

THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**BOURNE, William Dawkins**  
 B in Evansville, Ind., '35; to Calif. '49 from Ky., settled in Eureka until '55 when he came to Sta Cruz to engage with S. A. Hughes, G. W. Evans, George Otto, Frank Cooper and a host of others in an effort to develop a gold and silver strike in the San Lorenzo valley. To the Panamint mines in the excitement of the mid-70's. Here he died May 18 '75. Unmarried. Memb. Sta Cruz Lodge Sons of Temperance '56.

**HOOK, Solomon**  
 '50, in Sta Cruz. Dist. court juror '51. A son of Mrs. Elizabeth Donner in the ill-fated party of that name '46. Living in Lake co. '63-4.

**SANBORN, O. S.**  
 In Sta Cruz '50; apparently no relative of others of the same name here.

**SKIRM, Joseph H.**  
 B '32 in NY; apparently a printer who came to Soquel in the early '50s as a school teacher and printer determined to become a lawyer. School teaching gave him the time to study his intended prof. By '55 he was practicing here, encouraged to acquire a modicum of experience peering through the bars of county jail for 15 hours as the result of a physical assault against John Nutter, associate district attorney, while defending Marvin Sellers on a criminal complaint '56. Elected on the Whig ticket '57 to the office of da, being admitted to the bar the printing business as late as '59; frequently hired as special counsel for the county from this date, an occasional candidate for da through the civil war years and one of the leaders of the Union party organized '60.

On the side of romance his most noted exploit was that of Dec. '62 when in competition with John Elliott, Jr., for the hand of Mary Ord Berger, an 18-year-old lass, he fired a shot at the other man's head. The bullet, embedded in the front street side of the Flatiron building on the lower plaza, was for many years one of the "places to see" in a day when Santa Cruz had little for entertainment.

Elliott charged an attempt at murder, but Skirm talked his way out of it and on Dec. 21 walked to the altar with the young lady. His act had two effects: it made Elliott unpopular with the ladies and concentrated their attention on "the judge."

In personal appearance he was most careless. His old clothes were encrusted with dust. His coat was green with age. Unkept hair covered his face and head. The floor of his bare office boasted Japanese matting only at those spots where long usage had not dispelled it. The open doors admitted the errant breeze, pets and clients alike.

But this, apparently, was because he had neither the time to see himself as others saw him nor the egotism to concentrate much upon himself. For in conduct he was a proud person who spent most of his time at learning. He became a linguist of alchemy because he wanted to be, spending long hours with Spanish, Italian, French, Latin and Greek which he read constantly. His legal tones on file in this county are the nearest of his contemporaries. Spurning the aid of office assistants, the ponderous briefs, complaints and arguments in which he became involved were the labor of his own hand.

When, as was frequently the case, he appeared before the state supreme court on which he could have had a seat any time he wanted it, the lawyers of Sacramento dropped what they were up to and assembled to hear him. Skirm was at his height when addressing his peers with an affection that gave him the appearance of thinking aloud.

He ruled his own house with an iron hand. He did the shopping, coming to town each morning with a market basket which he had filled at a specified hour in order that one of his children could pick it up.

Not always in sympathy with the folderol of his time, when the city council ordered the paving of Mission street he refused to pay because a large portion of the assessment came upon his extensive frontage. He also refused to use the street, but walked to town through the back fields adjacent to his home. The law street assessments might have been altered so that had it not been for the fact that his appeal from suit brought to force him to pay was still pending when he died Feb. 19, 1912.

His needs were of the simplest. Luncheon consisted of bread and cheese washed down with a non-vintage wine from Garibaldi Hotel. His guests were the mice that frequented his sanctum sanctorum and with whom he conducted a conversation of sorts by drawing his finger across the desk. In early times his office in city hall (where the south end of the courthouse annex now is) adjoined the home of Elizabeth Moore (q. v.), a shrewd and intelligent lady who spent a great deal of her time soaking a pipe on her front porch. Here the judge practiced the art of "thinking aloud," permitting the lady to interpose her objections to his logs.

**NOBLE, Augustus**

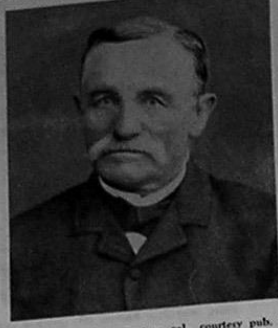


Photo from Rose Houston col., courtesy pub. lib.  
 Born in Baltimore, Md., Dec. 28 '23, son of an Eng. actor and actress who migrated there with Junius Brutus Booth (father of John Wilkes Booth) about '20. Taken to Salem, Mass., he was on his own from age 13 working in a grocery and crockery ware stores three years before becoming a cooper aboard whaling vessels.

In '48 a couple of townsmen returned to Salem from SF, bringing tidings of gold that stirred the populace. In Dec. the bark *Eliza* left for Calif., carrying what was believed to be the first load of provisions to leave an eastern port for the mines. The month before Noble with 20 others formed the Naumkeag trading and mining co. for the new land. Accordingly they took passage aboard the *Capitol*, paying \$150 each, and sailed from Boston Jan. 23. Among the passengers was Noble's sister, Alexina, and her husband, Thomas Baker, a theatrical man.

Ports of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts were loaded with the marine of the world, headed for Calif. The *Capitol* reached SF July 19 '49 without incident. When Noble and his friends reached Sutter's embarcadero they found the *Eliza* lying at the levee. From this point they went to the mines on the north fork of the American river. The lumber for their rocker cost \$1 per foot; but they were unable to do much work on account of the heat. Noble was taken ill with the fever and lay ill for weeks. Upon recovery they went to Foster's Bar, taking out \$10 to \$75 per acre per man; but were forced to give up because of a lack of shelter when the winter rains started. They walked back to Sacto, there being no accommodations of any kind between the bar (above the point on the Feather river where Marysville is) and the embarcadero. Sacto was loaded with 35-gal. whiskey kegs for which there was no demand. He made \$60 per day converting these into 5- and 10-gal. sizes for which the demand could not be supplied; soon acquired a competence despite the floods of that winter and became the owner of a city lot on which he erected his home and cooperage shop, being also in Aug. '50 a spectator of the horrible squatter riots in which the leaders of both sides were killed.

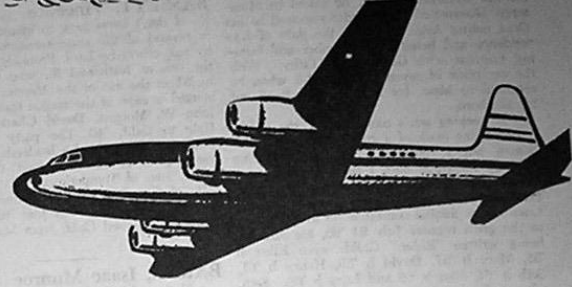
Returned east Nov. '51 to obtain a wife in Miss Johanna Shaw, in '52, returning immediately to Sacto. By '53 he was in business in SF, first as a cooper, then as hide and wool buyer. In the belief that the Almaden quick-silver mines, the wealthiest of their kind in the world, opened a ledge that extended into Soquel Aug. rancho he acquired the interest of the Rev. Fr. John Ingoldsby, a Catholic priest and uncle of Mt. Charley McKiernan, in this rancho and moved to Soquel '56. Of the child, Charlotte was born '55 in SF. The others: George Augustus '57, Edward Tidball '59, Fred '61 (killed in an accident '84), Charles '68 and Walter '70 were born in Soquel. My records do not disclose the identities, but there must be several descendants.

**HITCHCOCK, Isaac**

B about 1780, one of the oldest men in the Rocky Mountain trade, student perhaps of Daniel Boone and mentor undoubtedly of Capt. Bonneville, etc. to Calif. '33 with Walker, Dye, etc., back again '44 with a daughter, Elizabeth Patterson, (q. v.) and son, Silas, also a guide, to make his home in Sta Cruz, aged 64 years, from Cape Girardeau Co., Mo. His other child: Joshua, Absolum, Jesse, Samson and Lydia (Mrs. Green, q. v.) apparently came to Calif. with families in the overland migration of '46. He was an untutored man as also were his children, deceased (Jesse and Samson) or were living in the Stockton area by the time the old man died, early February '55.

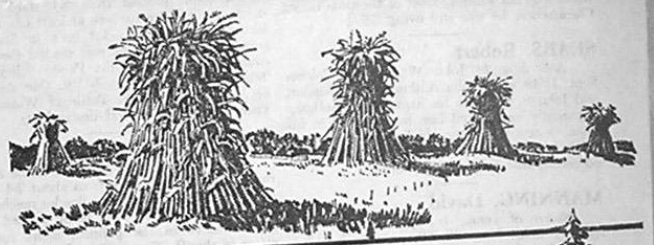
Silas, returned to Selby Co., Mo., to bring the remainder of the family. It was, seemingly, over the body of one of this man's young daughters who died in Sta Clara that winter of '46-7 that Adna A. Hecox preached the first Protestant sermon heard in Calif. I have little information relative to this old family after '54. Margaret, a daughter of Silas, in Stockton '58 Samuel B. Long, a pioneer of '52. She was dead 25 years later, mother of...

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