

Republic Centennial Edition for October 16, 1930

DOBN, Nicodemus Andrew Jackson



Copy of family portrait by Bill Bookenogren.

One generation removed from the old country, this Mex. war vet. was born in the Kentucky hills. His father, member of one of the ruling families of Holland, Van Doorne, was orphaned at the age of 10 years and placed on a vessel bound for America by crafty relatives bent on confiscating the lad's properties. On this estate Kaiser Wilhelm II finished out his allotted years after world war I. Here without a bean, the lad acquired a competence as a stockraiser and became the father of several children among whom Nicodemus was born April 5 '29.

Only 18 years of age when the Mexican excitement swept the country he enlisted with the 5th Ind. inf. serving for the duration with Gen. Joe Lane's brigade.

Back at Madison, Ind., at war's end, he quickly acquired a yen for California's gold fields and retraced his steps to New Orleans and water route to Vera Cruz. From this point with the aid of a train of pack mules, he walked his supplies across Mexico to Acapulco. A steamer took them up the coast, but stopped at Guaymas. Unwilling to wait, Dorn impressed another pack train into service, crossing the Colorado at Fort Yuma and entered California Feb. 15 '49.

A trip from the southern mines north as far as Placerville netted him \$6,000 in dust. With this and the ambition to establish a home N. A. J. returned to Indiana where in '50 he married Miss R. E. Walters. The couple started on the return to California overland, but stopped at Council Bluffs, one of the jumping off spots, for several months while N. A. Dorn and a twin brother were born and preparations completed for their long haul across the plains. The twin died enroute.

From '53 Dorn was resident of the Pajaro valley, a land-owner who drove stock from various points of the state to the mines to be butchered.

He was a self-made man in virtually every respect. Possessed of little schooling, he taught himself Greek and Latin, his progress in these studies being traced in the names of his children:

Narcissus Augustus and Marcellus Aurelius, named after Roman heroes; and the next son, Diodemus Socrates for a couple of Greeks. By the time the sixth child, fourth son, arrived, however, he was so busy that the lad wasn't named until he started to school when he took for himself the name of Fred and being persuaded that all good men and true had a middle name added that of Adolphus, perhaps in allusion to some other ancient saint.

In connection with these names Mrs. Mabel Dorn Early, a grand daughter, recalls that during the 1915 international exposition at SF she and her mother chanced to visit the Greek building. "There was a picture of Socrates on the wall. I told the Greek attendant that my mother and I were related to him. The attendant led us into the inner sanctum of the building and showered us with olives and other Greek condiments. Nothing would do him, but he had to have my address. I gave him mother's, Lol and behold! he showed up at mother's house with two or three other Greeks a few weeks afterward."

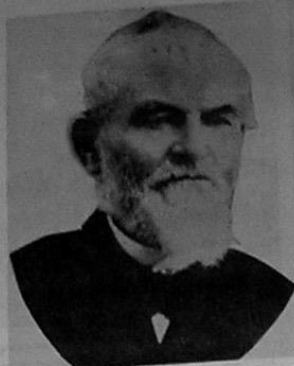
Raised in "poor" circumstances, all of the Dorn children found places in the world. Every one of the boys were lawyers of better than average prominence in the profession in this state. One girl became a doctor.

Several great grandchildren are resident of Santa Cruz, one but recently being assigned to the armed forces for the Korean affair.

COLES, Henry

An Englishman seeking naturalization in Santa Cruz in '51. B. A. Case testifies that he has been a friend of Coles "since 1846." According to Charles V. Anthony (50 years of Methodism) Coles "had already spent several years" in California by 1856 when he was re-

FARGO, Darius Chapman



Old print copied by Bill Bookenogren.

Married at the age of 24 years at Warsaw, N. Y., close by his birthplace, Fargo took his bride to Wisconsin and lived there as a carpenter for eight years before he was attracted to this state by the tale of El Dorado. Leaving his wife at home he started from Beloit, Wis., April 8 '50. He and a single companion crossed on horseback carrying their effects on three pack animals. He afterwards recalled that he saw many Indians in war-paint, but despite the fact that they were virtually unable to protect themselves from any number, neither he nor his companion were in any way molested. Perhaps the Indians thought them crazy!

In Utah they split up, Fargo coming on to California alone. He reached Sacramento July 16, only 99 days from the time he left home. Instead of going to the mines, he established a general merchandising store at John Sutter's *embarcadero*. Pleasantly surprised by the money-making possibilities of merchandising, he concluded to make his home here and went east for Mrs. Fargo. In company with 50 others going east, he chartered a vessel for the trip, intending to cross at Panama; but the going was so rough that after 42 days they were forced to put in at Acapulco in distress. The company walked across Mexico, suffering such hardships that three died. He got through all right, and returned with Mrs. Fargo without difficulty. He moved about the state extensively, his wife's health having failed her in what afterwards was the state's capital, and went east again in '53. His return to Oakland three years later was by way of the Nicaragua route. This unhappy country at that time was torn by the Walker filibuster. Fargo was the only one of an entire ship's company who came through safely.

He came to Santa Cruz to make his home in '67, variously doing business as a millwright, undertaker and builder. The Fargo home was the mansion that once stood on the present-day vacant lot east of the offices of Drs. Philip Bliss.

A son, Leroy L. Fargo, following in the footsteps of his father's earlier California experience, that of hotelkeeper, was for some years proprietor of the Wilkins House where the J. C. Penney store now is.

WILKINS, Peter Veeder

Born in Syracuse, New York, in '30 Peter Wilkins graduated from Dartmouth college before coming to California at the age of 20 years. His experience in the mines was neither profitable nor healthful, which latter fact perhaps took some years from his life. For he was not a strong man.

Repairing to SF, he learned the hotel business under the trying circumstances attendant upon the gold excitement. His health failing again here, he came to Santa Cruz and embarked in the restaurant business '64. By '67 he was conducting the old Santa Cruz House with George H. VanDresser, continuing alone when the latter died in '69.

The Wilkins House, which stood where J. C. Penney store now is, then located in the center of a long block was erected in '76 as an accommodation for a limited number of boarders; but this soon became so popular during the summer season that he had to build a hotel to accommodate no less than 150 persons. Like some others of the day, he utilized the old Cathcart homestead for the business, converting that portion of it to the south of Cathcart street as a pasture for the neat cattle that supplied milk and cream for his table.

Wilkins died in '91 at the age of 61 years, being an ex-member of the city council of several years experience, leaving the widow who had been Catherine A. Scollins, a native of Ireland reared in New Hampshire and visiting a married sister in Monterey when he met her. The couple had no children, but reared an orphaned niece whom they adopted. The latter became Mrs. Frank A. DeCray; died

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* The old Hindu sword swallowing trick is really no "trick" at all. The swallower so contorts his mouth, throat and esophagus that these organs are lined up to receive the sword. (Easy though it may seem, this trick is not advocated for amateurs.)

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