

Quarterly Bulletin of the Calaveras County Historical SocietyVolume XXIApril 1973Number 3

LIVERY STABLES AND GARAGES IN SAN ANDREAS

In our present-day era of efficient automobiles and high-speed highways, it is difficult for many of us to visualize the transportation problems and methods of a century ago. Our elder members, however, have witnessed the passing of the age of the horse and the coming of the automobile. And so, in this issue, we present descriptions of the livery stables and the people that ran them, and then the leading garage that led the way into the automobile age in San Andreas.

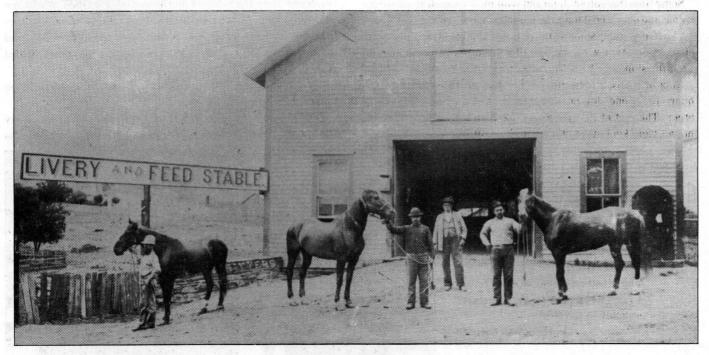
Emmett Joy records, in "Chronicles of San Andreas," that there were at least three livery stables in the late 1850's in town: the Benjamin & McDonald on the east side of north Main Street, the Chamber & Irvine at St. Charles and Main, and Russell's on lower Main Street. In later years, Russell's business was taken over by J.F. Washburn. Patrick Masterson later established his livery on St. Charles and Main.

George Stewart opened the first garage and agency for horseless carriages on lower Main and later moved up town. Shortly after, C.F. Tiscornia opened the Superior Garage on St. Charles and Main (later taken over by Hausalt & Winchell's Chevrolet business). D. McCarty came in also, and ran a garage in the structure recently rebuilt as the Remington Building.

THE WASHBURN STABLE By John Huberty

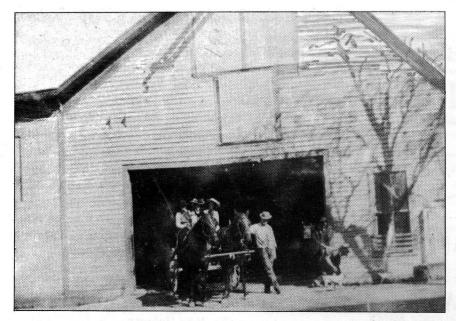
Originally started by R.W. Russell in early days, this livery and feed stable was for many years owned and operated by J.F. Washburn and his wife, Marie. There were three children, Frank, Jr., Nellie and Dorah.

Dorah remained single and became a teacher. She was quite



UNION LIVERY STABLE

A view of the horse stable of Washburn's Livery, taken about 1880. From left to right, Clarence Getchell, "Doc" Wentworth, J.F. Washburn, and Frank Washburn. San Andreas Museum



WASHBURN CARRIAGE HOUSE Across the street from the horse stable, this building, housing the carriages, was almost identical to the stable. Will O'Connell stands beside the Haupt team, with Louis and his daughters on board.

Loaned by Eva Soracco

popular as a teacher in this and the surrounding area of the county. Frank married Maud Schrack who at that time was secretary for the law firm of Solinsky & Wehe. Nellie married Oscar Wentworth who, somewhere along the line, took over and ran the stable for a while. At his death it appears that the stable went back to the Washburns.

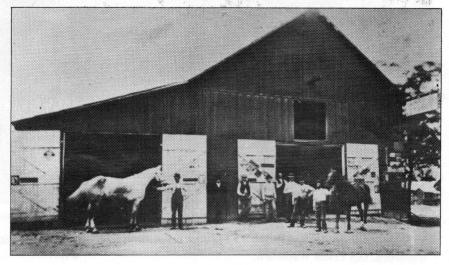
Some time thereafter, John and William O'Connell acquired the stable and operated it until the horseless carriage age took over.

The livery stable stood on the east side of Main Street, just north of the property now owned by Lillie Swanson. (The foundations are still standing. Ed.) This was a three-story structure, consisting of a street level floor which had an office and sleeping quarters on one side of the entrance, and a grain room on the other. The rest of the space was taken up with stalls where the horses were kept during the night. The loft was used to store hay for the stable stock. The basement, under the street floor level, was where the horses were kept during daytime, as the dirt floor was considered much easier on the horses' feet than the plank floors above.

The vehicle shed and wash racks stood on the west side of Main Street and north of the present theater, on a site now occupied by a residence. Here the vehicles and horses were washed. Washburn owned the land east of Gold Strike Road (old Route 49) and northeast of the elementary school buildings, and farmed this land for hay for the horses. A large barn stood where the present school playgrounds are now located.

Water for use at the stable and wash racks was brought by pipe line from a supply tank east of the Neilsen ready-mix plant.

The Washburn dwelling still stands on the large lot bounded by California, Lewis and Pope streets, and in its better days, this



PHENIX LIVERY STABLE John Masterson and the other hands at the Livery pose for their picture, probably in the 90's.

Courtesy Eva Soracco

house and yard with many trees, palm, and green shrubbery was one of the beauty spots of the town. (The Washburn home burned down in1972.Ed.)

After the O'Connell Brothers went out of the livery stable business, John and his family moved to the Bay area, and Will became hostler for Mr. Fricot for a time. He later became judge of the Justice Court, a position that he held for a number of years.

Some of the young men who drove for the O'Connell Brothers' stable included: Clarence Leonard, Arthur Leonard, Lester McFall, Fanen Winkler, and Henry Wettstein.

PHENIX LIVERY AND FEED STABLE By Eva Soracco

The Phoenix, or as it was generally spelled, Phenix Livery Stable that was once located on the southeast corner of Main and St. Charles streets, was originally owned by Patrick Masterson, native of County Mathe, Ireland. It was one of the first up-to-date stables in this part of the Mother Lode, and was built in the mid-70's. Mr. Masterson took great pride in maintaining a large variety of modern rigs for all occasions, and had many horses of beauty and speed. (A fine picture of Mr. Masterson's fleet of buggies appeared in our October, 1969 issue. Ed.) Transportation



JACK MASTERSON & FRIENDS Some of these may have been livery hands. Masterson second from right.

Loaned by Clara McGuirk Leonard



PATRICK MASTERSON 1826-1887

Patrick Masterson and Ann Miles, both recently arrived from County Mathe, Ireland, were married in Fall River, Mass. in 1885. A year or so later they left for California with the eldest of their five children. The other four were born in San Andreas.

Loaned by Clara McGuirk Leonard

to one's destination was guaranteed, although roads were rough and traveling just a few miles often seemed like going to far-away places. He gave excellent service at reasonable rates.

Mr. Masterson passed away on March 18, 1887. His three sons, John, James, and Chris all under the age of thirty at that time, continued on with the business. After several years in business, however,they sold their stable, live stock, feed barns, and equipment to the Dasso brothers.

The Dassos, Dante and John, served the public in the same Masterson fashion. For added amusement for the community, the Dasso Brothers occasionally staged rooster fights. This was done in the carriage runway, back of the barns, and sometimes on Main Street in front of the stable for all those who chose to watch this kind of amusement, long since outlawed.

In 1912, the Dasso Brothers retired from business. Fred Winkler and Will O'Connell then formed a partnership, and combined the business into auto livery and stage lines, giving service to all parts of this and the adjoining counties. They remained in this business until 1915. Then the buildings were vacant for the first time since their construction many years before.

In 1918, George Stewart bought the stable and feed barns from

the Dasso Brothers, and also purchased the adjoining John Hall Blacksmith Shop. In the 1920's, when the cement plant began construction, Mr. and Mrs. Meadough rented the front portion of the stable from Mr. Stewart and remodeled it into a restaurant, and named it the "Meadow Lark Cafe." They served fine meals to the construction men and others that worked at the plant at that time. And they also served the general public.

After the restaurant closed, the stable and feed barns were torn down and cleared off to make way for transportation progress in the expansion of the Stewart's Ford business.

STEWART'S GARAGE By Leslie A. Stewart

The founder of Stewart's Garage was my father, George A. Stewart, and contrary to what you might expect, he was born right here in Calaveras County in the town of Camanche, now covered over by Lake Camanche. He was the third of five children in a family you might well class as poor financially. When my father was in the fourth grade, he had the misfortune of having his father pass away, and six years later he lost his mother.

The children were placed in different homes of friends of the family, my father going to stay on a ranch close by, belonging to "Auntie Hill."* He had to help earn his keep by feeding stock, milking cows, pitching hay, cutting wood, and doing other typical

* Auntie Hill was quite a remarkable woman of her day, running a ranch on which she raised a unique crop called Buhach - see "Las Calaveras" for October, 1955. She had a reputation for always setting an extra place at her table when the occasion called for it, and George Stewart was fortunate in becoming a part of Auntie Hill's establishment. ranch chores. When he grew older, he worked at other jobs he could find around Camanche.

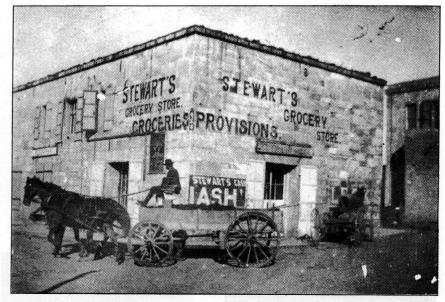
In 1890 he came to San Andreas, and went to work for Oscar Pfortner's "Calaveras Citizen", with a salary of \$30 a month. Today \$30 a day is common pay. After a couple of years at that job, he had the desire to better himself. He had made friends in town, and after discussing the matter with some of them he found one who had sufficient confidence in his honesty and judgement to make him a loan of \$300 to start a merchandise store. Of course, today this would be the equivalent of a much larger sum. As an example of the value of the dollar of those days, there used to be a hotel across the street from our present garage on St. Charles Street, the Columbo, where they served meals including soup, salad, macaroni or ravioli, chicken and other things with wine, all for the price of 25^e.

So, with this \$300 my dad stocked his store very sparingly with a sack or two of beans, flour, wheat, macaroni, cheese, tobacco, and other essentials, and then replaced them as they were sold. He was very careful to keep his credit good, always discounting his bills, and soon the wholesalers had confidence in him and extended more credit to help him stock his store. He continually gained friends in town and improved his business. This was the beginning of a business which has continued to flourish through the years.

In the late 1800's and early 1900's, San Andreas, like other towns in the county, was a mining town with individuals undertaking mining ventures on their own. My dad and a friend of his, Charles Walters (Justice of the Peace), took up a mining claim called the Squarehead about two or three miles out of town. The property had a water-bearing gold gravel channel that entered the claim at one end, made a bend, and came out on the side at right angles.



THE FIRST STEWART GARAGE Located down at the lower end of Main Street. The bridge can just be seen at the left.



STEWART'S GROCERY

From 1895 until 1900, the grocery business was carried on in the old Corcoran Building, on the corner of St. Charles and Main. Later, C.F. Tiscornia started the Superior Garage in this building. Columbo Hotel at right.

They figured if they could sink a shaft somewhere on their claim and hit the gravel channel where it made the turn, they would find gold, piked up on the turn. As they were short of cash, they worked mostly alone sinking the shaft, using a bucket and windlass to hoist the dirt and water out. They were down less than one hundred feet when water became a real problem. They could not hoist it out fast enough to be able to continue sinking the shaft. They didn't feel that they could afford a pumping system, so they sold the mine. The new owner put in a pump, sunk another 15 feet, and took out \$100,000 in gold, for dad and his friend had picked the exact spot on the turn in the gravel channel.

The price received on the sale of the mine was \$5000, so Dad's share was \$2500. I heard Dad say many times that the \$2500 gave him a real start in his business, for in those days, that was a lot of money. He was able then to increase his stock in the store, and also carry customers on credit. In those days, some ranchers would have money only when they sold or harvested such crops as wheat, barley, etc., or they would bring in a wagon-load of grain, hay, wood, or anything that my dad could sell, and thus pay their bill.

On the other side of my dad's life, he was always interested in sports. He was an excellent fly fisherman, and also a good shot with rifle and shotgun. He and Frank Treat (an uncle of Ralph Treat's) always seemed to bring in a deer when they went hunting. In the early 90's, he helped organize a young fellows' baseball team which was successful in defeating the regular town team. Dad was the pitcher and had quite a reputation in Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Amador counties. As an unusual item, he and his catcher would offer a prize, usually a sum of money, to a player of the opposing team who could steal second base. play them both. At one time when there was no band in town, he helped to organize one and helped teach a number of young fellows to play and read music, with frequent practice meetings. This was named the "Miners' Band" and it continued on until the second World War. My Mother played the piano, and she and Dad played for dances around the county. Now there was a period when there was no drummer available for the orchestra, so my dad rigged up an electrical hookup, using dry cells, connecting a bass drum and snare drum to the piano, so that when the keys were played on the bass section of the piano, the bass drum and cymbals would also hit. Likewise, when the treble keys were played the snare drum would hit. It worked quite well when they were playing waltzes.

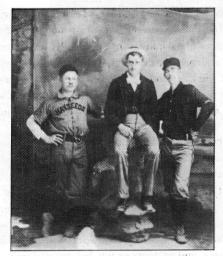
In the very early 1900's, Calaveras High School came into being. It was very small at first, but it soon became large enough for the students to want to form a baseball team. The faculty asked my dad if he would coach and manage the team, which he did. He used to have one or two of the boys come out to the back of his store where he would teach them how to pitch. Then he would complete his coaching on the diamond. The team was quite successful under his coaching.

By the time 1911 arrived, there were three or four automobiles in the county, one of them belonging to Dr. Turner, a friend of Dad's. Dr. Turner had had his car for about a year when he told my dad he was going to buy a new one. So Dad bought his old car. It was a chain drive - no clutch or pedal - you just pulled a lever into low gear, and pushed the lever ahead for high gear. It had one cylinder, a speed of about 25 miles an hour, and was called a "Brush." It had one seat and no doors or top, but my dad took a seat and top from a horse-carriage and put it on. Summertime came and we all wanted to take a trip to Lake Tahoe and Nevada

Dad also liked music, and got a cornet and violin, and learned to



MELVINA LA RIVIERE

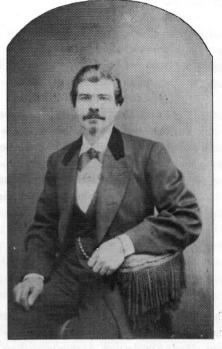


GEORGE STEWART, PITCHER



HATTIE AND GEORGE STEWART

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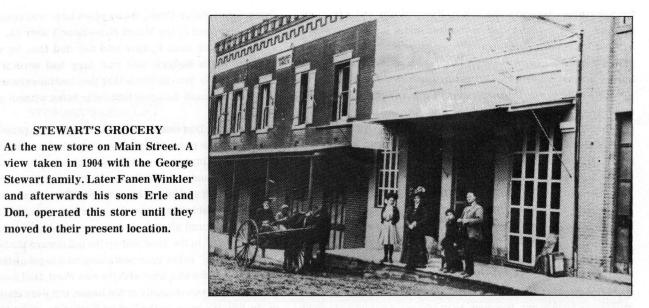


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NARCISSO LA RIVIERE



LA RIVIERE HOME



STEWART'S GROCERY

moved to their present location.

GEORGE STEWART, MUSICIAN

THREE GENERATIONS OF STEWARTS -1942 Standing, left to right, Rita, Leslie, Marie, and LaVerne. Sitting, Hattie, George, and Jeanne.



for a vacation. Around Lake Tahoe, the road was just a track in the sand, with no foundation or roadbed under it. The car would not pull well enough in the sand for us all to ride, so we got out, pulled it into low gear and everyone pushed until we found a little harder ground, when we could get in again. Not far from Bijou, the drive shaft broke. Dad borrowed a horse, rode 25 miles to town to get the shaft welded, came back and put the shaft in, and we continued on our trip. In Nevada, while traveling between towns, we had a flat tire, and didn't have a spare. The car never had a spare. And we had forgotten to bring a jack. We started walking down the road, and about a quarter of a mile down we found a large hard lump of dirt about a foot thick. We carried it back, Dad lifted up the rear wheel, and I pushed the dirt under the axle so that we could take the tire off and patch it. We then pumped up the tire and continued on our trip.

After about a year, my dad decided he wanted to get a new car, so he went down to Stockton to buy a "Flanders." But he didn't like the salesman's manner, so he came home without the car. He still wanted a new car, however, so in another week he went down again to buy the Flanders. But on the street, he met a good friend of ours, Bill Harper, who had been superintendent of the County Hospital at San Andreas (where the present government center is now). Grace Harper and my sister, Rita, had been pals in school. Grace's son, Bruce Orvis, many years later was responsible for the development of the Mount Reba-Bear Valley Ski area.

Anyway, this man Harper told my dad that he worked for Gravem Inglis Bakery, and that they had several makes of delivery trucks, but the Fords that they had far excelled anything else they had used. So again Dad came home without going to see the Flanders.

By this time Dad was seriously thinking of the automobile as the coming means of transportation, so he decided to go to see the Ford Motor Company to ask for an agency for selling Fords in Calaveras County. Accordingly, he boarded the horse stage to Valley Springs and took the train to San Francisco, where he was successful in obtaining the agency for Calaveras County. He did not get home until after dark, but we were watching for him, and saw him come in the yard and up the hill toward the house. Now, the old "Brush" in low gear took a long time to get up the hill as far as the porch, but this time with the new Ford, Dad zoomed up the drive, never even stopping at the house, but went clear to the top of the hill. We were as thrilled as if we were at the Indianapolis speedway.

The first year Dad was in business, he delivered four new cars. He stocked a few parts such as a spring, timer, some wiring, etc. He also built a ramp under a tree in our yard to run a car up onto, if



STEWART'S GROCERY

The store interior, taken about 1918, with (l. tor.) Fanen Winkler, Martin Donnalan, Les Stewart, and Tom Kelley.

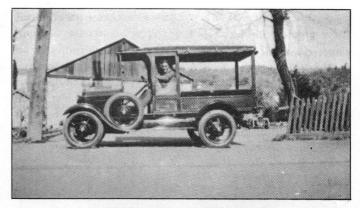
he had to work on such things underneath as tightening bearings, etc. Sales increased remarkably fast, however, so he had to build a small garage for service and sales on Main Street just south of the bridge on the east side. It extended partly over the San Andreas creek. John Dietz came in as a partner, for the service work, and was assisted by his son, Walter.

One interesting incident of the early days was when a customer purchased a new car and paid cash for it - with two buckets full of silver dollars and halves. Another interesting item was that in 1915, Ford stated that they would refund \$50 to everyone who bought a Ford, provided the company sold 250,000 cars that year, which they did. We received the money and distributed it to everyone who had bought a car from us that year. In those days, almost everyone that bought a car had to be taught to drive, which was many times a job for me, as I was out of high school at that time.

And then the United States became involved in World War I. On returning home after my discharge, my dad told me that he would give me the store, if I would take care of the business. However, I presume that I had too much automobile in my blood also, and after two years in the store, I told him he could have it back. It was then that we turned it over to Fanen Winkler who had worked for us for about twelve years. The present Winkler's Village Mart is the aftermath of that exchange.

Delivery of cars in the early days was entirely different from now. There were no convoys delivering completely assembled cars to your door. It was necessary to go to San Francisco with drivers, and drive the cars back, a trip taking ten to twelve hours in open cars, with only a top and curtains. These helped to keeep out the rain, but not the cold, and heaters were not available at first.

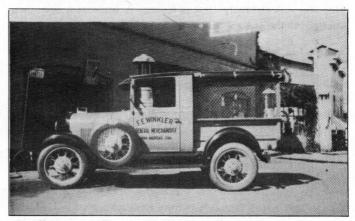
Then we used to have cars shipped by boat up to Stockton, and we would go down there and drive them home. When we had ordered several cars, they often would be sent by rail from Detroit with destination - Valley Springs. We would receive a call from the station agent there saying that there was a carload of automobiles arrived, and we had to go down there and get them out. I believe that the railroad had an agreement with Ford Motor Company to get the cars to their destination, and then the dealer was on his own. We had to take some men down to Valley Springs, preferably some strong men, for the autos were standing on end, mostly on their noses, and fastened to the sides of the cars with brackets and nails. So it was necessary to get them down into an upright position mostly by brute strength. Usually there were no fenders on them nor radiators, hoses, wheels, top, or coils, and the motors were dry, no gas or oil. They were pushed down a ramp to the ground after the wheels were put on, and then the other parts were assembled, so that we could get them started either by cranking or towing, as the earlier ones were not equipped with a starter nor battery. There were some magnets fastened to the



A MODIFIED 1930 MODEL Often a client would purchase a chassis and use the old body, as did Bill Treat. Nat Gianini looks pleased with the combination.

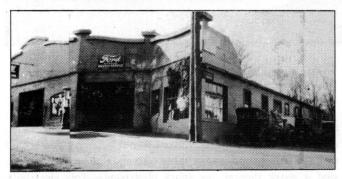
flywheel passing close to some field coils which were stationary, so that when the motor was cranked, some electricity was formed to operate the points of some other coils situated on the dash that sent a spark through the spark plug points. This electricity generated by the magnets on the flywheel also furnished lights for night traveling. When the motor was turning over fast, the lights were bright, but when you were traveling slowly, they were quite dim. About 1919, a battery and starter were installed so that much of the difficuly in starting and other light inconveniences were eliminated.

In those days, there were no paved roads in the county, so that in the winter the roads became quite soft and made travel difficult. Even the road between San Andreas and Valley Springs at some times was so muddy that wagon wheels ran in ruts as deep as the hubs, and horses sank practically to their stomachs. Consequently, there were many times that automobiles had to be stored for periods of time in the county. However, as automobiles continued to increase in demand, the roads improved.



A NEW DELIVERY TRUCK This Ford was sold in 1930 to Fanen Winkler.

Likewise, the increase in automobile sales caused our cramped space and location to be inadequate. So a purchase was consumated with Mr. Austin Hall, who owned a blacksmith shop on St. Charles Street. This is where our present dealership is located. The old building by the creek was torn down and relocated with some additions to it on the present site, about 1918. A short time later, the Dasso Livery Stable next door, on the corner, was also purchased and used for a few years as storage for both new and used cars. About ten years later, the building was torn down, and



THE NEW GARAGE Stewart's Garage as it appeared in 1930.

the entire lot used for sales and display.

The stocking of parts in the period from 1913 to 1927 was a far cry from the present difficulty in obtaining good and efficient service in parts. In those days as mechanical improvements were made, the parts newly required were so engineered as to replace and be used in older cars of prior years' production. Thus only one part in stock would fit all cars built over as much as twelve years past. Nowadays the operation of an automobile agency is in striking contrast to those early days.

The Stewart dealership has been successful now for some fiftyseven years, passing the control and management on from George A. Stewart, first to Leslie A. Stewart, and now to Laverne Stewart, with the name first of George A. Stewart & Son, then changed to the present Stewart's Ford-Mercury Sales.

STEWART GENEALOGY

George Stewart's parents were Allen Stewart and Sarah Dennis. Allen Stewart was born in Ohio in 1833, came to California over the Sonora Pass in 1849, and settled in Camanche where he died in 1880. Sarah Dennis was from Kentucky, born in 1833, and also came over Sonora Pass in 1849. She was then married to Abraham Littlejohn. They settled at Michigan Bar, in Sacramento County. After Mr. Littlejohn died, she married Allen Stewart (about 1862), and the Stewarts raised their family of five children at Camanche.

The eldest child was Sarah Ann, born 1865, unmarried. Albert Henry was born in 1867, and was unmarried. George Allen was born in 1870 and his descendants are noted below. Charles A. Stewart, the fourth child of the Allen Stewarts, was born in 1872. He lived in Amador County, where he died in 1952. His children included George Albert (1905-36), Charles E. (died 1954), Sid, Carl, Alice, Josephine, and Laure. The fifth child of Allen Stewart's was Mary Josephine, born in 1877 and lived to 1965. She first married Fred Stevens, and later married Charles Arn. Her two children were Wilma H. Stevens (Scott) (1895-1966), and Hazel Irene Stevens (Hagglund), born in 1896. Both of these made their homes in Sacramento.

George Allen Stewart married Henrietta (Hattie) Melvina La Riviere. Her father was Narcisso La Riviere, born at Trois Rivieres, near Quebec, Canada, and moved to San Andreas about 1890, where he died in 1915. Her mother, Melvina, was also born at Trois Rivieres. The La Rivieres were married in Carson City, Nevada, in 1869. Their attendants were Marceline and Louis Daoust. The La Rivieres had eight children, Georgia, Walter Eugene, Nelson, Alex, Henrietta, Zeph, Marie and Frank.

Of the La Riviere children, Walter Eugene married Nettie Soracco; they had a daughter, Lorraine, who died at the age of six. Alex married Louise McNichols, and they had one son, Lester, who died at age 35. They lived in Stockton. Zeph married Maud McElhany, and they had one son, Donald, who is presently the manager of the Dean Witter office at Stockton. Marie married Frank Oneto, and lived in Oakland. Frank was married to Nellie Miller of Clements: they had one son, Jack, an employee of the Bank of America, in San Jose.

Henrietta La Riviere was born at Gold Hill, Nevada, in 1877. She and George Stewart were married in 1894 at the La Riviere Ranch, near San Andreas. To them were born Rita Myrtle Stewart in 1895, and Leslie Allen Stewart, in 1897. Hattie Stewart died in 1948. George Stewart later married Norma Costella, of Mountain Ranch. He died at San Andreas in 1960, at the age of 89.

Rita Stewart married George Dietz, of San Andreas (deceased 1954), and then Gale Wallace of Angels Camp. Leslie Stewart married Marie Jane Marelli, originally from Orsolina, Switzerland (born 1905 and died 1967). Their children are Jeanne Marelli, born in 1926, and Laverne Allen Stewart, 1928. Jeanne married Ellis W. Gibbons. The Gibbons had three children, Gayle Louise (1948). Lynne Marie (1953), and Greg Ellis (1957-65). Gayle is married to Fred Gerard, with daughter Jeanne Maria, born 1968. Laverne Allen Stewart married Gloria Patricia Bentrod, and they have one son, James Allen Stewart, born in 1951. Leslie Stewart married Margaret Bogliolo in 1970.



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WARD DURADIES

THE TIN-LIZZIE ERA This is how Stewart's Garage looked, about 1919.



SAN ANDREAS LADIES BAND - 1936

On closer inspection, however, these lovely ladies would seem to be, left to right, Arthur Adams, George Stewart, Ollie Wyllie, Sam Johnson, unidentified, Bert Neal, Ralph Treat, Jimmie Poe, Les Stewart, Schwartz, George Treat, and George Dietz.

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The Calaveras County Historical Society, a non-profit corporation, meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Grange Hall in San Andreas - except for dinner meetings which are held each quarter at different places in the county.

O'CONNELL'S STABLES



W. R. O'CONNELL, Manager

When you want to get to a place be sure to get your team at O'Connell's. Teams from this stable are known by all travelers for their beauty, speed and kind disposition. We have horses for all classes of people, not only one class of horses. We can suit the armless driver, the careful driver, or any other driver, with either a single or double team. Competent drivers furnished at all times on request.

CAREFUL ATTENTION GIVEN TO TRANSIENT STOCK

FIRST CLASS OUTFITS FOR DRUMMERS

Main Street,	San Andreas,	Calaveras County,	California
		5 8 888 8 8888888886	

We have received a number of favorable comments on our last issue, on the Chinese in the county, and at this time we would like to point out that Assistant Editor Ida Long was responsible for that issue. Last month we mailed out the Thirteenth Essay Contest volume to members. Assistant Editor Macie Taylor took on the job of getting this publication out.

New Members

Mrs. Martha Brown, Stockton Mrs. Charlott L. Dragomanovich Miss Lora Nelson, Moraga Mr. Allen F. Peek, Castro Valley Mr. & Mrs. Thomas J. Shephard, Stockton Mr. & Mrs. Leslie Stewart, San Andreas Mrs. Frederick E. Wesson, Los Angeles

Except where otherwise credited, the photographs in this issue were loaned by Mr. Leslie Stewart.

The papers in this issue were presented to the Society at the February meeting, in 1970.

