drive on the south.



Garrett Madigan was born in County Galway, Ireland,

on December 15, 1826. On July 10,1847, he and his wife Bridget Cavegnah immigrated to Quincy, Massachusetts, where he was a stone cutter. Their first child was born in 1849 and there were four more by 1859. He became a naturalized citizen of the United States in Boston in 1852.

By July, 1860, the Madigan family had relocated to Mayfield, California, and his occupation was farmer. Two of Garrett's brothers also lived in Mayfield: Thomas, a stone cutter, and John, a farmer. Another brother, William, lived in San Francisco. All four brothers also worked as stone cutters according to the 1865 San Francisco Directory. In addition to his home, rental property, and livery business in Mayfield, Garrett also had farm land along Page Mill Road south of the San Francisco-San José Road as seen in the 1876 map. Sometime in the next decade he sold that land and acquired the property for his Mountain View ranch.

There were more children and grandchildren as well as nephews and nieces. Bridget (called Delia in the 1870 census) died and at the time of his death, he was married to Margaret, age 33, and had a 14 month old daughter.

Garrett Madigan did business with many establishments from Redwood City to San José according to the bills paid through the probate process. The following businessmen in Mountain View were among them:

Madigan Subdivision noted on Office of County Assessor

- J. S. Mockbee, Blacksmith and Wagon Maker
- J. A. Hornberger, Grain Merchant, Dealer in Bale Rope and Grain Sacks
- Giovanni Bracchi and Co., Mountain View Gardens, Dealer in Vegetables and Fruits
- Hawley Bros., Hardware Company

Margaret Madigan was the administratrix of his estate. She sold everything to pay bills, and distributed what remained to family members. Many

T BENVENUE T T T

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things were sold at auction but the Mountain View ranch was subdivided and sold privately. On May 1, 1887, Thomas Hayes bought Lot 1 for \$2,350 and on June 8, 1887, D. L. Farnsworth purchased the rest for \$20,142. The land continued to be developed in the next century.

The widow ordered a casket from the undertaker in Redwood City and paid for a hearse to Santa Clara where Garrett Madigan was buried. Other family members are buried in Union Cemetery in Redwood City and Holy Cross Cemetery in Menlo Park, including several infants. Attributions and Sources

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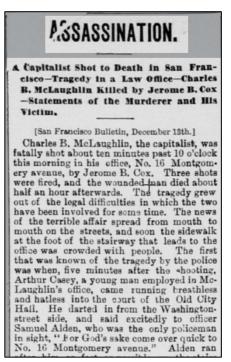
McLaughlin, Charles by Juno Anna Heine Szalay

Born in Pennsylvania in 1833, Charles McLaughlin was a pioneer, a successful capitalist, and a landowner. At the time of his death, he was listed as one of the millionaires of his time.

He moved to California in the 1850's where, as a teenager he helped establish the California Stage Company which he would later replace with railroad. By the 1860's he led a group of men working to build the third railroad in California between San Francisco and San José. Although that enterprise failed, he



successfully signed a contract with Western Pacific Railroad Company in 1864 for \$5,400,000 to construct a 123-mile railroad from San José through Stockton to Sacramento.



This is when he met Jerome B. Cox whose firm was contracted to grade the path from San José to Stockton. The work included all of the masonry, building of bridges, viaducts, and any other preparations before the rails and ties could be laid. After Cox's team finished the first 21 miles of work, McLaughlin stopped making payments.

This was the beginning of McLaughlin's tendency to refuse to pay subcontractors. Over the next 16 years Cox would bring lawsuits against McLaughlin which finally ended with a frustrated Cox shooting McLaughlin three times and killing him on December 13, 1883.

At the time of his death, McLaughlin was the second largest landowner in the state. He was the president of the Central Gas Light Company, traveled often with his wife Kate, and enjoyed thoroughbred racehorses. His landholdings in the Rancho de los Vaqueros acquired from Louis Peres in 1881 were left to his wife Kate Dillon McLaughlin and, upon her death five years after her husband, went to her niece Kate May Dillon and her friend, Mary Crocker. Niece Kate

married Emory Winship and the holdings became known as the Crocker-Winship estate. Tenant ranches, the Vasco Grant School District, and other improvements have since made the Los Vaqueros land-lease area in Contra Costa County a desirable place to live and work.

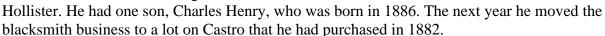
Mockbee, Jacob by Elizabeth Lilly

Born on 16 March 1859 between old and new Mountain View, California, Jacob S. Mockbee was the son of James Mockbee and Clarissa Boon. He was the third of seven children. His father had come to California from Kentucky to look for gold in Placer County. However, once married, in 1855, James Mockbee turned to farming, and raised his family in Fremont Township.

Jacob began working on threshing machines for his father and other farmers around age 11. At 15 he worked with John Haverty in the butcher business, and after two years apprenticed as a blacksmith with G. W. Smith. When he completed his training he bought out Mr. Smith and owned one-half as Smith and Mockbee. In the 1880

census he was living with James Smith.

In the next decade he became more and more involved in the growth of Mountain View. 1884 was a big year for Jacob Mockbee. He bought out his partner, joined the Masons, and on October 1 married Emma Wagner of





Mockbee Building, Corner Castro and Villa



Mockbee Home, 190 Hope Street, Mountain View





In the late 80's he partnered with D. B. Frink, and others to buy the land and build Olympic Hall for social events and to form a Building and Loan Association. He was a stockholder and secretary for the Olympic Hall of Mountain View and stockholder and director of the Mountain View Canning Company.

By 1891 Jacob S. Mockbee was listed in the voter registration directory as "Capitalist." According to city directories and voter registration records in the 1890s he continued to own a blacksmith and wagon business on Castro Street with a partner named Jacob Wehrly. He was also listed as a landlord. In the next century he continued his engagement in banking, served as bank president, and built several buildings including the building at Villa and Castro (1906). He lived on Villa near Hope and a photo of the home is in the History Collection at Mountain View Library.

Jacob S. Mockbee died in Mountain View on February 11, 1935, and is buried at Cypress Lawn Memorial Park in Colma, CA.

Murphy, Martin, Jr. by Donna M. Santistevan

Martin Murphy, Jr. was born in County Wexford, Ireland, on 9 November, 1807. His wife, Mary Bolger, was also born in Wexford, on 24 June 1808.

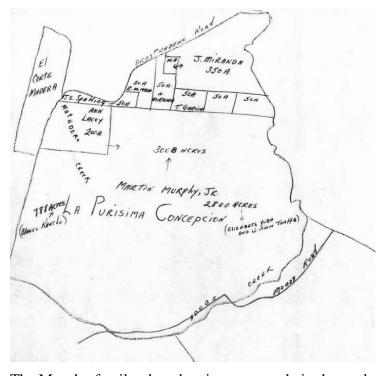
The Murphy family was one of the first families to settle in Los Altos Hills, coming from Ireland via Canada. They were looking for religion and educational freedom.

In 1843 Martin Murphy, Sr, arrived in Martin Murphy, Jr. California with his family. Here he founded farms and ranches.





Mary Bolger Murphy



By 1849, Murphy, Jr., had acquired nearly half of the rancho that is now known as the City of Sunnyvale. A claim for Rancho Pastoría de las Borregas was filed by Murphy, Jr. and the grant was patented December 15, 1865. He lived here permanently and established the Bay View Ranch which was the first wood-frame house in California. He also purchased large sections of the Rancho Purísima Concepción from Juana Briones. The Murphy family also planted the first orchards in the Santa Clara Valley.

After Murphy, Jr., died (20 October 1884, San José) and Mary Bolger died (29 August, 1892 San José), the property was divided among the children and grandchildren.

The Murphy family played an important role in the settlement of the state of California. Murphy, Jr. built the first courthouse in Santa Clara County and helped establish some of the first schools including Santa Clara University. According to the *Los Altos History Anthology*, "Collectively, the family [became] the largest private landowners in world." The father, Martin Murphy, Sr., owned 10 million acres in California.

Elizabeth Yuba, the daughter of Martin Murphy, Jr., married William Taaffe. They were given 2800 acres of the La Purísima Concepción land for their wedding present. They resided in a house which was called "Taaffe Ranch" where Foothill College is located today.

Murphy, Jr., is known as the founder of Sunnyvale, and the Martin Murphy, Jr. Historical Park, corner of N Sunnyvale and California Avenues, Sunnyvale, is where he used to reside. The *Anthology* also states "... streets in Sunnyvale and Los Altos Hills that bear family names, include Mary, Mathilda, Bernardo, Frances, Martin, Taaffe, and Murphy avenues, Yuba Drive, Elsie Way, Taaffe and Elena roads, and Via Arline."

Attributions and Sources

Parker, Edwin Lewis by Carrie Zeidman

Edwin Lewis Parker owned 154.80 acres in the west hills of Cupertino in the area of what is now Montebello Road and Swiss Creek Lane.

Edwin, born February 19, 1831, was the 8th and last child of a wealthy family with long roots in Richmond, Virginia. His father, Stafford Henry Parker, an attorney, served in the Virginia House of Delegates and State Senate, and was Speaker of



the State Senate (1835-1839) and Register of the Virginia Land Office (1839-1865). His mother, Sarah "Sallie" Bailey Pearson also came from a distinguished family in Port Royal, Virginia.

Edwin's paternal grandfather, Watts Parker (1760-1812), was a sergeant in the 10th Virginia Regiment during the Revolutionary War and was granted land in Virginia for his service. The family became very wealthy, and the 1810 & 1820 federal census records for Caroline County, Virginia, lists many slaves for both Watts Parker and his son Stafford.

Edwin's maternal great-grandfather Stafford Lightburn was a lieutenant in the Revolutionary War and for his service, the family was granted 2,928 acres after his death. Several others in the Lightburn family were granted land for their service as well.

In 1858 Edwin Lewis Parker was in Virginia offering land to potential settlers. By 1875 he was in California and was appointed Assistant Deputy in San Francisco to his brother-in-law George Maynard, husband of his sister Sarah Virginia Parker.

Edwin and his father both fought for the South in the Civil War, and in January of 1903, Edwin and his father Stafford were awarded medals by the local chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy in celebration of Robert E. Lee's birthday. The medals were made from the melting down of Confederate canons used during the Civil War.

Edwin served as the secretary for the Sierra Silver Mining Company from 1880 to 1897. The company was founded in 1860 and offered stock in a silver mine in Genoa, Nevada. The company office was on California Street in San Francisco.

After coming to California, Edwin lived in both Santa Clara and San Francisco. Sadly, in November of 1905, just six months before his death, Edwin was declared insane and committed to a private sanatorium in San Francisco where he died on May 6, 1906.

EDWIN L. PARKER INSANE.

Edwin L. Parker, secretary of the Sierra Nevada Mining Company, with offices in the Nevada building and a residence at 2845 Fillmore street, was committed to a private sanatorium yesterday morning by the Insanity Commission. Mr. Parker, who is about 65 years old, has been irrational for some weeks, and Monday became quite irresponsible, imagining he was lord of the universe and in constant communication with President Roosevelt.

Edwin Lewis Parker died a very wealthy man. In his will dated September 22, 1900, having never married, he left, to his siblings, nieces, and nephews, interest in coal mines in Virginia, West Virginia, and Texas; oil and mineral rights on 4,680 acres in West Virginia; a 30-acre vineyard in Fresno County; and 330 acres of land in Kings County, formerly Tulare County, California.

He left the 154.80 acres in the Cupertino Hills to his sister Sarah "Sallie" Virginia Maynard.

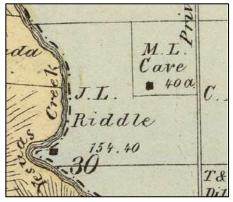
Riddle, James Lapsley by Victoria McElroy

James L. Riddle was born in Philadelphia c. 1817 and at a young age moved with his parents to Boston where he learned the auctioneering trade, married, and eventually started his own auction house. At about age 32 he arrived in California from Boston via Panama during the 1849 Gold Rush, quickly established a successful auctioneering business in San Francisco, and became a widely-known and wealthy businessperson and resident of the city. His business ventures included commission sales, real estate, imports, investments, and infrastructure projects.

He retired from the auction business in 1857 and twelve years later (after his wife's death in 1864) settled on land that would eventually become part of the City of Los Altos.

He took up residence on a 154-acre property adjacent to Adobe Creek (then Yeguas or San Antonio Creek) in the Fremont Township (later the western part of Santa Clara County). The property, described as a "fine and comfortable residence near the foot-hills, on a good farm," was associated at that time with the towns of Mayfield and Mountain View. His was the first American name associated with this property, which not much earlier had been an undeveloped mix of chaparral and oak grassland.

James Riddle remained involved in real estate and farming until his death at his home in 1881. His only child, a daughter Grace Ida, inherited the property. James Riddle exemplified the pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit that contributed to the commercial and civic evolution of the early San Francisco Bay Area.

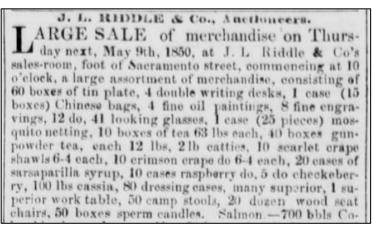


VPanama route to California



Attributions and Sources

- ← Riddle property in 1876, bounded approximately by current Yerba Santa Ave. on the north, San Antonio Ave. on the east, Edith Ave. on the south, and Adobe Creek on the west. Riddle's house shown in a tight curve of the creek is where Cypress Drive is now.
- → Riddle's early auction house on Montgomery Street in San Francisco. Example auction notice below.

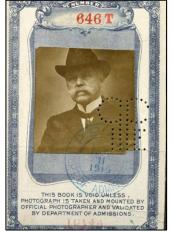


J. L. RIDDLE & C

J. L. RIDDLE & Cº

Sanborn, Frederick George by Donna M. Santistevan

A plot of land near Foothill College was owned by F. G. Sanborn. Frederick George "F. G." Sanborn was born 2 June 1854, in Webster New York. He married Helen Peck 14 September 1882. He died 10 September 1915.



Helen was born 23 August 1858 in New Hampshire.

Hampshire.
She died 31 January 1922 and is buried
Cypress Lawn Memorial Park, Colma, San
Mateo County.

On February 3, 1886, F. G. Sanborn applied for a passport. At 40 years old, he was 5'10 ³/₄" in height. He had dark blue eyes and

brown hair. In the directory and census records his occupation was

listed as clerk, merchant, and publisher. He was a registered republican according to voter records. He was an officer (treasurer) of the Bohemian Club, and a commissioner of the California Fish and Game Commission. Fredrick G. Sanborn also headed the Bancroft-Whitney publishing company.

Helen was the President of the Woman's Board of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. She was also President of The Sorosis Club of San Francisco, active in the Women's Club, President of the San Francisco Red Cross Society, on the San Francisco Board of Education, and active in the Century Club. As a member of the Board of Education, she supported the Americanization curriculum, and focused on foreign-born children. She was an active member of the First Congregation Union for Women's Suffrage.



Mrs. F. G. Sanborn delivering an address at a tree planting ceremony

F.G. Sanborn and his wife, Helen lived at 1020 Dolores Street in San Francisco. They had no children. His estate at the time of his death on 1020 Dolores Street was valued at \$8000 and he had a parcel of real estate in the Town of Mountain View, Santa Clara County, at the value of \$800, a tract of farming land of about 107 acres adjacent to the Town of Los Altos at the value of \$10,000, and 700 shares of the capital stock of Bancroft-Whitney Company. That estate was about \$50,000. When Helen Sanborn died, she left an estate valued at approximately \$10,000.

Places named for Settler: Sanborn and Stone Ranch in Los Altos (where this is today is unknown).

Sleeper, Frank by Sally Evans

Frank Sleeper was born in Vermont in 1824. His wife, Eunice S. Beverly, was born in 1821 in Maine. Frank and Eunice married on 27 November 1845 in Boston, Massachusetts. After

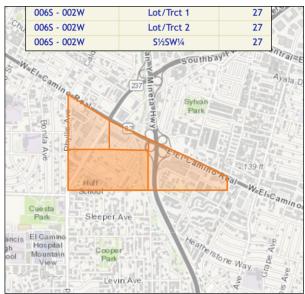
immigrating to Fremont Township sometime prior to 1860, his occupation at that time was listed as farmer.

The old town of Mountain View consisted of a stage station on the San Francisco road, built by James Campbell in 1852. Frank Sleeper and Mariano Castro surveyed the town into lots and blocks. Frank was elected to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors for two terms, from March 1864 to March 1866 and again from March 1866 to March 1868.

To the right are maps of property acquired by Frank Sleeper in 1869. Since he died in 1872, he isn't shown on either the 1876 or 1889 map as a landowner, but his wife is. She died in 1900 or 1901. The map below is that portion of Mountain View as it is today.

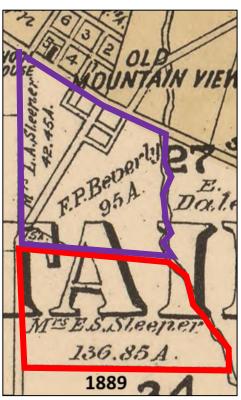
Other relationships include Anna H. Sleeper, Victoria Beverly, Margaret Beverly, and Frank Beverly all of whom were living with Frank and Eunice in 1870. As Frank was age 5 at that time, he was most likely a nephew of Eunice. Victoria and Margaret were 16 and 14, and Anna was 5 years old.

Places in Mountain View named for Frank Sleeper: Sleeper Avenue and Eunice Avenue.



Attributions and Sources





Springer, Elias Fulton by Liane Jensen

Elias Fulton Springer was born on 10 March 1831 in Washington County, Missouri. His older brother Peter Springer joined one of the first groups to take the difficult journey overland from Missouri to California. The party experienced severe thirst and hunger, resorting to eating their own mules. Peter arrived in Santa Clara County in November 1841. He returned to Missouri and told many people about the great land in California. He made several more trips across the country. Elias joined Peter for Peter's final trip in 1852, when both men settled in Santa Clara County.

A few weeks after Elias's arrival, he married Kate Shore on 14 October 1852. Elias and Kate had been neighbors in Missouri. She had also just traveled to Santa Clara County. Like Elias's brother Peter, her brother Thomas B. Shore and also father Thomas P. Shore had traveled to the county earlier. In 1850 the pair had tried mining in California, but were not successful. They settled in Santa Clara County. Later the father returned with Kate and her family. In 1852 the Shore family lived in what was likely Fremont Township, near the Bubb family. Springer brothers Elias, Peter, and Samuel lived together with their wives and children. By 1860 the Elias Springer and Peter Shore families were neighbors in Fremont Township.

Sadly, tragedy hit the family one year later. In the spring of 1861, three young Springer children; Leora, 5; Mary, 3; and John, 1; died. Only the oldest child Eliza was spared. Elias's brother Peter also died that same spring, of pneumonia. Peter had been serving in the state legislature for Santa Clara County since 1859, but sadly he too passed.

Elias wasn't finding success farming his rented land, so in 1868 he bought land south of Gilroy to farm. Thankfully that venture was successful, so he was able to sell that farm and return and purchase land in what is now Mountain View in about 1872. In 1876 Elias owned 160 acres in Fremont Township. The land borders current-day Springer Road, and contains the land where Springer School now stands.

Elias and Kate had seven known children: Eliza "Lida," Leora, Mary G., John G., Charles, Elizabeth, and Susie.

Kate died in 1890 and was buried in Santa Clara County. Elias moved south to San Gabriel, Los Angeles County, by



1900. He was a fruit grower. That year he lived with his two unmarried youngest daughters and a servant. Elias died in 1905. He was buried with his wife and children in Santa Clara County.

Places in Mountain View named for Elias Fulton Springer:

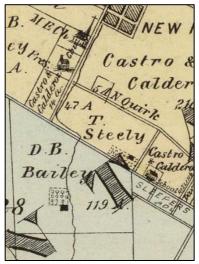
Springer Road Springer Elementary School

Stealey, Thomas by Susanne Martinez

Thomas Stealey arrived in California in the fall of 1849, traveling through the Isthmus of Panama to reach his destination. He made his fortune in gold mining on the American River, before returning to San Francisco where he and his brother, John Stealey, were involved in real estate and construction for many years, helping to build many of the first buildings in that city.

DEATH SUMMONS ONE OF THE "VIGILANTES" Thomas Stealey, Who Was Prominently Identified With the Early Pioneers, Passes Away. Thomas Stealey, a pioneer of California, was buried yesterday from his residence, 3/91 Seventeenth street. Mr. Stealey was one of the men who came here from the East at the time of the discovery of gold. His early life was spent in St. Louis, and from there, in the spring of 1849, be went to New Orleans, thence to Panama. He made the journey from Panams to San Francisco on the bark Caucasta, commanded by Capitain Hoar, arriving at San Francisco in the fall of 1849. Upon his arrival he identified himself with the law-and-order element, and upon the organization of the celebrated Vigiliance Committee became one of its most active members. He then engaged in mining on the American river, was all through the Frazer river gold excitement, and made his fortune in the mines, subsequently returning to San Francisco, which he made his home. Mr. Stealey was a man of fine intellectual attainments, great physical vigor and determined character. By occupation in recent years he was a contractor and builder, and, with his brother John, erected many of the first buildings in the city. In May, 1899, he married Miss Mary L. Saunders, a native of Tenneasce and a descendant of George Washington. She survives him, with a family of california Lodge, No. 1, 1, 0, 0, F., joining in 1844.

Stealey was also a prominent member of the "Vigilantes Committee," a group of men in the early 1850s who sought to bring "law and order" to San Francisco during a period of lawlessness.

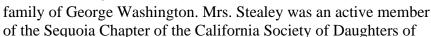


Around 1870, Stealey moved his family to Mountain View where he lived for about fifteen years. He was actively engaged in local politics during this period, served as a Mountain View

school trustee, and narrowly lost an election to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

On his return to San Francisco, his political activities continued, including a campaign to join the San Francisco school board, which failed.

In 1860, Stealey married Mary Louise Sanders, a descendant of the



the Revolution (DAR). Two daughters, Emma Stealey Raisch and Ethel Stealey, were

also DAR members, with Emma serving as regent of the Sequoia Chapter. Ethel is pictured here at a 1901 DAR function, dressed in a colonial style gown.

CHOOL DIRECTOR

Thomas Stealey.

NON-PARTISAN NOMINEE.

Thomas and Mary Louise had ten children, many of them born during their years in Mountain View. Thomas died in San Francisco in 1899, and is buried in Greenlawn Cemetery in Colma, California. Mary Louise died in 1921 and is also buried there.



Swall, Peter by Dee Miller

Just as Santa Clara and Silicon Valley today attract people from around the world searching for new opportunities, things weren't much different in the 1800s. Land in the fertile Santa Clara valley was plentiful and farms large and small soon dotted the landscape attracting immigrants from around the world.

Peter Swall, born August 1837 in the German state of Prussia, is presumed to have arrived in America with his mother and at least one brother sometime in the 1840s, leaving Prussia follow-

ing the crop failures and potato famines all across Europe. The Santa Clara Valley offered prospects for successful farming with its fine alluvial soils and temperate climate. He and his brother, William F. Swall, soon settled in San José Township.



In October 1860 he married a young Irish immigrant, Mary Riley, and began raising a large family – 11 children would be born into this farming family over the next 25 years.

In 1864 Peter and his brother William, dissolved their initial co-partnership, "Swall & Bro," and struck out on their own. Beginning with just 2 horses and wagons listed on the 1864 tax rolls, Peter was soon farming his own land, buying and selling property through the end of the century. Peter became a naturalized citizen in June 1867. He was active in the community, running for the office of Road Master and serving on the Santa Clara County Grand Jury for several years.

Peter at times owned farms all across the valley, small and large. In 1869 he lived near Coyote in the Oak Grove district of San José Township. Adding property over the years, local maps show him also owning property next to Henry Rengstorff in the Shoreline area of Mountain View, and in the Mayfield district. By the end of 1881 he was acquiring larger tracts of land; one purchase of 274 acres of the Giffin Tract, was valued at over \$11,000, encompassing an area in what is today near Pine Lane and Los Altos Avenue in Los Altos.



The Swall ranches were "well known for producing some of the region's best and earliest strawberries – fetching as much as \$1.50 a basket" (basket size unknown). At one point in 1881 he was advertising 2,000,000 strawberry plants of the desirable Longworth variety for sale.

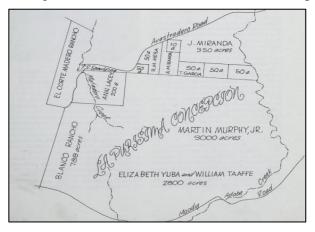
In the early 1890's, Peter began purchasing property in San Francisco, eventually contracting for the building of homes for himself and other family members.

He retired from farming in 1902, moving to San Francisco where he built a large house on McAllister Street. He died 18 March 1908 at the age of 70 and was buried at Holy Cross Cemetery, Colma, CA. While Peter is not today as well-known as many of his neighbors of the time,

many of whom who have left their legacies as names of local streets, schools and parks, he was a highly successful rancher and contributing member of society in the valley. Upon his death his estate was valued at close to \$20,000.

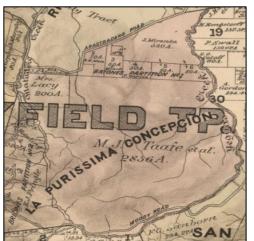
Taaffe, William P., Murphy, Elizabeth Y. by Pam Heldenbrand

William Post Taaffe was born in New York in 1842. He traveled to California with his parents William Patrick and Anna. His father was an import and retail dry goods merchant in San Francisco and William Post built the business into a prominent firm known as William P. Taaffe & Co. In 1863 he married Elizabeth Yuba Murphy, daughter of Martin Murphy, Jr., one of Santa Clara Valley's first American landholders. Elizabeth is said to be the first child of American settlers born in California. She was born at a winter camp called Big Bend near Lake Tahoe during the 1844-1845 Stevens-Townsend-Murphy wagon train to California.



As a wedding present, Mr. Murphy gave William and Elizabeth 2,800 acres of Rancho la Purísima Concepción, a land grant awarded by the Mexican government in 1840 to José Gregorio and son José Ramón. Their land was sold to Doña Juana Briones de Miranda and thereafter she sold it to Martin Murphy. The Rancho encompasses the current location of Foothill College. William and Elizabeth made their home there and had four children: Martin Joseph, William Francis, Mary Elizabeth, and Matilda Julia.

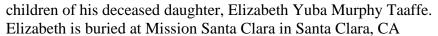
William Post Taaffe died on June 15, 1869, and was buried in the Calvary Cemetery in San Francisco, later removed to Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Colma, San Mateo County, CA. In



his will he bequeathed the property in equal shares to his four children. Elizabeth and the children moved to her parents' home known as Bayview, in Murphy Station,

now known as Sunnyvale. She died in 1875 leaving her four orphaned children to be raised by their grandparents.

Upon Martin Murphy, Jr.'s death in 1884, his estate was divided in six equal portions—a share for each of his five living children and the sixth divided among the four





Places named for settler: Taaffe Road and Taaffe Lane in Los Altos Hills, Elizabeth Way and Taaffe Avenue in Sunnyvale, and Elizabeth Avenue in Los Altos are named for Elizabeth Yuba Murphy Taaffe.

Attributions, Sources, & Summaries

Attributions are linked directly from each Settler's Profile.

Summaries: New Understandings Project Experience About the Settlers

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Page 9: Our Area Today

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■ Page 10: Ohlone map:

Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area Tribal Area. Map after Milliken, 2007. Land acknowledgement, Who Are the Muwekma Ohlone? https://uufs.org/land-acknowledgment/

■ Page 10: Rancho map:

Map of Santa Clara County Ranchos, created by Clyde Arbuckle and Ralph Rambo in 1968 based on maps from the 1860s-1890s https://www.losaltoshillshistory.org/Resources/HaleRanch/Map-Santa%20Clara%20County%20Ranchos-full-size.jpg

Page 11: Thompson and West 1876 (Map)

Historical atlas map of Santa Clara County, California. Compiled, drawn and published from personal examinations and surveys by Thompson & West, San Francisco, Cala. 1876. Thos. Hunter Pr. Phil. N. Friend, Engr. Philad. C.L. Smith, Del. Farm Maps 1 & 4. https://www.davidrumsey.com (search for "Thompson and West 1876 Santa Clara").

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Back cover: General Store

Mountain View Grocery and General Store 1890, Mountain View Public Library. https://californiarevealed.org/islandora/object/cavpp%3A29044.



New Understandings – what we learned about our area before 1900.

Fremont Township

The area was known as the Fremont Township and recorded as such in census records until 1940. Knowing this helped us find information about the people before 1900 in our familiar towns of Los Altos, Mountain View, and Los Altos Hills.

> Change in enterprise

Santa Clara County has often been presented as a land of orchards, the Valley of Hearts Delight where the blossoms of the fruit trees spread across the land in springtime. Earlier, native settlements and ranchos played an important part in the development of the area. Cattle and dry crops of wheat, barley, and hay, dependent on winter rains were the major products of the area. By the 1880s things were really changing. The change to vineyards and orchards of stone fruits began in the late 1870s-early 1800s with the advent of deeper wells, new drying and canning methods, and rail transportation to the east coast before the fruit rotted. These changes led to the valley bursting into bloom.

> Crops grown

A wide variety of crops were grown and animals raised: wheat, barley, grains, orchards of stone fruits (apricots, peaches, cherries, prunes), cattle, sheep, horses, pigs, berries, and grapes.

> They weren't all farmers and ranchers

Many ventured into businesses which contributed to the growing prosperity of the area – butcher, mason, stable owner, property & wagon rentals, investor, fruit merchant, blacksmith, mining, canning, banking, government, construction, machinist, educator, postmaster, drayage, vintner, real estate, and auctioneer.

➤ What drew new people to the area

Many came for gold and other opportunities and found a home in our valley. They acted on the possibilities that the area offered: the growing importance of transportation, the fertile land, the expanding population. About a third of the people we investigated were born in California.

> Characteristics of the people

The people were hardy and adventurous. They overcame adversities and developed new practices for meeting the challenges and improving life. They had the energy and drive to succeed and a willingness to work for the common good. The area was like a small town – everyone knew everyone, and people married their neighbors. We learned what life was like for the people of the time.

➤ The shared experience has made us feel more a part of the place we live.

We welcome knowing the history of the land where we live. Knowing the source of the names of our streets and schools has changed the way we drive down the street.



The Project Experience – When asked about their experience with this project, the participants responded:

- o The most useful resource was newspapers. Newspapers of the time contained extensive reporting of major and minor personal and general details, allowing us to track our settlers through the years. The Californian Digital Newspaper Collection and Chronicling America gave us free access to California newspapers of the time. Paid sites such as Newspapers.com, NewsBank.com, and GenealogyBank.com were available free to us online through local libraries.
- Maps, biographies, obituaries, Sawyer's History of Santa Clara County, California, Foote's Pen Pictures of the Garden of the World, census records, probate files, and city historical records were also mentioned as valuable resources in the search.
- o The participants reported enjoying:
 - The research, using and polishing genealogy skills on something new.
 - Learning local history.
 - Making a connection to the areas where early families owned land.
 - Learning about some of the original names and specific people.
 - Connecting families within a close neighborhood.
 - Learning the genealogy of the land from one landowner to the next.
 - And in some cases contacting and meeting descendants.
- Other comments and wishes:
 - Wished there had been no pandemic to restrict collaboration with local historians and access to other resources (and other parts of our lives).
 - Three wished the profiles could have been more than one page.
 - Would like to share this with other local groups.



About the Settlers (and where they came from)

- ✓ The settlers recorded were overwhelmingly males; a few females were factors in their own rights (with many others surely doing supportive work).
- ✓ Only about half were recorded as married. Some married a neighbor (in a small community, the options are limited) and most of them had children.
- ✓ Many came to California for the opportunities it offered, often related to the gold rush and the needs of the resulting population growth. Several came to get married, to take advantage of an inheritance, or to escape turmoil in the homeland. About half had spent time in the gold country before settling in Santa Clara Valley.
- ✓ At least half of the settlers lived on land which was part of one of the Fremont Township ranchos: La Purísima Concepción, San Antonio, Pastoría de las Borregas, or Posolmi.
- ✓ About half of the settlers had a street, school or other local location named for him or her.
- ✓ Several listed themselves as a capitalist on the census report; according to the census bureau, persons living on income from land, stocks, etc., were to be reported as "Capitalist."

✓ Some lived or worked in San Francisco *and* in the Fremont Township. Several lived in nearby areas such as Mayfield (now Palo Alto) and Santa Clara and tended land in the Fremont Township/Mountain View-Los Altos/Los Altos Hills area.

Where they came from:

France, Ireland (3), Kentucky (3), Maine (2), Massachusetts (2), Missouri (3), New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York (3), Newfoundland, Pennsylvania (2), Peru, Prussia, Vermont (2), Virginia

California: Fremont Township, Mission San José (2), Mission Santa Clara, Mountain View (2), San Francisco, Santa Cruz, Yuba River









Mountain View Grocery and General Store 1890

