

Elizabeth - This is great. only problem I had was with the wording of one sentence - see below - Joan -

The Cooper Family of Santa Cruz County
By Elizabeth Shemaria

The name Cooper is associated by most with the building known as the Cooper House, a popular downtown gathering spot in the 1970's and '80's. The building at the corner of Front St. and Cooper St., however, was not this family's only claim to fame. To fully understand and appreciate the importance of the Cooper family and their endeavors in Santa Cruz County, a history of the family and the building which would eventually bear their name, is necessary.

Brothers, John L. and William F. Cooper were the most influential members of the Cooper family in Santa Cruz County. The brothers were born in Pennsylvania in 1829 and 1823 respectively and could trace their family lineage to the author James Fenimore Cooper known for his *Leather Stocking Tales*. In 1849, John L. Cooper accompanied by his brother T.S. Cooper and their uncle, Franklin Cooper, began a sea voyage to California aboard the schooner *Sovereign* which sailed to the Isthmus of Panama. After crossing the Isthmus on the *Sovereign*, the Coopers boarded another sailing ship, the *John Richardson*, which took them to San Francisco. John Cooper opened a mercantile store a few months after arriving in San Francisco, coming to Santa Cruz in 1851 to establish the Cooper Brothers Mercantile Store, a store that achieved great popularity, and was considered one of the best stores in Santa Cruz County for many years. William F. Cooper traveled across the United States in a covered wagon with the Pittsburgh Enterprise Company in 1849, spending a brief time working in the mining profession before moving to Santa Cruz in 1851 to assist his brother in the mercantile business.

The Cooper Brothers mercantile store, located on the corner of Front and Cooper streets was said to be modeled after a store in the Pennsylvania town where the brothers

Please add in Gold Rush trips
the store
say that
Gold Rush was it just William who went to the mines

* does first part of sentence refer to a store in S.F.?
If so - should be explained - if not - suggest - upon arriving in Santa Cruz in 1851, John established Cooper Bros. ---

were born. It was located in a one-story building with a gable-shingled roof and green shuttered windows on each side. The store served as a favorite destination for children, and as a place where individuals could speak freely about politics while gathering around a huge box stove in the rear of the store. For nearly thirty years, the Cooper brother's store stood as a Santa Cruz land-mark and was visited by young and old alike.

While they ran a successful mercantile business, the Cooper brothers also took an active interest in the politics and public affairs of Santa Cruz, using their store as a political forum, and serving terms as public officials. The brothers helped to organize the first Republican Party in Santa Cruz County and for many years their store served a dual function, as the Republican headquarters. John served as supervisor to the district in 1853 for two terms and was elected again in 1858. However, he did not accept the offer for re-election, leaving Santa Cruz briefly in April of 1859 for the east coast, to marry Alice Paxton of Chambersburg, PA (although an 1859 Sentinel article reported his departure due to ill health). John F. Cooper died in 1887 at the age of 58, having occupied his home on Front street for nearly thirty years. When the city government of Santa Cruz was organized in 1876, William F. Cooper was chosen as the first mayor under the new government. After serving one term as mayor, he spent four years (1883-1887), as Postmaster. William F. Cooper died in 1894 at the age of 71. The Cooper brothers left an impact on Santa Cruz county in many ways, they are best known however, for the contribution they made on behalf of the County's first courthouse.

In 1866 Santa Cruz decided to build its first "real" courthouse. The county accepted a tract 110-ft square, located between Willow and Main streets (now Cooper St. and Pacific Ave.) from the Cooper brothers and Thomas W. Moore. The courthouse was

Yellow
designed by architect Tom Beck: A two-story brick structure with white stone trim and a white picket fence edging the wood plank sidewalks. The courthouse had five offices on the ground floor, with the court room and clerks offices upstairs. In 1868, improvements were made to the courthouse including enlarging the bar, covering the courtroom floor with cocoa matting and installing a twelve-light chandelier in the center of the building. As stated in the Santa Cruz Sentinel, July 20, 1867: "No finer courthouse for the money was ever erected in the State." Of this, the Cooper brothers must have been very proud.

On April 14, 1894, a fire roared through the block north of the Courthouse, leveling most of the buildings on that block. The fire also reached Cooper Street, destroying the courthouse beyond repair. In 1895, architect Thomas Beck designed a new courthouse on the same ^{site} ~~sight~~, to replace the one damaged by fire. This second Courthouse was functional for fifty years, until 1963, when the county hired an architect to design its replacement, ^{over} the present courthouse near the San Lorenzo River.

In 1969, the building located on the corner of Pacific Ave. and Cooper St was sold to Max Walden, who refurbished it, creating a popular downtown ^{gathering place} hangout. The building once known as the courthouse was re-named the Cooper House, after the brothers who originally helped to provide the land for it. The building stood until the 1989 earthquake, which destroyed the building beyond repair. At the present time, August 1999, a new Cooper House is reaching its final months of construction. With the completion of this structure, the legacy of the Cooper family will be continued, and their kindness remembered.

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