



City of San Bernardino Historical and Pioneer Society P.O. Box 875, San Bernardino, CA 92402

LIBRARY NEWS APRIL 2007

By Richard D. Thompson, Librarian

California Room Docents Discuss Local Literature

On February 21 the Heritage House hosted a conclave of librarians and docents from everybody's favorite library: The Feldheim. Mike Clark and Millicent Price and a throng of docents from the California Room came over to tour our facilities. They viewed our Queen Anne house, our meeting room/museum, and our library. Of course the latter is in its infancy, but I remember when the City Library's California Room got its start and had less than what the Historical Society has now. Now it (Feldheim) is, or should be, the envy of all public libraries.

One of the things we discussed was how the writing of local history one hundred years ago was mainly done by newspapermen. The first book published on SB was Arthur Kearney's *San Bernardino: Its Resources and Climate*. Kearney was the editor of the SB Times. The second book (1876) was by W. D. Frazee, *San Bernardino: Its Climate and Resources*. Frazee was the editor of the S. B. Argus. The third book (1883) was *History of San Bernardino county, California, with illustrations etc...* This is usually referred to as Elliott's "History of San Bernardino and San Diego Counties" because Elliott published it without a credited author. However, the youthful (25 year-old) Warren Wilson, editor of the SB Index, was the author of the San Bernardino portion of the book.

Next is Edson D. Hale's *The County of San Bernardino, California, and its principal city* (1888). I don't know what Hale's profession was and only mention his book because I don't have a copy, or even a photocopy. I don't have one because Arda Haenszel didn't run one for me. Well, I never! I don't think the Feldheim has one either but I can't check because their online catalogue is down. The Smiley has one and maybe some high-minded soul will procure a copy for us San Bernardinans. A couple of other books are worth mentioning. Juan Caballeria was a newspaperman in Spain before becoming a priest, and he wrote a series of articles that became a book (see below). Also, newspaperman George Weeks wrote a book, *California Copy*, about a third of which is on San Bernardino. Although published in the 1920s, it covers events from 1876 and is the best-written book on San Bernardino from the standpoint of readability. There are other newspaper authors later, but I will just mention Riverside's Robert Hornbeck and Tom Patterson as worthy members of the ink-stained wretches club.

From Desert Land to Fairy Land

Back in 1902 the San Bernardino *Times-Index* ran a series of articles on the history of San Bernardino valley. The series ran weekly, and before long the people of the area looked forward in anticipation to the next installment. The eighth story, in particular, set tongues to wagging, and, among historians at least, they are wagging still. Number eight is where the author, a Spanish priest by the name of Juan Caballeria, wrote that the first Christian settlement in the San Bernardino was established in May of

1810 under the leadership of Father Dumetz, one of the missionaries of San Gabriel Mission. In December the newspaper took the 23 installments and published them in book form, which it entitled “*History of San Bernardino Valley: From the Padres to the Pioneers.*” This story has become controversial over the years, but I do not propose to enter into that discussion here.

The reason I raise the subject is that San Bernardino folks were excited that their city was the site of a former mission (well, they stretched it into that, nobody worried about the details), and the centenary of the event was fast approaching. The *Times-Index* was perhaps the biggest booster and their newspapers were a must-read. When the centennial arrived, the city had a mass party. Parades, orations, dedications, parties, it was quite festive. One outcome is that the *Times-Index* produced what for the time was a huge book on the activities, entitled: *From Desert Land to Fairy Land.*

All of this is to highlight the fact that Society President Steve Shaw has scanned the entire book, and it is a treasure trove of photographs of people and places. There were dozens of committees, each with photos of their members. Of course you were a nobody if you didn’t get appointed to one of them, so I think maybe everybody in the entire city got their picture in the book. (Well, that is an obvious exaggeration, but you get the idea!) Steve ran a copy of this now scarce book for our library, and we also have it stored on the computer so that copies of anything in it can be reproduced. As an experiment we took a photo of John Brown Jr. about the size of one’s thumbnail, and enlarged it and printed it out, and it came out very nicely.

Just an aside but the *Times-Index* was an afternoon paper. Although originally an independent, the San Bernardino *Sun* acquired it and along the way and changed its name to the *Telegram*. It survived into the 1970s when the Gannett Corporation bought the *Sun*, and dropped the afternoon *Telegram*.

Literary News

Historical Society members have been busy producing more local history for your bookshelves. Here are five books that have been recently donated to the Heritage Library by our members/authors.

John Weeks and William Thomas, co-authors of *Windows Beyond the World*. A novel in which the action takes place in and around San Bernardino.

Hockaday, John and Sandy. *Trails and Tales of the Cajon Pass: From Indian Footpath to Modern Highway*, Buckthorn Publishing, Etiwanda, CA.

Nicholas R. Cataldo. *The Earp Clan: The Southern California Years*. Back Roads Press, San Bernardino, CA., 2006.

Alice Eby Hall. *Echoes of Eden: Life at Hallcienda Farms*, Cajon Pass, 2004. Autobiography of Alice’s life on an 87 acre ranch in Devore.

Alice Eby Hall. *Devore Baptist Church-’48-’72 The First Fifty Years Community Church of Devore-’72’98*. Originally printed in 1999, revised and reprinted, 2006.

I should mention some other recent San Bernardino Historical and Pioneer Society authors:

Steve Shaw. *San Bernardino Fire Department*. Arcadia Pub., 2003.

Nick Cataldo. *San Bernardino*. Arcadia Pub., 2002..

Roger Smith. *Portraits in History: The San Bernardino Medical Center 1855-1998*. Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, 1999.

Edward Leo Lyman and Susan Ward Payne, *No Place to Call Home The 1807-1857 Life Writings of Caroline Barnes Crosby, Chronicler of Outlying Mormon Communities*. Utah State University Press, 2005. Leo has also done *The Arduous Road: Salt Lake to Los Angeles, The Most Difficult Wagon Road in American History*. Self-published 2001. Another Lyman opus is *The Overland Journey From Utah to California*. University of Nevada Press, 2004.

Richard D. Thompson. I've done a book and a few pamphlets, which can be seen on my web site here: <http://members.uia.net/rdthompson/index.html>

Donaldson Report

I mentioned last month that Sue Payne brought the Donaldson Report, *Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey San Bernardino California*, to my attention. Nick Cataldo donated a photocopy of the report to the Library. Sue said that the report was a popular item in the California Room, and well it should be, because it is a terrific photographic study. Chapter three has over a hundred historical photographs that Donaldson thought was of especial historical interest. That is probably the chapter that is most used because the buildings are large enough to be seen. Because the following chapters, consisting of about 6000 photographs, were printed out as contact prints from a 35 mm negative, the resultant photographs are too small to be of any use. Steve Shaw discussed this issue with Tom Marek of the City of San Bernardino, Tom arranged to lend the Society the negatives with the understanding that Steve would scan the entire photo collection.

This is a huge undertaking involving weeks or perhaps months of work, and the scans take up so much memory they will have to be stored on dozens of DVDs. When he gets through, there will be a tremendous increase in the availability of historical/architectural data added to the both officials and general citizens.

Waterman Story

Don't know why that link to the Robert W. Waterman story last month didn't work, but here it is again (takes a while to download):

http://www.sandiegohistory.org/journal/v52-1/pdf/2006-1_waterman.pdf

California Copy

While looking up things on R W Waterman I went to the 1880 San Bernardino census and found RWW's family: he, his wife and three daughters, and a couple who did labor/housekeeping. That gave me the idea to check on David Noble Smith, owner of the Arrowhead Springs Hotel and Waterman's neighbor. The census shows Smith, listed as "Hydropathic Physician," his wife, daughter and mother, one "bath attendant," one "secretary of hospital," and two patients. No wonder he was having trouble making ends meet (he had to lease it out in 1885 because of money woes), eight residents and only two paying (assuming the patients paid!). That in turn reminded me that George Week's classic *California Copy* had a chapter on what it was like to live in the sanitarium (in 1876). That book is on line and can be found here:

<http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query>

Follow the links (click California Copy, then where it says "click here to see full text of this document," well, click there, and then click on Chapter V. Actually all of the chapters on San Bernardino are quite a hoot, although some of it is pretty serious too.

William Charles Robert Wiggins

On March 19 we received the following message:

From: Jay Wiggins <drwiggy2@msn.com>
Date: March 18, 2007 8:34:09 PM PDT
To: sbvgs@sbpl.org
Cc: sbhistoricalsociety@mac.com
Subject: William Charles Robert Wiggins (1847-1921)

I'm sending this to you to ask you for some assistance in researching my g-grandfather. William CR Wiggins was born somewhere in Missouri and moved to San Bernardino about 1873. I believe he was involved in a lawsuit that year. He started the "W.R.Wiggins Cash Store" about that same time. It was situated where the county courthouse stands today, I believe. He was married to Adelia Frances Hawkins and had 3 children. I am looking for information about where in Missouri he was born. I am looking for any information about his parents, and/or any possible siblings. I have a number of pictures of him. I have some pictures of him on "Wiggins Hill" hunting with his daughter-in-law (my grandmother) looking on. Other pictures of water pipes being laid on his land and pictures of freshly planted grapefruit trees on his farm. I have pictures of his cabin (ca 1930's) at the top of Highland Ave. I'm willing to share these photos in exchange for "look-ups" or anything else you can help me with.

Thanking you in advance for all your help.

Judy Wiggins

To which I responded:

Hello Ms. Wiggins,

This will acknowledge receipt of your email requesting the assistance of the San Bernardino Historical and Pioneer Society in researching your great grandfather, William Charles Robert Wiggins (often referred to in local stories as W. R. Wiggins.) We would be happy to assist in your search, and we do have some information in our files that should be of use to you. Also, we would like to have copies of the photographs that you have offered.

I remember Wiggins Hill from the 1970s when I placed a monument at the east end of the hill marking an historical toll road that went from the valley on up into the mountains. I wrote a brief story on the road at the time. A few years later one of our members, Nick Cataldo, also wrote a story for the Society's newsletter Odyssey (Vol. VIII) that further detailed the Devil Canyon Toll Road. Part of the

story included information on Wiggins, who owned a commercial enterprise (lime kilns) in Devil Canyon, and who was the president of the East Devil Canyon Toll Company, capitalized at \$10,000 (\$100 per share). I am requesting, by copy of this email, that Nick (yankeenut) see if he has anything else on Wiggins. Although the references in Odyssey are brief, you will probably want a copy of the story, and if you email me your address, I will send a copy. (The other cc is to our President, Steve Shaw.)

The best thing we have on Mr. Wiggins is a biography that appeared in the January 1, 1891 issue of the *San Bernardino Courier*:

W. R. WIGGINS

WHAT HE IS DOING IN THE CROCKERY AND GROCERY BUSINESS

One of the handsomest and most neatly fitted up grocery and crockery shops in the city is the large store of Mr. W. R. Wiggins on Third street, near F street. The large show windows are a sight that will attract the eye of every passer-by. Every thing in the window is neatly and artistically arranged, but the greater variety and quality can be found inside the store.

Mr. Wiggins is what can be termed a successful business man and a man who runs his business to conform strictly with the wants of the people with whom he associates. Mr. Wiggins came to San Bernardino in 1875. After living here a year he saw that the city had a great future in store, and in 1876 he first opened in business. Mr. Wiggins has been in business in a great many portions of the city, but the store he now occupies is the largest he has ever run in the city. Mr. Wiggins carries a full line of the following lines of goods, all of excellent brands and quality: Jellies, jams, preserves, olives, prunes, raisins, figs, the best brands of capers, pickles and ketchups, the best quality and quantity of table butter from the different well-known dairies of the county; also a full line of foreign and domestic cheese, giving you your choice from a large and varied stock; a full line of tallow and wax candles, In the tea and coffee stock he carries only the grades that have a well established reputation in all markets. In the shelf line of goods Mr. Wiggins carries the largest and best stock in the city.

Besides his grocery stock, Mr. Wiggins carries the largest and most carefully selected crockery stock of any firm in the city, also a large stock of glassware, chinaware, lamps and vases. You can go into W. R. Wiggins's store and fit up the largest house in the land in that line. Prompt attention and courteous treatment are accorded to all. Mr. Wiggins does a strictly cash business, and a successful business. He receives his goods direct from the manufacturers, and consequently can afford to do a cash business. Mr. Wiggins carries over a \$7,000 stock of goods.

In the upcoming days I will do some more research and see what else can be found on your ancestor. An interesting coincidence is that at our meeting earlier this month, a woman came into the library after the featured speaker was through, and informed me that she was a descendant of Mr. Wiggins. She offered to donate to the Society a local history book (one she did not have with her), and so if she follows through, I might see her again early next month. If she does return I'll be sure and get her name and address.

Sincerely,

Richard D. Thompson, Librarian
San Bernardino Historical and Pioneer Society

City Seal

Tom Marek has been busy doing research to add to the City's website. If you go to the Historical and Pioneer Society's page, which can be found here:

http://www.ci.san-bernardino.ca.us/about/history/historical_n_pioneer_society.asp , you will see the new City seal and City Hall link. The pre-1939 seal was located by Steve Shaw. Tom credited the Society for providing the seal in a prominent place right under the seal. Tom is great about giving credit, and it makes those who work with him very appreciative. He has also been researching the location of earlier City Halls, and has another project which I won't mention until I ask if its OK. He spends a lot of time at the California Room and the Heritage House Libraries, and is known to be a stickler for details. This is an admirable trait, "get it right!"

Steele Photos

Steve Shaw has been busy digitizing old and new photos. Tom Marek wanted a photo of an early City Hall, which was in the Steele collection, and which we had a couple of copies in our files. However, he (Tom) wasn't real happy with the quality of the photos, so he went to the grandson of Steele, borrowed some albums, and had Steve copy them. Now we have 67 quality photos scanned from the Steele file itself.

San Bernardino Public Library Critique

I had written the first paragraph praising the SBPL two or three weeks ago, prior to the release of a report critical of the library by Management Partners Inc. Following the story by John Weeks in the March 25, 2007, San Bernardino *Sun*, I wrote a letter to the editor in which I expressed sentiments similar to those written above. The letter has not been printed, not yet at least, but in the meantime several other editorials and letters to the editor have been printed on the subject, all of which put it better than I did. Everybody is scratching his or her head over the independent study. It is just ludicrous. One thing I did find in my research is that the operating budget for the SBPL for the current year is \$2.7 million, while the operating budget for the City of Riverside's library is \$8.6 million. Riverside has a similar operation, although they do have four branches whereas San Bernardino has three. I think the authors of that study should go to each and every staff member at the library and apologize.

SAVING THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE
SINCE 1888