

WOODS, John



Photo from Rose Holstrom col., courtesy pub. lib.

One of the charter members of the Sta Cruz county pioneer society, Oct. 8 '81, this man was born in Georgetown, Brown county, Ohio, Sept. 30 '18. He had emigrated to Missouri and was in the lumber business there by the time the Mexican war broke. Someone talked him into escorting to St. Louis a boatload of horses destined for army service. Before he was through with the assignment Woods had landed them at Matagorda bay, Port Labaca, thrown breeching across the backsides of a team and was hauling supplies behind General John E. Wool's army across the Mexican desert.

After a year in the service, at the close of the war he was mustered out and returned to Missouri in ample time to get married before starting out for California April 20 '48. Considerations of health, rather than of gold, induced him to come overland with his bride. Indeed, he may never have heard of gold before reaching the sierra and while I have several statements relative to this party, none of which throw much light on its membership or their later activities, there is no evidence that he ever turned over a single spadeful of earth looking for the precious metal.

Instead from May 10, 1849, his first day in the mines, until the latter part of August of that year he labored for James W. Marshall & Co., Coloma, sawing lumber at \$20 per day. Having accumulated all the "wealth" he considered desirable, he parted company with Dame Fortune September 1 of that year and together with Ellihu Anthony, Silas Bennett, John F. Pinkham and Robert Sears (with whom, with the exception of Anthony, he probably had come overland) Woods came to Santa Cruz to spend the remainder of his days.

He was employed for several months '49-'50 in the operations of the Bennett sawmill on Love creek in Ben Lomond; but late in '49 he and his wife preempted lands in what is now the Seabright section. The family gave its name to Woods lagoon and he for some years owned "the resort called Seabright."

All the children were born here. Two daughters, Miss Laura and Miss Emma, became honorary members of the Santa Cruz county pioneers Sept. 9 '86.

He died at his home "in Branciforte" Oct. 11 '87, leaving the widow (b. '30) and 11 children to mourn. The last of these, Frank Woods, died at Bitterwater, San Benito county, in the mid-30s, aged 75 years.

CURTIS, Capt. John

Sea-faring man born in Biddeford, Me., in '25, captain and part-owner of his own vessel in the Pacific coast trade from at least '50. Settled on Rancho Rodeo, his farm being that portion now called "Opal Cliffs," in '51 and for the next ten years dividing his time between the land and the sea. He was elected to the county board of supervisors in '60, but poor health forced his resignation before his term ended and he died in the Nyantic hotel on the SF waterfront Nov. 3 '61 from a combination of ailments growing out of the pulling of a tooth. Surviving was the widow, who had been born Phoebe L. Goodwin Dec. 24 '24 in Maine and to whom he was married at the time he settled in this county but who may not have accompanied him at that time. Child, were Edward E. Curtis, born in Me. '47, a farmer and clerk in Sta Cruz until '84 when his name disappears from the record, and a daughter Mary V., aged 16 months when her father died, still living at the Masonic home in Docoto a few years since.

Mrs. Curtis, perhaps the forerunner of a large family of Goodwins who settled here, became the wife of Dennis C. Feely before '63. Died April 23 '70.

DART, Harrison

DRYDEN, Rev. David A.



Copy by Bill Boekenoggen from M. E. Church col.

Member of the Ohio Methodist Episcopal conference transferred to Calif. '50 shortly after his wedding to Sarah Raynor, sister of Chaplain J. O. Raynor, USA, who in '44 preached the first sermon ever heard in what is today Portland, Ore. His introduction to Calif. was in the San Juan district where his zeal led him to conduct services in a private home for the settlers he found in the region of the old mission. As he prayed, the host sat on one side of the fireplace smoking a pipe. The hostess was on the other side doing the same thing.

Later that year opened a church in the Feather River mining dist., but was shortly sent to Sta Cruz to conduct the M. E. academy, short-lived because of a lack of funds. He remained here until '54, Mr. Dryden giving birth to a daughter in the interim and he gallantly giving up his watch to help finance publication of the *California Christian Advocate*. Back to Feather River '54 he commenced an itinerary that took him to all parts of the state which, with his avocation of taxidermist, enabled him to send numerous specimens of California bird and animal life to eastern universities.

Genial, pleasant in conversation, sprightly in speech and wielding an able pen, he found himself in minor heresy troubles after publication of his book denying resurrection of the body. From '75 he was employed by the government to oversee Indians of the southern missions. Because of this and a misunderstanding his connection with the Calif. conference closed. He united with the New Jerusalem church. Died July 6 '94, past 70 years of age.

Mrs. Dryden was an intelligent, well educated woman possessed of a gift for writing poetry and a knack for winning other women to her standards.

CHAPPELL, George

An Englishman, he deserted on this coast sometime prior to 1836; becoming shortly afterward the husband of Maria Josefa Soto. His wife gave birth of their first child, Manuel, in 1840, in which year, along with other foreign residents of this region Geo. was arrested and sent to San Blas for trial on suspicion of sedition.

Returned to Santa Cruz in '41, he settled in the "redwoods" here and became a large property owner. I possess no original records concerning grants of land, but he was at one time one of the wealthiest men of the community being a stock raiser from '44, owner of not less than half the area of Villa Branciforte plus a huge block of Ranchos San Agustin and Rodeo; all earned, perhaps, in the mines.

About 1850 he seems to have gone back to the Mother Lode, entrusting his business and family cares to John Lott; tho' he was back again for naturalization in '51 and the "county undertaker" for the ensuing two years, being also head of the firm of Chappell, Reynolds & Co.

Chappell died here January 2, 1856, leaving the widow, who became the second wife of Philip Leggett, and several children: Manuel, b '40; Jose de la Cruz, b '44; Juan Bautista, (called Babe), b '47; Susannah, b '54. This according to his will; but the record gives Carlotta as the name of another daughter while George Chappell, aged 21 years, appears in the great register of '68. This latter was quite prominent as a counsellor of sorts among his "cousins" in the villa.

I find no record after June 1, '88, when Babe Chappell died at his home in Santa Cruz aged 40 years, 11 months and seven days, tho' there should have been a large number of heirs.

CARPENTER, John

A captive of the Castro-Alvadar forces in the internal military troubles of '44-'5, said to have been exchanged with Switzer, Co.