

DAUBENBISS, John



"Among the delegates in the democratic judicial convention that met (here) on Wednesday last we were pleased to see the genial countenance of our old friend, Col. John Daubenbiss, of Santa Cruz county. He migrated from Arkansas to Oregon in 1841 and the subsequent year brought him to California. Of late years he has turned his attention to farming and politics; but in early times in this country he was a considerable warrior. In '45 country he was in the war of Pico, Castro and others against Micheltorena, which resulted in deposing the latter. He was at Monterey when Commodore Sloat captured that place and the American flag, and carried the proclamation which Commodore Sloat issued on that occasion, to the Americans up the country. As he was wending his way with the proclamation, he was captured a few miles north of San Jose, by a party of Californians, who had got wind of his mission. As they were returning with him to town with the intention of executing him, they were met by Don Antonio Pico, who was a great friend of John. Pico ordered him released. John went his way rejoicing.

"He returned from up country with Fremont's company to San Juan, where they raised the American flag, and proceeded with that company to Los Angeles. He was also of the party that, escorting the 400 horses from the Sacramento to Fremont's camp at Montevideo, where was fought "the battle of Salinas" where he was wounded in the arm. We believe the old corral yet stands where the horses were herded while the battle raged. After this battle he went with the California battalion to Los Angeles, assisting in capturing San Luis Obispo and other exciting things on the march.

"Col. D.— is not only famous, but has a good fame "without which glory's but a tavern song." He is a whole souled fellow, for "God gave him a noble and generous heart" and when he lets himself out, a considerable politician. It is pleasant to hear him revive reminiscences of yore, as he often does lest perchance they should fade away, like "a crimson cloud on sunset borne." Long may he wave!

—S Jose Mercury, July 24, 1858.

The above perhaps gives better than anything could a bio. of Daubenbiss. His life, tho' active in American times, belonged to an earlier era; b in Bavaria '16, to NY '32, seemingly associated with Sam Houston in Texas, at least an acquaintance of ex-President Andrew Jackson, overlaid with the Bennett family, an active filibustero with the Bears, blacksmith building smithys saw- and grist mills in several parts of the state and ranchero prince from '49 until the drought of '63-4 urged him

BENNETT, James Fitz John

Native of Auburn, NY, b April 7 '19, said to have run away from the iron rule of his father, warden of Sing Sing prison to Calif. via Cape Horn, reaching SF Dec. 27 '49. Perhaps to the mines. By '53 engaged in the milling business in the Corralitos area, thence with Capt. James Brennan to operation of the Aptos grist mill of Rafael Castro which stood across the highway from the present entrance to Rio del Mar '56, one of the 'subscribers' who induced the Sentinel to move from Mont. to Sta Cruz this year and a supervisor of road construction at Corralitos. 'Of Sta Cruz' Nov. 29 '57 when Jane, daughter of County Judge Henry Rice, late of Jo Daviess co., Ill., became Mrs. Bennett. He had been elected county clerk (combining the office of school superintendent and auditor) this year, but apparently did not start serving the term until Oct. 5 '58. He had defeated Deacon Nelson Taylor for the post.

Not a candidate to succeed himself, he took over the Majors flour mill on Escalona heights with John Fleck, David Hinds and J. D. Bagwell at various times before moving to D. Bagwell about 70 to open a hotel. Built a new one to accommodate the custom '75, destroyed by fire a few years later when by reason of his management he had virtually lost it. The old man suffered as many others before a nd since as his own best customer and worst enemy, a condition Jane, granddaughter of Hiram Inus, Sr., was not content to witness. She took over guardianship of her husband and salvaged what could be saved of their hard won competency. Three of the four daughters of this couple were among the leading dressmakers of SF. One daughter became Mrs. Frank Graham and as a widow, Mrs. John R. Stanley, Jr., son of a pioneer. Belle Graham is Mrs. Henry S. Nelson, whose daughter, Mrs. Barry Bliss of Pasatiempo, is the mother of two. Doll Bennett, Mrs. Florence Wansbrough of 1127 No. Branciforte, was born in 1873, 11 years younger than her next youngest sister. She is the last of the family. Bennett died Dec. 19 '91.

HARRISON, Jonathan

'50, in bus with R. R. Griffith nigeneral store on upper plaza; JP '51; on the Militia roll '62.

out of this business; member of the first bd. of supers. and again '56-7; road builder; employed in the office and perhaps acting for a time as the county surveyor '50; a Breckenridge democrat before Charleston but on the side of the union after the shooting started.

There is a story in the family of his acquaintances on the frontier. Driving cattle from Texas through Arizona to Soquel with his oldest son, he kept surprising the son by pulling into ranch homes of his friends. Crossing a wide expanse of untenanted land he chanced to see a man some distance away. The man was going about his business in another direction.

"I know him, too," said Daubenbiss to his son.

"Aw, Dad, cut it out," retorted the boy, who thought his father was fooling.

Daubenbiss threw back his head, let out a peculiar war-cry that brought the stranger flying to his side. They had been buddies in some sort of frontier shindig nearly a generation earlier, but hadn't seen each other for years.

The old man followed the practice of recounting his adventures on every possible occasion up to his death Feb. 9 '96. Neither his child, nor grandchild, seemed so weary of them, but none thought to put his stories on paper. A grandson, Frank, employed at the Sta Cruz mortuary, is the only descendant carrying his name.

Mrs. Daubenbiss was Sarah Lard (q. v.)

PORTER, John Thomas



B in Duxbury, Mass., '30 he was a bro. of George K. and cousin of Edward Porter (q. v.). He was working with his father in trades allied to lumbering and agriculture in Wis. when the gold fever broke out. His parents were determined that he should have a liberal education, but finally broke down a nd gave him their blessing when they learned he had made secret plans to leave Boston aboard the brig Hercules. To the San Andres mines with the intention of returning home as soon as he accumulated \$10,000. However, before he could put his hand on this sum there was no reason for returning: virtually all of his family was here and had been here for some years.

From a disastrous experience in the mines he turned to draying and accumulated by '53 sufficient money to engage in the mercantile business in Soquel with his bro. a nd cousins, soon branched out into farming, ownership of a saloon, one or two butcher shops, a brick building in Sta Cruz.

At the height of the vigilance troubles in SF '56 he was elected sheriff of Sta Cruz county and in this was sufficiently successful to be re-elected; appointed collector of customs at Monterey by President Lincoln. Here a daughter, Florence, the last of his two child, was born '63 just before the office was abolished.

Returning to Sta Cruz he engaged in trading for several years, acquired a vast amount of property in the Pajaro valley and elsewhere, permanently residing in the valley from about '68. Died in 1900.

Mrs. Porter, to whom he was married in '59, was 20-year-old Fannie Cummings of Prince Edward, Ontario, who had arrived here two years earlier to visit with brothers and who remained to teach. She died in '33, aged 94 years. The son was Lt. Gov. Warren R. Porter, b in Sta Cruz March 30 '61. Ed Pfingst, John and Thomas Porter of Watsonville a re grandchildren.

SMITH, Henry

Poss. member Co. I NY vols '46; keeper of a sailor's boarding house, owner of a lot, constable and jail keeper at SF '47; speculating in Sta Cruz lands '49, but said to have drowned in the Feather river later this year.

GUERRAZ, John

Pioneer of '48 living in Sta Cruz 1929 when he married a childhood sweetheart after 50 years of separation. To Calif. as a child from Louisiana, to the mines at Hangtown to '50 when the family of father, mother and 11 child, settled in S Jose. John was in the cattle business for a quarter of a century, then in the fruit business from 1903 until his retirement in 1927.

CASE, Benjamin Allen

Native of Winterberry, Conn., b 1798. In NY '21 Mary Anne White, b in Westham, VT, 1800. They became the parents of nine child., only two of whom survived. In '47 from Keokuk, Iowa, this family of father, mother and two sons migrated to Calif., with Anthony. They were of a deeply religious turn. 'Mother' or 'Grandma' Case as she was called drummed up the first protestant gathering in S Jose, equally divided between Cumberland Presbyterians and Methodists, out of which a class of 12 was organized for prayer meetings.

At Sta Cruz later that year, the family built a home ("where Ah Kee's laundry was and where the Christian Hoffman home now is, according to a statement of Duncan McPherson in the mid-90's . . . I suppose this was about where the Don Morris garage is, but Oscar Foster tells me this was overlooking the mission potrero a few yards east of the present location of Holy Cross hall, while Miss Alice Neary insists it was the old Case home — long since destroyed by tramps — overlooking Case's — now Neary's — lagoon at the end of what we knew as children as Case's Lane, now called Laurent street). Here Mother Case conducted the first school.

The family lived in Sta Cruz for nearly a quarter century, owning a variety of properties which, according to Georgiana Bruce Kirby (*Her Diary*, fiesta edition of *Riptide* for 1948), enabled Mrs. Case, "a very gossipy old lady" to gain the distinction of setting "the best table of anyone in Sta Cruz, well stocked with dairy comforts."

B. A. Case d at Catho, Mendo. co., July 15 '71. The old gentleman had suffered from lung fever, the only serious illness he ever knew. A grandson, Jesse Bennett Case, aged three years and 24 days, had died a few days earlier. The family returned from the one funeral just in time to see the old man breath his last.

Mother Case returned to Sta Cruz to live. Here Aug. 11 '89 she died survived by Bascom B. Case and his wife, a daughter of Silas F. Bennett, residing near Cahto; and Rollin Dwight Case, living in Sta Cruz with his family.

Among the few members of the family with whom I am acquainted the name has died out. There should have been some of the Case name descended from the Mendocino branch, but the only one of whom I have had information was a lady, once owner of business property here who disappeared rather suddenly of late years.

BOYLE, John Joseph

'49, from Mass. where he was b '30; to the Pajaro valley from the mid-50's, active as road builder, merchant, farmer and census taker. There were no less than two of this name, one from Nova Scotia whose wife was an Irish girl, Carolina Taggart, in at Wat. April 23 '55. I suppose this man was a bro. of M. O. B— (q. v.) It is almost impossible to clarify the identity. I have 15 of this family name, prob. all related or nearly so. A large family of the name at Soquel poss. descended from the '49er. If so, Mrs. Phil Hartman, wife of the township constable residing at Boulder Creek, is one.

HAM, Jeremiah

Said to have been a pioneer, but I have never seen a record dating his arrival, tho' there were several of the surname after '30. He was the prop. of a livery at Wat. from about '54 when Dean was swung from the livery sign for the killing of Bomber. Owner of a farm on the Beach road '60, sold to Michael King by '65 when H— appears to have disappeared for a time. He was back on the Pajaro poll list '68, aged 44 years.



BORN in 1892... 58 YEARS of PROGRESS!