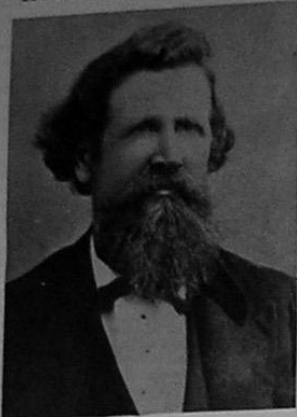


**HUTCHINGS, L. S.**



B '28 in Ohio, to Calif. from Iowa, starting '49. Wintered at Salt Lake, reaching Sacto early next spring. Married '54 Mary Rigby. To Wat. '69, purchasing 195 acres; one of the best known strawberry producers in the state '79 when he was the father of 11 child.

**BENNETT, The Widow**



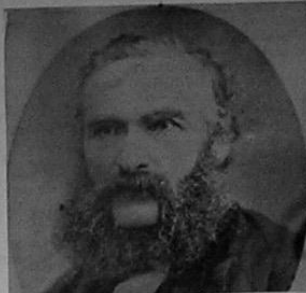
B '02 Mary McSwain, whose grandfather fell at Bunker Hill, in the home of a large, honest, but poor Virginia family and forced from an early age to shift for herself, she grew to be a large-boned, huge woman, weighing 300 pounds, capable of handling a man any way he wanted it; possessed of a native wit that kept her pretty close to the head of the pack and an excellent vocabulary which, for sheer artistry, was second to none.

She was virtually from childhood a domestic, in this capacity accepting employment in the home of a wealthy family of Georgia, said to be a branch of the same American family from which Britain's Winston Churchill descends, winning the heart of one of the scions of that family. The family didn't attempt to break up the marriage. It simply dropped one of its scion on the spot.

Mary and her husband, Vardamon Bennett lived for a time in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi and Arkansas before heading west '42 in the first general migration to Oregon. By this time they were the parents of eight:

Winston, b '19, overlaid with his parents, falling in immediately with the plans of the Bear Flag party, going south with Micheltorena '44. On July 11 '46 while searching for a horse fell in with Thomas Fallon's Bear party from Sta Cruz, to LA and return with Fremont's Calif. bat., building the Bennett sawmill with his bros. from Jan. '48, from this time until his death being involved in all manner of adventures as miner, merchant, farmer, woodsman, peace officer in a dozen or more places from here to Tex.; always returning (not, however, like a bad penny, for he, like his bro., Mansel, was a favorite with his companions). His wife was Maria J. Perez, m '71. His ranch was located on the headwaters of Pescadero creek.

Tillatha Catherine, b '24, married by bans '45 to Capt. Isaac Graham, by whom



she became the mother of two daughters, Matilda Jane and Amanda Ann, and a son, who took the name Frank McCusker, the surname being that of his stepfather. The unfortunate growing out of the affairs of her first marriage constitute within themselves a chapter of Santa Cruz history too lengthy to deal with here. (See Graham and McCusker).

Mary M. Ann (The Widow gave each of her daughters a middle name of 'Ann'), married Oct. 19 '51 by Elibu Anthony to Granville C. Shelby (q. v.)

Julia A. T., became the wife of David L. Adams (q. v.)

Samantha Ann, became the wife of Samuel A. A. Hughes of Sta Cruz about '60; Napoleon Boneparts Hicks of Felton (after threatening to shoot his head off the first time she saw the man) at Sta Cruz June 20 '69, being then a widow. Resident of S. Bern. Co. shortly afterward, mother of several child.

Dennis C. b '25. Killed at the sawmill April 20 '50 by Jesse Graham, son of the Capt.

David Jackson, called Jack, b April 5 '28, an aggressive gambler and builder of sawmills who claimed to have been "scared out" by the Graham family '53, going to SF to join the Crabbe and Walker filibustering expedition into Mex. and central America. Died '56 of tropic disease in Nicaragua.

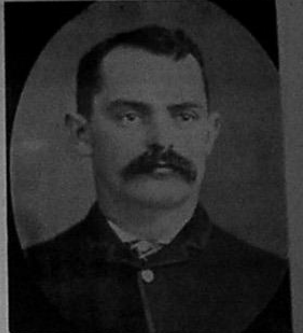
Mansel Vardamon, b '36, who seems to have been on his own from '50. A surveyor and temperance man, refusing to take part with his sister's neighborhood squabbles, he was several times county surveyor, subdivider of the Ocean View avenue property which once was the city's finest residential area; the man selected to subdivide what is today Lompoc, started as a temperance colony, employed in mining in Mexico when he died in the mid-'80's. His wife was a daughter of M. O. Boyle (q. v.). His daughter, only issue of the marriage, became the wife of Charles E. Towne of Mission street.

Vardamon died in SF '49, keeper of a grog shop and bowling alley, etc. But as early as '45 The Widow had asked for a separation on the ground of his failure to provide for the child, and from that time watched over her brood like a hen with one chick.

Legend tells us that she was called 'Narciso' by the Spanish as an encomium in recognition of her kindness nursing these people at Sta Clara mission during an epidemic. According to this, the masculine form was applied because the Spanish in return for her tenderness gave her a land grant but had to make it appear to be a grant to a man because a woman couldn't get a grant.

This ought to be nonsense to the least initiated, but it has been long accepted and frequently repeated as Gospel. For future 'historians' we offer:

"To the Senor Don Juan Burton, juez del Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe:  
"The order which you have willingly



sent me on the 15th day of Feb. last so I can take possession of the irrigated land of this mission of Sta Clara I have not presented to Senora Bennett for the reason she was found to be in SF, only returning this present day. The said Senora persists in not executing the mission grant by offering a thousand falsehoods and torfuges without presenting documents prove the illegality and injustice of claim, with which she desires to take possession of a particular proprietorship with respect to the decisions of the first magistrates. This conduct which is so ungrateful of the Senora Bennett has placed me in the obligation of asking for a new compliance with what you yourself have ordered me in your aforesaid mandate. I have the honor to place this before your judgment. Repeating, I remain your obedient servant,  
"Friar Senor Maria del Padre Jesus Red

"Mision de Sta Clara March 3rd, 1852

For sheer nerve, her claim '52 to acres before the US land commission alle that the man who signed that above gave a sowing lot of that size in '45 is almost equal. But she pulled it through. How "like a good many other people she tried stretch her claim over more land than she entitled to. At one time she wanted her to run the long way through the town of Clara, but that would have located it, together on the "highlands of the mission."

The above is taken from the record of the state supreme court. I do not repeat here to show her up as a fraud, but rather point up the times. She was a woman, a in a world of men, with eight children to port.

In an era when she could see law stealing lands by the millions of acres, when they wanted another sockful of float a grant across the street, while we men and women cried perhaps but paid for all that, she possessed the courage to into the bear's nest, beard the monster tushes and walk away with part of its l

She was perpetually involved in some kind of a suit, brought by lawyers or lenders, but had a truly remarkable capacity for retaining her property in a day when interest rates sometimes ran as high as ten percent per month.

Her marriage to Capt. Harry Love (q. v.) was healed with the reward money given him by the state for breaking up Muirietta gang was unfortunate.

Taken all in all, however, the exploit Mary Love, The Widow Bennett, 'Californ Calamity Jane', have afforded many a laugh for a number of descendants living this region.

**GRINS, John**  
In Sta Cruz '50.



Orchard's First Home - 1899

**ORCHARD'S CANDY STORE**  
FOUNTAIN LUNCH  
OPEN DAILY 8:30  
CLOSED SUNDAY  
1335 Pacific Phone 1385  
Santa Cruz

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URING the days of gold, the general merchant was also the neighborhood banker, the man entrusted with the care and investment of the surplus wealth of the region. In Soquel the early day bankers were Porter Brothers.

Doing business on the site of that original brokerage house is

**CITIZENS & COMMERCIAL SLAVINGS BANK**  
SOQUEL, CALIFORNIA

★

When Buying and Leasing Property in SANTA CRUZ and vicinity, may we suggest that you deal with Brokers whose 35 years acquaintance here will enable you to receive the best advice.

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