

# THE THOMAS WHALEY HOUSE



SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

PRICE \$2.00

## FOREWORD

Organized in 1956, the Historical Shrine Foundation of San Diego County is devoted to the task of acquiring, restoring, and operating, in the interest of the public, various buildings and other historic landmarks throughout San Diego County.

The Historical Shrine Foundation is a non-profit organization supported by membership dues and donations.

Under contract with the County of San Diego, the Foundation leases and operates the Whaley House. This building recently was restored by the County to its former appearance as "the most elegant home in Southern California." This colorful, century-old building has been furnished with household items donated by scores of people interested in preserving the dramatic history of the Southwest.

Written by Mrs. June A. Reading, director of the Whaley House, this book was published by the San Diego Historical Society, working in cooperation with the Historical Shrine Foundation.

The Whaley House is open to the public Wednesday through Sunday, from 10 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. The small admission charge helps make this historical shrine self-supporting.

Address all communications to the Historical Shrine Foundation of San Diego County, Whaley House, 2482 San Diego Avenue, San Diego, California 92110.



© 1960 Historical Shrine Foundation of San Diego County



To visit the Whaley mansion, leaving the visitor in stagecoaches and a "mansion" in a dusty

Cross the long hall more history than the spacious hall. Brussels carpets, in to imagine the man the court, a battle soirees, formal ball not be created with

The age-mellow built by a civic-minded over \$10,000 in the plans currently so formal spacings of cut moldings, the roof and essential flourished in the U block of the house and doors, except

Like a great plain graphic conditions one hundred eight and functionally c that keep the room for its building were made into from the East; ced from the New Thomas Whaley c his retirement bac torians. The accu in the re-building careful study of From these paper family, his house citizen of his com public servant, and of Trustees of the

He was born Qu of ten, to Rachel

*Opposite page: Tho*

## THE WHALEY HOUSE

By June A. Reading

### I — YOUNG THOMAS WHALEY

To visit the Whaley House today is to sweep back time like a curtain, leaving the visitor standing on the threshold of the 1850s — the age of stagecoaches and crinolines — in what for years was the only "grand mansion" in a dusty little frontier town.

Cross the long gallery, and you enter a house which has witnessed more history than any other building in the city. As you tread through the spacious hall, glimpsing the intimate family parlor with its soft Brussels carpets, its damask draperies and crystal chandelier, it is easy to imagine the many scenes which have taken place here — sessions of the court, a battle for the county seat, jury trials, the theatre, musical soirees, formal balls — a veritable bonanza of events. The vision could not be created without the help of the builder.

The age-mellowed house on the east side of San Diego Avenue was built by a civic-minded eastern merchant, Thomas Whaley, at a cost of over \$10,000 in 1857. In building this home he used the details and plans currently so popular in the New York houses of the period. The formal spacings of the doors, windows, heavy porch posts; the nicely cut moldings, the contrast of white detail and red brick, the concealed roof and essential simplicity are all typical of the Greek Revival that flourished in the United States from 1820 to 1860. The plan of the main block of the house is like a city house on a limited scale; all the windows and doors, except three, face either front or back.

Like a great plantation house, it is adaptable to its climate and geographic conditions; it is as cool and comfortable as when it was erected one hundred eighteen years ago. Modern in every sense of the word and functionally correct are the heavy brick walls and high ceilings, that keep the rooms as cool as if they were air-conditioned. The materials for its building were taken from the land; native clay and river sand were made into bricks and baked in kilns. The embellishments came from the East; cedar for the woodwork, and hinges, doorknobs and locks from the New York establishment owned by Whaley & Pye. When Thomas Whaley cleaned out his desk drawers and files preparing for his retirement back in 1888, he did a great favor for present day historians. The accurate restoration work done by the County of San Diego in the re-building of the Whaley house was made possible through a careful study of the papers and documents he carefully preserved. From these papers emerges the story of the San Diego merchant, his family, his house and times. He was well equipped to be a leading citizen of his community; a businessman, merchant, architect, mechanic, public servant, and among other things a former President of the Board of Trustees of the city of San Diego.

He was born Oct. 5, 1823 in New York City, seventh child in a family of ten, to Rachel Pye and Thomas Alexander Whaley Sr. The name he

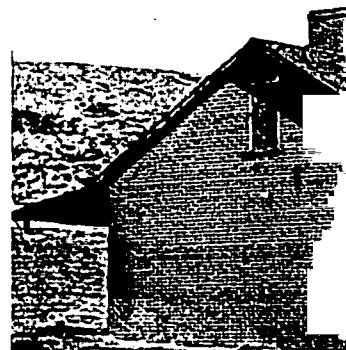
*Opposite page: Thomas Whaley, pioneer merchant and civic leader.*

— WHALEY PAPERS



bore ran through more than 800 years of English history. The family had been prominent in local and national affairs since 1067, and included names of Oliver Cromwell, Frances Goffe, and Major General Edward Whaley. Various causes growing out of the Civil Wars caused James Whaley to move his family to America. When he settled at Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1722, he brought with him a goodly assortment of English flintlock muskets, several homemade firing mechanisms, and English flints. Weapons were desperately needed in every settlement along the Eastern seaboard to wage war on the wild animals that were a menace to the colonists. In the process of clearing his land, the sons became skilled riflemen, and the guns improved. Before the Revolutionary War the family migrated to that rich hunting ground of New York City. Alexander Whaley, a grandson, continued to improve and experiment with muskets and produced a smooth bore musket for hunters which sold at twelve to fourteen dollars. When the Revolution began George Washington badly needed additional guns for the Volunteers from New York. Alexander Whaley produced some of the flintlock muskets which were issued to the men who did not carry their own arms. His large two-story frame house near the toll gate at Buswick Cross Roads, L. I., became Washington's headquarters. Whaley received an honor from Washington for carrying a message through enemy lines; he had saved the American command from being cut off at the Battle of White Plains.

Thomas Whaley Sr., son of the gunsmith, carried on the business. He served with the Militia from New York and was sent to Washington on August 14, 1814, the day the British burned the Capitol. Dolly Madison had superintended the last minute packing of plate, valuables, and the Stuart portrait of Washington, which was entrusted to the care of the New York militia — "the gentlemen from N. Y." — for safe-keeping. After the war Thomas Whaley married Rachel Pye, whose father William was a manufacturer of locks in Brooklyn; he was taken into the firm. About the time his son Thomas was born, he established another business in New York City, where he manufactured engineers' and surveyors' instruments. His untimely death in 1832 caused the business burden to fall on his capable widow's shoulders. Rachel Whaley was quite occupied raising four lively children, John, Henry, Thomas and Harriet. The years passed and Rachel increased the family holdings through shrewd purchases of real estate. One of the parcels of property she bought was located at Sheeps Meadows, a grazing land, which is now known as Central Park. She was also successful in leasing the business property on Fulton St. for a slaughterhouse. As John and Henry became older they took over the management of the locksmith business and succeeded in obtaining government contracts in Washington, D.C., and Harpers Ferry. Thomas, the youngest of the boys, showed an unusual ability for business and she decided that he would be given the best possible education available at that time, to manage the business affairs of the family. Harriet, meantime was growing to young womanhood. Thomas was sent to boarding school in Colchester, Connecticut, then enrolled in Washington Institute, and graduating with honors was sent to Europe under the watchful eyes of a tutor to travel and study for two years. Upon his return from Europe he managed his father's business



*Dirt streets and bu*

affairs, and ren  
of the settleme  
him to start ou  
Co., a ship-buil

One crisp D  
copy of the Ne  
delivered to Pr  
of gold in Cali  
newly propose  
cited one of th  
the operation  
the opportunit  
of a ticker. Tim  
world. Young  
counts. Whaley  
ment, action. F  
dangerous and

The family and included several Edward caused James at Plymouth, assortment of manisms, and ry settlement ls that were a and, the sons e Revolution- of New York e and experie t for hunters olution began e Volunteers the flintlock air own arms. swick Cross received an enemy lines; t the Battle

business. He ington on olly Madison bles, and the care of the safe-keeping. e father Wil- ken into the hed another gineers' and the business Whaley was Thomas and ily holdings of property which is now the business enry became business and n, D.C., and an unusual ven the best siness affairs womanhood. ecticut, then ors was sent dy for two er's business



*Dirt streets and barren hills: the Whaley House as it appeared in 1869.*

—WHALEY PAPERS

affairs, and rental properties for his mother, but difficulties arising out of the settlement of the estate concerning the locksmith business caused him to start out on his own career, and accept an offer with Sutton & Co., a ship-building firm.

One crisp December morning in 1848 he sat at his desk, reading a copy of the *New York Herald*. A tea caddy of gold nuggets had been delivered to President Polk, and the news of this first concrete evidence of gold in California had everyone in the office aroused. Rumors of a newly proposed line of government steamships to California had excited one of the men, George S. Wardle, who had planned to expand the operation to the west coast at San Francisco. Whaley was offered the opportunity to go, a possible partnership in the firm, and the price of a ticket. Times were hard in the East, and the outlook bad all over the world. Young men worked for low wages, totted slimming bank accounts. Whaley was young, in his veins was the tug of adventure, excitement, action. He decided to go to California — he must see this exciting, dangerous and wonderful land.

## II — BY WAY OF CAPE HORN

He quickly assembled a consignment of goods belonging to George Wardle, a stock of locks, window sashes and hardware from his father's shop, guns from Grandfather Whaley's establishment at No. 18 Catherine St., and a wagon. Grasping a strip of ticket, he squeezed through throngs of people and crossed the snow-covered, slippery wooden planks of the wharf to board the *Sutton*, January 1, 1849. He had chosen the long way, around Cape Horn. As the ship was being towed toward Sandy Hook by the steamboat *Hercules* he began his journal: "... We are off now and no mistake. The day is fine the wind is fair. We set sail immediately."

In his letterpress book he began a long series of letters, the first to his mother: "... My wish is granted. This is New Years Day — I bid you, my friends and country a long long farewell. God speed me to the distant land toward which my future hopes are centered and grant a fair realization of my wishes. At noon we set sail and ere this reaches you I shall be some hundreds of miles from home ploughing the mighty main. Regret not my absence, shed no tears but pray constantly for my safe return. A mother's prayer will be heard. He who has protected me so long will surely bring me back to your arms again. I shall never forget that fond embrace and those tears which bedewed your furrowed cheeks upon parting with you — I shall endeavor not to let your good counsels be wholly lost, but try to profit from them as much as possible. The circumstances under which I am going are indeed very favourable and should I not succeed the cause can only be attributed to myself.

"You might call on Mrs. Lannay, you will find her a very pleasant lady. I may as well inform you that I have a particular regard for her youngest daughter, Miss Anna, indeed I love her and intend marrying her if ever I return from California a rich man ... I may send for her. She is a pleasant and amiable young lady of very affectionate disposition and gentle and innocent as a lamb. She is only 16 or 17 years of age. You would no doubt love her as a daughter-in-law. She attends Miss Green's School on the 5th Avenue."

The *Sutton* did not prove to be a "happy ship" on her 204-day run from New York to San Francisco. On Feb. 2 Whaley noted in his diary that the captain and the mate had quarreled, and the mate had been ordered off of the poop. Other journal entries follow:

*Feb. 12* "... This morning I rose having spent a restless night. The heat is oppressive ... the fact is there are too many passengers, more than there is accommodations for ... I awake in the morning in a fever with my linen saturated with perspiration ... How refreshing one finds the Sea Air after being pent up Seven or Eight hours in a small apartment no larger than six by four feet and this too shared with another."

*Feb. 27 Rio De Janeiro* "... Last night at 10½ Mr. Theophilus Valentine one of the forward passengers blew out his brains. Our ship was guarded in consequence. Passengers on board held prisoners. After being without fresh provisions for 24 hours they were relieved."

*Mar. 21* "... I now come to a most melancholy period of our voyage. Rough seas ... Ship uneasy ... Cry all hands on deck ... Albertross ... Sternboat gave way to four passengers in the Sea, quarter boat lowered, picked up one, two climbed up ... Schoonmaker drowned.

SAN  
CH

Motto:-

JUS  
of  
of the

Bea  
Potat  
Oy  
S

Sc  
Sal  
Wood

Bes  
Old G  
DR

DRU  
All  
CASH  
Co.,

San

Great-grandfather o,

ing to George  
om his father's  
t No. 18 Cath-  
squeezed through  
wooden planks  
ad chosen the  
towed toward  
arnal: "... We  
air. We set sail

ers, the first to  
rs Day — I bid  
speed me to the  
and grant a fair  
is reaches you I  
e mighty main.  
y for my safe  
ected me so  
never forget  
arrowed cheeks  
good counsels  
possible. The  
favourable and  
myself.  
a very pleasant  
regard for her  
ntend marrying  
ay send for her.  
mate disposition  
17 years of age.  
he attends Miss

her 204-day run  
oted in his diary  
mate had been

tless night. The  
passengers, more  
orning in a fever  
shing one finds  
a small apart-  
with another."  
neophilus Valen-  
s. Our ship was  
prisoners. After  
relieved."  
d of our voyage.  
... Albertross  
ea, quarter boat  
maker drowned.

## SAN DIEGO ADVERTISEMENTS.

# CHEAP CASH STORE!

*Motto:—QUICK RETURNS AND SMALL PROFITS!*

*Positively no Credit!*

**JUST RECEIVED**, a complete stock  
of Fresh Groceries, consisting in part  
of the following:

Flour,  
Buckwheat,  
Corn Meal, Sago,  
Tapioca, Pearl Barley,  
Macaroni, Vermicilli, Rice,  
Leaf Lard, Clear Pork, Butter,  
Beans, Soap, French Candles, Teas,  
Potatoes, Onions, Sardines, Lobsters,  
Oysters, Pickles, Tomato Catsup,  
Sauces, Codfish, Castile Soap,  
Preserved Fruits, do Meats,  
Filberts, Brazil Nuts,  
Tobacco, Segars,  
Snuff, etc.  
Liquors,  
Champagnes,  
Hock Wine, Annisette,  
Ale, Porter, Boston Syrup,  
Schnapps, Sperm Oil, Pure Honey,  
Salmon, Smok'd Herrings, Hams,  
Wooden-ware, Tin-ware, Hard-ware,  
Also—Stationery.

Besides the balance of the stock of the  
Old General Store, Consisting of  
**DRY GOODS AND CLOTHING**  
**BOOTS AND SHOES,**  
**DRUGS AND MEDICINES, &c.,**  
All of which will be sold **CHEAP** for  
**CASH**, at the old stand of Pendleton &  
Co., by

**WHALEY & RINGGOLD.**  
San Diego, Oct 31, 1857. c31-tf

Great-grandfather of the supermarket, as advertised in the *SAN DIEGO HERALD*.  
—WHALEY PAPERS



Sea was running mountain high and dangerous . . . I could not refrain from shedding a tear."

*Apr. 1* "... Mr. Wadsworth was engaged in reading the sermon when by a sudden squall the Ship was taken aback. This is the worst thing that can happen to a ship particularly when the wind blows fresh. Every timber in her shook and it seemed as though the mast would be taken out of her."

*Apr. 17* "... Quite a flare-up . . . 2nd mate damning Dr. Johnson who is creating ill feeling among the officers . . . the Captain got into the Devil of a passion."

*May 1st* "... We were pitching about all last night . . . the Ship rolled tremendously . . . I was obliged to get up and take one of the Slat from my Bearth . . . Meal consisted of coffee with brown sugar, cold Salt beef sliced, boiled rice, soft bread and molasses . . . as for junk beef — I am sick of it . . . The old Sutton is a finely moddled ship and has ridden through many a storm. But had I known the leaky condition she was in and the Character of her Captain I would never have set foot on board her especially after being forewarned by Anson that She would never round the Horn safely."

*May 14th* "... The Valparaiso light was seen about 10 o'clock . . . Dale lying in the harbour with \$250,000 aboard . . . Reports say a million . . . Shipping in the harbour at the present time consisting mostly of vessels bound for California . . . among them the *Taralinta*, the *Croton*, the *Capital* . . . the Cutter *Ewing* and the Store Ship *Fredonia* . . . regaled myself with grapes, peaches, apples, pears."

*May 14 Valparaiso* "... After dinner took a stroll. Midshipman's alley terrible row, police . . . stabbing and cutting . . . Retired to Hotel, impossible to get room . . . Jones took us to a room. 5 of us, George Wardle, George D. Puffer, Chas. Palmer, W. R. Wardle and myself . . . only one bed. Ships are scarce, sailors in demand, and freight high. Inducements offered to the men of the Sutton as high as \$80 per month but no one will leave. A great deal has been shipped from this port particularly flour of the best quality . . . the market is flooded with it."

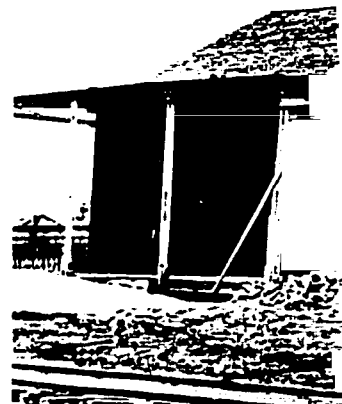
*July 15th* "We are still upon the bosom of the mighty deep . . . little prospect of reaching "Eldorado" . . . believe the "Old Sutton" is like the "Flying Dutchman" doomed eternally to wander the seas over . . . Within a thousand miles of San Francisco . . ."

*Fri. July 20th* "obtained a list of all the passengers on board and the names, places of birth, occupations &c."

*Sat. July 21* "The Sutton is pitching into it hot and heavy going at the rate of nine knots. All hands busily engaged packing up . . . Probably in the morning we shall see land . . . In the afternoon cut G.S.W.'s hair, who in turn cut mine. Engaged in the evening in copying off Lat & long together with the distance."

### III — LUSTY SAN FRANCISCO

*Sun. July 22 San Francisco* "... Cloudy morning, saw Pilot \$10 per foot . . . Took her . . . 'Twas the *Anonyma* we spoke before coming into Rio . . . Arrived at 3½ . . . Fine Harbour . . . Old Spanish Fort . . . Over



Above: Damage ca

Below: In 1906 th



uld not refrain

e sermon when  
he worst thing  
d blows fresh.  
mast would be

. Johnson who  
in got into the

the Ship rolled  
the Slats from  
cold Salt beef  
ik beef — I am  
and has ridden  
tion she was in  
foot on board  
e would never

clock . . . Dale  
a million . . .  
stly of vessels  
he Croton, the  
nia . . . regaled

Midshipman's  
etired to Hotel,  
of us, George  
ile and myself  
d freight high.  
\$80 per month  
from this port  
oded with it."  
deep . . . little  
Sutton" is like  
e seas over . . .

board and the

avy going at the  
... Probably in  
G.S.W.'s hair,  
off Lat & long.

w Pilot \$10 per  
ore coming into  
h Fort . . . Over



*Above: Damage caused by 1904 earthquake.*

—WHALEY PAPERS

*Below: In 1906 the facade was strengthened by replacing two of the five windows with masonry.*

—WHALEY PAPERS



150 vessels at San Francisco, Sau Saulito (sic). Met O'Neal . . . Went to Rosses . . . Post Office not open . . . Wilburs & Muir . . . Rec'd letters . . . All accounts wonderful. Incredulous . . . As a general thing goods worth nothing . . . My wagon and Window Sashes worth a fortune. . . ."

July 29th (Letter to his Mother).

"Thank God we arrived here a week ago . . . Last Sunday after a long passage of 204 days from New York! The old Ship will be my home until George S. Wardle's store is ready to occupy . . . which I presume will be two or three weeks."

Whaley found his land-legs, in a raw settlement turned upside down and temporarily mad. Legitimate business had been made into a gamble by the speculators. Side walk deals, although there were no sidewalks, went on day and night. Auctions were held with much noise and shouting and were nearly as exciting as gambling games. No one wanted to pay a set price for anything — they liked the fun of bidding. One store catered to Indians, taking their gold weight for weight, on a scales made of sardine cans, in exchange for the raisins they loved. San Francisco was a conglomerate settlement made up of cloth houses, canvas tents, adobes, flimsy stores, and ramshackle saloons; the store into which Whaley moved was located on Montgomery Street between Jackson and Pacific.

The agreement with George Wardle stipulated that he dispose of the consignment, for which he would receive \$600 per month. Whaley also had his own stock of hardware, and a consignment of miners' equipment from Flintoff & Co., which he would dispose of at a 10 percent commission. The operation was successful; with the proceeds he purchased his own building on Montgomery Street and rented the Wardle store to Lewis Simons at \$350. He improved his store property with the addition of a second story for offices and living quarters, and had plank sidewalks put in. By April 1851 he had purchased land at Rincon point, near the shipyard, and erected a spacious two-story house with a balcony which commanded a beautiful view of the bay. His partner, a William Warner, was expecting his wife to join him, and Whaley hoped that young Anna Lannay would come along. He wrote his lady many letters, giving her detailed descriptions of this first house he obviously had built for her.

During this interlude he managed the rental property for Wardle, engaged in grain business with Edwin Gomez, a classmate from Washington Institute, N. Y., and had a contract with Dillon & Co. to supply grain for cattle feed for three years. He also had invested in a side venture with a lawyer, Lewis Franklin, and his brother Maurice, to the amount of \$3000. The Franklin brothers were partners in a business at San Diego. Then it happened. On May 3 and 4, 1851, San Francisco suffered a severe blow; an incendiary fire began in a store on the south side of the Plaza, running along the planked streets, and leaping from house to house as it pursued its terrible course. His letter of May 15 to Anna Lannay described the conflagration thus: ". . . This city was consumed by fire the night of the 3rd and 4th. The scene which presents itself is painful in the extreme to gaze upon . . . There are to be seen only smouldering embers with here and there tottering walls of warehouses that were thought to be proof against the flames. To give you an

N

T

T A

Proprie

THE  
citi  
that, hav  
HOUSE,  
pose of  
season, o  
tainment  
Singing  
Negro D  
efforts to  
of Patron

On W

Fo

ADMISS

Childr  
Reser.

Doors  
8 o'clock

"The Brick House

Jeal . . . Went  
.. Rec'd letters  
al thing goods  
a fortune. . ."

ay after a long  
be my home  
rich I presume

d upside down  
into a gamble  
no sidewalks,  
oise and shout-  
one wanted to  
ling. One store  
a scales made  
San Francisco  
canvas tents,  
into which  
ween Jackson

dispose of the  
1. Whaley also  
ers' equipment  
ercent commis-  
purchased his  
ardle store to  
th the addition  
lank sidewalks  
point, near the  
balcony which  
illiam Warner,  
at young Anna  
ers, giving her  
built for her.

y for Wardle,  
te from Wash-  
Co. to supply  
ested in a side  
Maurice, to the  
a business at  
San Francisco  
on the south  
leaping from  
of May 15 to  
city was con-  
which presents  
are to be seen  
walls of ware-  
To give you an


## NEW ADVERTISEMENTS.

# THEATER. THE RENOWNED TANNER TROUPE!

Proprietor, - - - T. W. TANNER

**T**HE MANAGER has the honor to inform the citizens of San Diego, and Public generally, that, having Leased the upper part of the BRICK HOUSE, he has fitted up the Hall for the purpose of offering to the generous Public a short season, of his Moral, Chaste and Versatile Entertainments, consisting of Drama, Farce, Comedy, Singing and Dancing, Laughable Burlesques, Negro Delineations, &c., and hopes his untiring efforts to please, will meet with a Liberal Share of Patronage. He will offer his

**FIRST EXHIBITION**  
**On Wednesday, December 2nd.**

 For Particulars see Programmes.

ADMISSION,.....50 Cents  
Children Half Price.  
Reserved seats.....75 Cents

Doors open at 7, Performance to commence at  
8 o'clock, precisely.

*"The Brick House" was a good enough address for the first theater in San Diego.*

—WHALEY PAPERS

imperfect idea of the vast extent . . . it is more than a mile in one direction and about half a mile in the other . . . Twenty center blocks of the most dense and thickly settled quarter of the town is in ashes. At least a thousand houses have been burned, the largest number ever in the United States, not even excepting the great fire in New York is 1835 . . . The loss is variously estimated at from ten to fifteen millions of dollars . . . our business men are crippled but resolve to surmount the obstacles . . . many a noble and courageous heart has fallen victim in their glorious endeavor to rescue from the flames the effects of others . . . While the tottering walls of Delmonico's were being removed they suddenly gave way and buried five poor firemen beneath the ruins . . . By this fire the buildings which I erected upon Montgomery St. were destroyed . . . I stood watching my buildings until they fell with a crash. In a short space of minutes all that I had toiled for and which I had looked upon with so much satisfaction was reduced to cinders, and ashes was all that remained to represent the \$10,000 which they cost . . ."

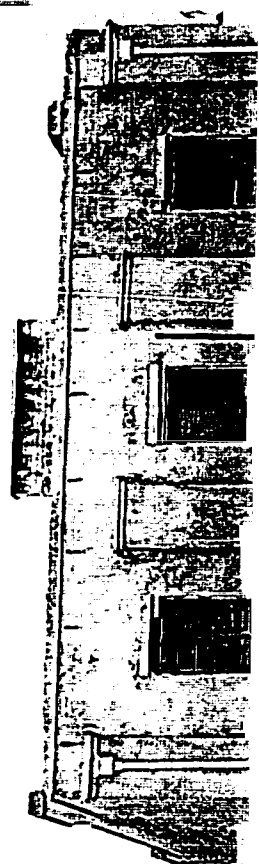
This was only part of the sad news. He reveals another disappointment to his mother on May 15: ". . . My young lady's mother refuses to let her come to California." Anna had sent him her likeness which he often gazed upon, and he in return had sent her a bag of gold dust to buy some silks and beads. He continues: "The last Steamer brought me advices that Lewis A. Franklin had done well in the business [at San Diego] which is the largest in the place and bids fair to become very extensive. I shall go down there [San Diego] to attend business."

#### IV — SLEEPY LITTLE TOWN

By October 4 he had arrived at San Diego, found that Franklin had set up a neat two-story building answering as a store and residence; it was the best in the town. The dwelling part of the house was comfortable and he was content, with more personal comforts than ever before. He said: ". . . The climate of San Diego is like that of Italy, and healthier than San Francisco, more uniform . . ." By Nov. 1 he added: ". . . The only paper published here is very small, appearing once a week and does not contain one column of news, but I will send you one next Steamer as a sample. San Diego is a small old Spanish town containing about 250 or 300 inhabitants, situated from La Playa (the beach) where there is a small settlement of 50 or 100 persons. In an opposite direction, is what is called the New Town of San Diego, which may contain 100 inhabitants. This is distant 5 miles and situated farther up the bay. I reside in what is called the Old Town. There are some 6 or 8 stores, 2 hotels, an apothecary shop kept by an old friend of mine from New York, Dr. Painter, who is the only physician, and three lawyers. The only place of worship is the Catholic church, temporarily in the house of one of the citizens, until the new one, now in the course of erection, is completed. The old padre and his assistant officiate at La Misa. There is nothing in the way of amusements, except fandangoes which are frequent at night; scarcely a day passes by without something . . . transpires in the way of excitement to occupy the whole community . . . Not

*Opposite: Demolition was imminent. Vandalism took its toll in 1956 before the house was rescued.*

—HISTORICAL COLLECTION  
TITLE INSURANCE CO.



e in one  
t locks of  
ashes. At  
ver in the  
s is 1835  
"tions of  
ount the  
victim in  
of others  
ked they  
rins ...  
St. were  
a crash.  
ch I had  
hers, and  
cost ...  
appoint-  
refuses to  
dust to  
which he  
ought me  
; Jar San  
ome very  
ness."

Klin had  
dence; it  
comfort-  
r before.  
healthier  
... The  
week and  
one next  
containing  
y) where  
direction.  
tain 100  
te bay. I  
8 stores.  
om New  
ers. The  
house of  
ction, is  
There is  
are fre-  
... trans-  
... Not

before the  
... LECTON  
... RANCE CO



a night passes, Anna but what I look at your daguerrotype . . . I sleep with it under my pillow . . . It gives me great pleasure to gaze upon it. What if I should not know you? You may have grown tall, become very corpulent, and have adopted the "Bloomer Costume" . . . If that were the case I should not know you . . . I am ready to take you for better or worse, so it makes no difference in what shape you appear so long as you come."

Both Whaley and Franklin lived at this first store they established. Back of the store was a small room with a fireplace in it. It served as a dining room. In the rear, adjoining the house, was a kitchen with a large cooking stove. They were going to have a well. The upper story of the combination store and house contained two rooms neatly furnished with cane seat chairs, bedsteads, and mahogany center and pier tables. They planned to buy wallpaper in San Francisco to decorate the rough board walls. Their predecessors had done well at the business, but squandered their money foolishly at the gaming tables. Franklin was busy collecting the debts of the old firm; Whaley, among other duties was studying Spanish so he could do business with the natives.

Now trouble was brewing. On Dec. 2, 1851 he wrote to his mother and sister: "I have only a moment to say a word. The Toscin of War sounds. We momentarily expect to be attacked by the Indians who under their great chief Antonio Garra are Swarming by the thousands in the South. The town of San Diego is proclaimed under martial law. Every man is enrolled a soldier. We are but a handful of men . . . already several parties have gone out to fight . . . There are only thirty-five of us left to protect the town and as it is necessary to keep a good watch my turn to Stand guard comes rather frequently. I have contributed fifty dollars in cash and a few things towards getting up the expedition. The indians may attack this town when they know how feeble we are . . . it destroys our business . . . I am well armed with a brace of six shooters and have a horse ready to saddle at any moment."

The Volunteers were armed with condemned Army muskets loaned by Colonel John Bankhead Magruder, then the local commandant. Inspection of arms was not held until they arrived at Agua Caliente, where they discovered only one-fourth of the guns would fire. By Dec. 15, 1851 Whaley noted "the war is lulled but not at an end." He wrote on Jan. 1, 1852 ". . . Antonio Garra their principal chief was convicted and shot, the painful duty devolving upon me as one of the twelve men who were ordered to execute the sentence."

Lewis Franklin and his brother Maurice took over the Exchange Hotel, re-built it and opened it as the Franklin House with a billiard saloon, gilt mirrors and a flourish. Lewis Franklin no longer practiced law; his health none too good, and he soon sold out to Whaley. The Tienda General also did well during this period. Sales averaging over \$150 a day, and increasing activity demanded 18 hours a day out of 24, but resulted in a profit that year of \$18,600; the stock in the store amounted to \$10,000, which Whaley owned outright. He now was in a position to go back east and claim his bride, and his friends Ephraim Morse and Charles Poole made arrangements for him to bring back their wives. Both Morse and Poole were looking for houses in town which would accommodate the three families. Capt. George Johnson's



*San D.*

*Mo.*

*vised to atten  
of THOMAS  
the*

*Mass production of in*

house was a possi  
rented it to Lt. Ge  
knew what was g  
Bandini's Hotel f  
fortable. Morse h  
purchase of parlor  
girls would know  
brought from New

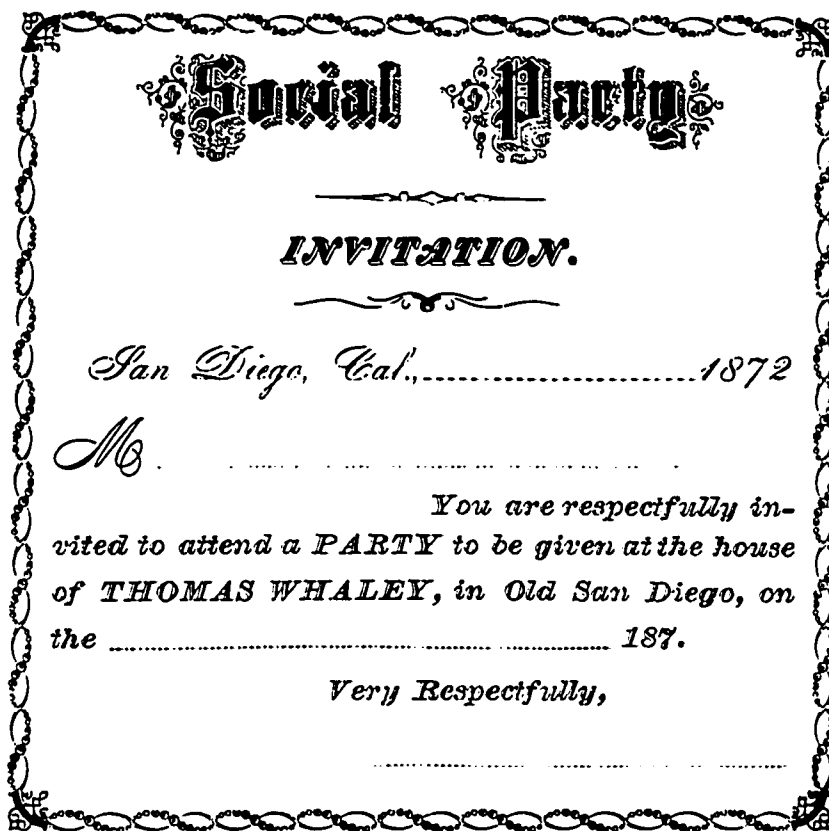
Thomas Whale  
Church of the A  
Rev. Dr. Seabury  
fifty-dollar gold  
trials of the Cali  
Gila House. The

... I sleep  
gaze upon it.  
become very  
that were the  
for better or  
ar so long as

established.  
t served as a  
tchen with a  
upper story  
neatly fur-  
ter and pier  
decorate the  
the business,  
les. Franklin  
among other  
the natives.  
his mother  
in of War  
idians who  
e thousands  
martial law.  
n ... already  
hirty-five of  
good watch  
tributed fifty  
edition. The  
we are ... it  
six shooters

askets loaned  
ommandant.  
ua Caliente,  
fire. By Dec.  
1." He wrote  
as convicted  
e twelve men

ne Exchange  
ith a billiard  
ger practiced  
Whaley. The  
raging over  
ay out of 24,  
in the store  
now was in a  
nds Ephraim  
o bring back  
uses in town  
ge Johnson's



Mass production of invitations reduced work and expense in the San Diego of 1872.  
—WHALEY PAPERS

house was a possibility, but they found that Don Juan Bandini had rented it to Lt. George H. Derby (of "Phoenixiana" fame) before they knew what was going on. They found the only place available was Bandini's Hotel (the Gila House) which they hoped would be comfortable. Morse had made arrangements with Howes & Co. for the purchase of parlor, bedroom, dining room and other furniture that the girls would know about. Some of the things that were needed could be brought from New York, the rest from San Francisco.

Thomas Whaley and Anna Eloise De Lannay were married at the Church of the Ascension in New York City on August 14, 1853. The Rev. Dr. Seabury officiated, and received for his services an octagonal fifty-dollar gold piece. Whaley brought the ladies safely through the trials of the California trip, the families settling temporarily at the Gila House. The day they arrived a ball was held for the guests —



splendid dancing with cascarones and California music; the waltz was the favorite dance of the day. They were constantly amused by Derby's antics, by the fiestas, and by the town's other diversions — horse racing, bull fights, and picnics to "La Hoya" as it then was called. The custom of burials was noted by Anna Whaley as being rather unique; music and firecrackers accompanied the body to the cemetery. She found the employment of Indians as house servants a custom, although it was difficult to keep them decently clothed and they were difficult to discipline. During the 1850's there was something like a reign of terror in Old Town, due to the lawless acts of the Indians; there also were stabbing affrays, nightly occurrences to the extent that Editor Ames of the *Herald* waxed indignant. Whaley bought an Indian girl from her parents, giving them \$100 worth of goods from his store for their consent for the girl to live in his family. The girl stayed about a month and then disappeared and returned to her parents. When Whaley went after her again the parents were willing to let her go, but wanted to be paid over again, and this continued as long as the kind hearted merchant would allow himself to be worked.

Shortly before the birth of their first child, the family moved to the Burkhardt house on Juan Street, opposite the Tienda General. A boy, named after Whaley's partner, Francis Hinton, was born Dec. 28, 1854. Whaley had already purchased from the Trustees of San Diego his La Playa lots, a total of six, fifty varas square, for \$237. On Sept. 25, 1855 the Minutes of the Common Council recorded another purchase of land — nine lots, totalling about 8½ acres, in Old Town, for \$302.

On May 1, 1855 he and George Tebbetts purchased two Vervalen patent horsepower brick-making machines, each complete with moulds, extra moulds and one force pump, for \$2500. One of the brick-making machines was to be put in immediate operation at some location near to Old Town, and the other at some point at the Playa convenient for shipping the brick. Working and manufacturing of the brick was to be carried on by one or more men thoroughly competent to take charge of the task, under the supervision of one or both of the partners, who would devote themselves to the operation. By October 13, Tebbetts had disposed of his interest in the venture to Whaley. His brick yard was located on Conde Street, just one block over from the Pendleton House; the yard employed six Indians, five whites, and a cook.

#### V — THE NEW BRICK HOUSE

In a letter to his mother on May 6, 1856, Whaley wrote: "... I have a fine lot 150 x 217½ which I shall enclose with a wall sometime this year. I am now building a grainary of brick which will hold 3 or 400,000 pounds of grain. I shall put up sheds for hay, a house and a store of brick." (The lot he refers to is Lot 1, Block 27, one of the lots which he had purchased for \$302, as a parcel with lots in Block 97. In 1850 the Common Council had passed a resolution by Councilman C. Haraszthy that sale of homestead lots was to be \$1.00 each.) He continued: "... I

*Opposite: Courtroom Scene*

—BERT SHANKLAND

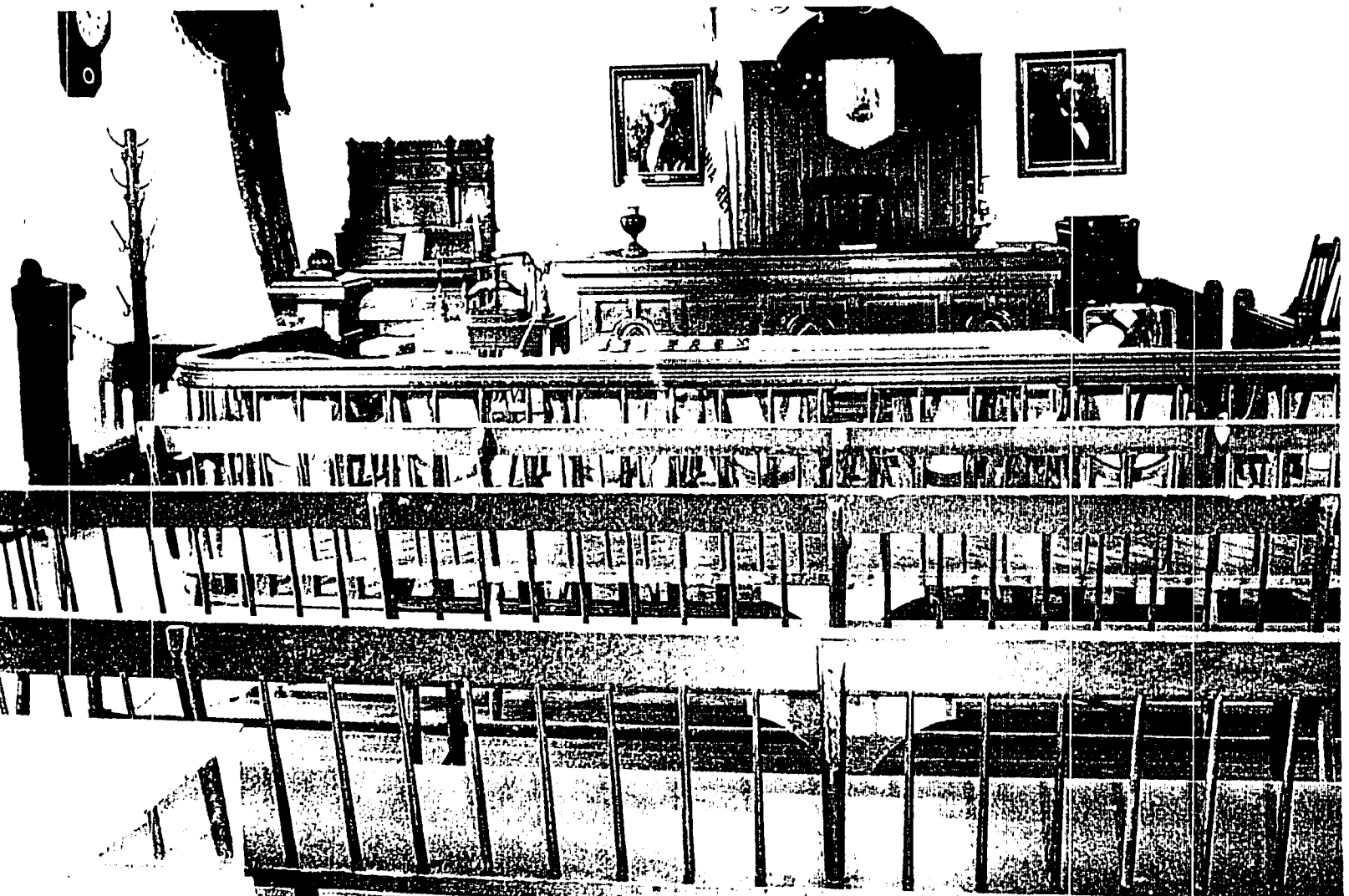


e waltz was  
rom Derby's  
orse racing.  
he custom  
g music and  
found the  
ugh it was  
ult to disci-  
of terror in  
were stab-  
Ames of the  
on her par-  
est consent  
th and then  
at after her  
he paid over  
thant would

oved to the  
tall. A boy,  
ct. 28, 1853.  
O ego his La  
ct. 25, 1855  
ase of land

As Vervelen  
with moulds,  
brick-making  
tion near to  
venient for  
ck was to be  
ke charge of  
armers, who  
ebbers had  
ik yard was  
leton House.

I have  
etime this  
3 or 400,000  
d a store of  
ots which he  
In 1850 the  
Haraschy  
inned: "I



1960...

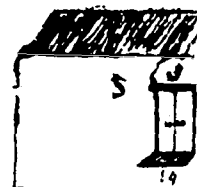


have over 150 thousand bricks left after putting up my grainary, and if I don't dispose of them soon I shall convert them all into houses and rent them. I have plenty of my own land to build upon. I have a fine rockaway carriage and a span of sorrels, with harness of silver . . . The carriage holds four or six persons . . . My wife has every comfort and luxury I can afford to give her, and we enjoy ourselves to the envy of many. My parlor is furnished with Brussels carpet and mahogany and rosewood furniture, a mahogany crib for little Frank. We frequently have musical soirees and our house is the resort of most of the best people in the place. My wife is the best little woman in the world, loved by all, she is proficient in music, plays and sings."

In September 1856 he reported considerable progress: "I have commenced erecting a two story building 32 x 44 to serve as a house and a store. It is to be completed by May 1858, as my lease expires by then. I feel I will have the nicest place in San Diego. It will cost several thousand dollars, but I have the bricks and will pay for the labor in store trade. I must wait patiently until it is known that this is to be the terminus of the railroad. I feel that San Diego with its climate and bay can become a teeming metropolis. It has the same possibilities as New York." During 1855 some of the bricks from La Playa were delivered to Mr. Ladd, stone mason, who was repairing two courses of brick in the Point Loma Lighthouse tower. The brick was shipped from La Playa by boat.

"My new house and store will be soon completed," he wrote on Feb. 9, 1857, "and when finished will be the handsomest and most convenient and comfortable place in this section of the country or within 150 miles of here. It will cost over \$10,000, but I am determined to have a comfortable home for myself and my family . . . I shall realize a handsome profit from what I invested in the brick business." The house Whaley erected faced San Diego Avenue. The front consisted of five pairs of doors set close together, each with a wooden base about three feet high. The upper part was made of window panes each about a foot high, and set in sashes in groups of two. These extended to the top of the doors which reached nearly to the twelve-foot ceiling. The plan was to combine living quarters with a store, but it proved to be too far away from the plaza, and by 1858 he had relocated his store in the Robinson House. Meanwhile a second child, Thomas Whaley, Jr., had been born in August of 1856, at the Burkhardt house. Several plans of the house drawn during the period of 1856-68 indicate it was changed considerably. Later on Frank Whaley made additional changes to the interior.

The downstairs portion of the house was divided into three large rooms, which extended to the back of the house. The granary was then a separate building, with a loading platform and no front windows. Two small windows on either side were the only means of ventilation at this early date. (One of these windows was discovered during reconstruction.) A drawing of 1862, made by Whaley's business manager, Augustus S. Ensworth, shows the granary. A covered veranda extended the full length of the front of the house. Five pairs of French windows were built into the front upper story of the main building. All the hardware came from the Whaley & Pye establishment, much of it was marked with the initials of the firm. An adobe wall, about 7 feet high, surrounded



- No 1, was cracked before settling of the house.  
No. 2, is a crack between in the front of the house.  
No 3 are cracks on the door.  
No 4 is a slight crack on

In a letter to Thomas

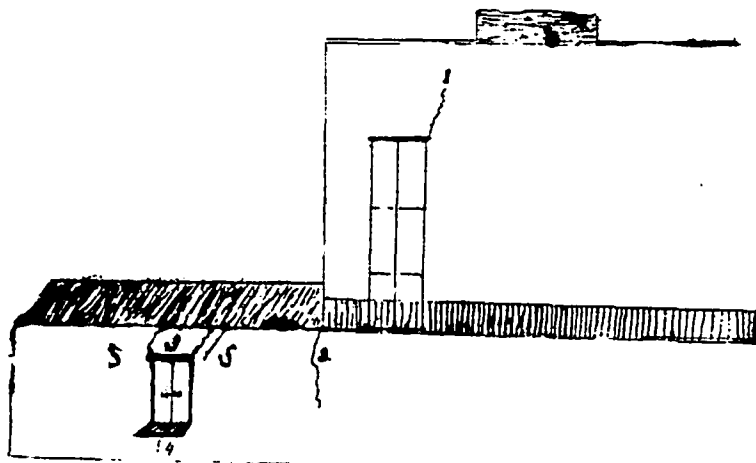
the entire lot. A wall in the middle corral. An adobe wall. The back cor for branding purp wall, and a well o on which stood a adobe wall origi Anna Whaley's de vegetables and he granate. There w planted the pepp also a fan palm.

Anna Amelia Thomas Jr. died

my grainary, and if I  
into houses and rent  
I have a fine rock-  
ver . . . The carriage  
mfort and luxury I  
envy of many. My  
any and rosewood  
scently have musical  
best people in the  
d, loved by all, she

gress: "I have come  
as a house and a  
se expires by then.  
t will cost several  
ay for the labor in  
hat this is to be the  
ts climate and bay  
ssibilities as New  
a were delivered  
ses of brick in the  
ed from La Playa

"he wrote on Feb.  
nd most convenient  
or within 150 miles  
ned to have a com-  
realize a handsome  
The house Whaley  
ed of five pairs of  
out three feet high.  
ut a foot high, and  
ie top of the doors  
e plan was to com-  
too far away from  
e Robinson House.  
d been born in Au-  
of the house drawn  
nged considerably.  
the interior.  
d into three large  
granary was then a  
ont windows. Two  
ventilation at this  
during reconstruc-  
ness manager, Au-  
randa extended the  
ench windows were  
All the hardware  
it was marked with  
t high, surrounded



- No 1, was created before the earthquake, and was caused, as I suppose, by the settling of the house, as I informed you in my last letter -  
No 2, is a crack between the front and back-proof house - is about 3/4 of 5' long & 1/4" deep in the center of the front side, with the exception of 5 bricks which the crack runs through  
No 3 are cracks over the door of the back-proof house - one open about 1/4 of an inch  
No 4 is a slight crack under the floor of the back-proof house -

In a letter to Thomas Whaley, "Squire" Ensworth sketched the damage by earthquake.  
—WHALEY PAPERS

the entire lot. A gate within a high wooden frame divided the front wall in the middle, and a similar gate formed the entrance to the back corral. An adobe wall separated the back corral from the front yard, and an outhouse built of brick stood in the front yard, close to the dividing wall. The back corral was used as a place for the rounding up of cattle for branding purposes. Cactus clumps stood here and there outside the wall, and a well occupied the center of the space at the foot of the hill on which stood a one-story building called the Washburn house. The adobe wall originally was whitewashed. The yard and flowers were Anna Whaley's delight, and the kitchen garden contained all manner of vegetables and herbs. Fruit trees were orange, cherry, fig and pomegranate. There were two cedar trees in the back yard, and Anna had planted the pepper tree on the side of the building herself. There was also a fan palm.

Anna Amelia Whaley was born in the house June 27, 1858 — and Thomas Jr. died at seventeen months, on Jan. 29, 1858. About two or

three o'clock in the morning of August 21, 1858, Whaley was aroused by a loud rapping at his window; the store on the Plaza was in flames. Whaley threw on his clothes and ran all the way from home to find the fire so advanced that the flames were bursting out the doors and windows, enveloping the building. No chance to save anything in the store, he ran around the back and found the liquor casks were rolled out in front of Mannassee & Co.'s store, also two sacks of buckwheat, empty barrels and a cot from the old Cash Store. Brown, the blacksmith, had prevented the people from trying to save the goods, telling them that there were 2½ barrels of powder inside, ready to explode. Brown and Colonel Kendrick broke the door in, but the smoke and flames were so dense by that time that they could not go in. The fire had originated upstairs on the side of the building near Compton's shop; it was occasioned by rats gnawing on the matches. Whaley wrote his friend George Ringgold, telling him the news of the disaster, and adding that he was discouraged and would probably leave San Diego and return to San Francisco. Both he and Anna felt the loss of the second child, and the idea of leaving town, even if only to visit old friends, appealed to them.

#### VI — ALASKAN VENTURE

By March 31, 1859 Thomas Whaley had received an appointment as Commissary Storekeeper, U.S.A. under Captain M. D. L. Simpson; he remained in this position until 1865, and later served as issuing clerk under Captain Sawyer. On July 31, 1867 the office of Quartermaster, San Francisco, issued orders to him to proceed to Sitka, Alaska Territory, in charge of five carpenters, and with the employees of the Quartermaster Department to set up stores and establish a base. His instructions Sept. 2, 1867 were to proceed by the barque *Buena Vista* and take possession of the Territory for the United States. Whaley raised the American flag, and was elected to the Council at Sitka, Alaska, receiving 94 votes in the election. Meantime Anna and the children stayed in San Francisco with Mary Condry Ringgold, the widow of Lt. Col. George Ringgold, who had died in service in June, 1864. Her family consisted of three sons, Cadwalader, Walter and Fayette, and two girls, Mary and Sophie. Mrs. Ringgold was having a difficult time supporting her family on the meager pension supplied her by the government, and Anna took care of one of the children, Sophie. Also there were Molly Miles and her baby; Mr. Miles was stationed with the Army in Alaska, with Whaley. There were three more children in the Whaley household by this time, George Hay Ringgold, born Nov. 5, 1860; Violet Eloise, born Oct. 4, 1862, and Corinne Lillian, born Sept. 4, 1864.

During Whaley's absence from San Diego, he engaged Augustus S. Esworth to take care of his business affairs. The gentleman, possessor of a magnificent beard, once a member of the legislature but lately beaten by a single vote, was an excellent partner for Whaley. He was full of common sense, gentle feelings, just principles and wry humor. He kept the family informed in all aspects of life in San Diego. He described an earthquake of May 27, 1862: "I've not much of any news,

---

*Opposite page: In 1960, members of the Historical Shrine Foundation (and a County Supervisor) re-enact the night-time removal of the Court House records.*

—M. J. O'HARA

Key was aroused  
 72 was in flames.  
 Home to find the  
 doors and win-  
 dows in the store  
 were rolled out in  
 a wheat, empty  
 blacksmith, had  
 rolling them that  
 led. Brown and  
 flames were so  
 re originated up-  
 and George Ring-  
 that he was dis-  
 turn to San Fran-  
 cisco, and the idea of  
 ed to them.

Appointment as  
 L. Simpson; he  
 as issuing clerk  
 of Quartermaster,  
 Alaska Territory.  
 of the Quarter-  
 his instructions  
 and take posses-  
 ed the American  
 receiving 94 votes  
 ed in San Fran-  
 cisco. George Ring-  
 uly consisted of  
 wife, Mary, and  
 and Anna took  
 South Miles and  
 in Alaska, with  
 household by  
 sister Elsie, born

ed Augustus S.  
 leman, possessor  
 future but lately  
 e Haley. He was  
 and very human.  
 an Diego. He  
 ch of any news.

ation and a Court  
 a record.



with the exception that on the 27th, at a few minutes past 12 o'clock we had two shocks of an earthquake within two or three minutes of each other. The second most severe. Many houses in town become cracked. I enclose a picture of your house, showing the cracks, but it looks worse on paper than it is. In fact the cracks are only discovered on inspection. But in order to crack many solid brick, I think in many places where there are cracks, the walls must have opened up considerable. I was in the yard at the time & the noise of the vibration of the windows & doors could have been heard at the graveyard. It was Awful! For days afterward it could be seen where the earth had opened and closed, leaving the marks of long rents. It cracked the Tower of the Lighthouse so as to injure it considerable. It rained nearly all of the 12th & 13th inst. & the sun having cracked the roof, it leaked in 2, 3 or 4 places, but on yesterday I fixed it up., using the bal of tar, and you had better send me another *small* barrel to fix it before the rains set in . . . But speaking of earthquakes . . . from the 27th ultimo, the earth has not been at rest, nearly every 24 hours bring forth little earthquakes . . . on yesterday two. As for myself. for more than ten days I slept in the corral . . . Others imitated me in the Town . . . I need a Ivory or bone paper folder . . . and six of them small boxes of water closet paper. That paper is a great institution. It is not all imagination as you suppose . . . While I have been writing this letter, quite a smart shock took place, Frank Stone, writing at the other table, jumps up & says 'My stars Alive! — There is another!' . . . Don't forget the Statutes, so soon as bound — With respects to your family I remain &c A. S. Ensworth."

#### VII — FRONTIER MANSION

When the family returned from San Francisco, Whaley began to remodel the house completely. Repairs were needed to the front, and the interior required remodeling to accommodate the five children. Lillian Whaley's earliest recollections were of the steamer trip on the *Orizaba* to San Diego, and the Captain lifting her over the side of the ship. The family were driven behind two horses in an open vehicle, over a dirt road bordered on both sides by high brush; there were no buildings between the landing place and Old Town.

"We were taken to that big room, afterwards used as the court room," she said. "My father was altering the other part of the house at the time. My next recollection is of being awakened by Father Ubach's ringing the Angelus at six o'clock in the morning. Father was putting in a lath and plaster partition making a hallway through the center of the house. The whole front was open. The arch which stands between the parlors was in place. It is said that Yankee Jim, who had been arrested for stealing a boat, was hanged over the spot. The rooms were furnished with damask drapes (rose) and ingrain Body Brussels carpet figured also in rose. Material for the drapes had belonged to Grandma Whaley. Looked warm and comfortable and inviting. The parlors were the reception rooms for all the balls we had here, the dancing being in the big room. To reach it we had to go to the door in the back parlor (study)

*Opposite page: With "New Town" already booming four miles away. Thomas Whaley bows to Progress.*

—WHALEY PAPERS

**FOR**  
**M**Y TWO Old Town  
fine view of the  
Plaza, on the  
Town, having  
42 ft. with a c  
also of brick.  
into two large  
10 and 12 fe  
force pump.  
with an outl  
and most co  
the State; s  
Business pur  
they now st  
order and fin  
ing to take a

For further

Old Town,

**T**  
**S**TORE  
person  
for my busin  
upon such t  
the amount i

cc24:267



past 12 o'clock  
minutes of each  
become cracked.  
at it looks worse  
d on inspection.  
ny places where  
erable. I was in  
indows & doors  
For days after-  
closed, leaving  
hthouse so as to  
13th inst. & the  
s, but on yester-  
better send me  
But speaking of  
ot been at rest,  
n yesterday two.  
rral . . . Others  
per folder . . .  
aper is a great  
While I have  
Frank Stone,  
ve! — There is  
bound — With

haley began to  
the front, and  
five children.  
ner trip on the  
the side of the  
en vehicle, over  
were no build-

he court room,"  
ouse at the time.  
ibach's ringing  
utting in a lath  
er of the house.  
een the parlors  
en arrested for  
were furnished  
pet figured also  
ndma Whaley.  
rlors were the  
ng being in the  
parlor (study)

v. Thomas Whaley

—WHALEY PAPERS

## FOR SALE OR TO LET.

**M**Y TWO STORY BRICK HOUSE, at Old Town, San Diego, commanding a fine view of the Harbor, within 700 feet of the Plaza, on the principal street leading to New Town, having a front of 32 feet, and a depth of 42 ft. with a one-story wing attached 31 x 27 ft., also of brick. Size of lot 150 x 217½ ft. divided into two large corrals, having arched gateways 10 and 12 feet wide, a well of good water and force pump. The buildings are substantial, and with an outlay of \$1500 may be made the finest and most comfortable in the Southern part of the State; suitable for a Hotel, Residence, or Business purposes. I will sell the premises as they now stand, or put the same in complete order and finish, for any responsible party desiring to take a lease.

**THOMAS WHALEY.**

For further particulars, enquire of

**WETMORE & CURTIS,**

Franklin House.

Old Town, San Diego, Oct. 24, 1868. 4w

## TO CAPITALISTS.

**S**TORE WANTED.—I will agree with any person who will erect a building suitable for my business, at New Town, to lease the same upon such terms that will pay fair interest on the amount invested.

**THOMAS WHALEY,**

oc24:2t1

Old Town, West side Plaza.

which led into the hall (the front parlor had none) then through the hall to the front porch and so on into the ball room. All Old Town attended these balls. The stairs led up the back. The present kitchen was then the dining room. The kitchen was a lean-to built on the back porch and connected with the dining room through the window. A Pantry separated the dining room from a large front room which we called the office. Just why I do not know. [The same room was used as the headquarters for General Thomas Sedgewick during the railroad development.] This room has been used for many purposes; sewing room, etc.

"The large room to the north, called the big room by the family, the annex by others, has been used for a number of purposes. It was the County court room in 1869-70, the county records being kept upstairs in the main building. The furniture consisted of a circular railing almost the width of the room, back of which was the chair of the judge on a raised platform. A canopy hung at the back of the chair on the wall. The furniture consisted of chairs and benches. Thomas H. Bush was one of the first judges. I remember seeing the jury locked up in the room after a trial. Political meetings were held here. Later it was used as a court room by Edward H. Burr and Francis Whaley. It also has been used as a billiard room, dairy, kindergarten, Sunday school, store, and residence."

On Nov. 1, 1868, Thomas Whaley leased the second floor of his house and the use of the corral to Thomas W. Tanner for \$20 gold coin, allowing him to take down in the second story twelve feet of studding, commencing at the east brick wall of the house, for the purpose of making an exhibition room, and a portion of the east end railing of the balcony for the purpose of erecting stairs thereto, for theatrical productions.

Following the Tanner troupe's occupancy of the house, Whaley inserted an ad: "To Capitalists: My house for sale." During this period the Board of Trustees met in the court room.

On August 12, 1869, the county leased the building for a court room for two years, at \$65.00 per month. The lease permitted the county the use of the big room, and of the three upstairs rooms for the storage of the county records. The accommodations were the best possible solution to the problems of the evicted county officers. Whaley had put up a dias and railing at the north end of the room. Here the judge used to sit while he held court.

Population conditions at this time were pointing more and more toward definite political rivalry between Old and New Town. Throughout 1869, Old Towners expressed bitter antagonism toward their rivals to the south, the general feeling being that the settlement would soon come to grief, and be abandoned, as was the fate of the settlement in 1850. As New Town became more outspoken in demanding the removal of county offices and records to a central location, definite party politics developed, and the fight became one of Republicans *vs.* Democrats, as well as Old *vs.* New. Many of the residents came originally from the



Above

Below

through the  
Old Town  
ent kitchen  
on the back  
window. A  
n which we  
was used as  
he railroad  
oses; sewing

family, the  
It was the  
ept upstairs  
iling almost  
judge on a  
he wall. The  
was one of  
room after  
as a court  
used as a  
residence."  
of his house  
gold coin,  
of studding,  
purpose of  
ailing of the  
ical produc-

Whaley in-  
this period

court room  
e county the  
ie storage of  
ible solution  
out up a dias  
e used to sit

re and more  
n. Through-  
d their rivals  
would soon  
ttlement in  
the removal  
arty politics  
democrats, as  
lly from the



*Above: A chain link fence gave security against vandals, as the job of restoration got underway.*

—HISTORICAL COLLECTION  
TITLE INSURANCE CO

*Below: Bertram B. Moore, chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee on the restoration, stands in the onetime "Theatre" of the Tunner Troupe.*

—HISTORICAL COLLECTION  
TITLE INSURANCE CO



South, and were Democrats. However, Alonzo Horton, founder of New San Diego, was a staunch Republican, and an aggressive promoter. New Town residents, realizing the changes they wished could best be reached by a change in the local politics, decided to put some Republicans friendly to their interests into county offices, especially the Board of Supervisors. In the election of 1869 the Republican platform was based upon the removal of county offices, records, and business from Old Town to New Town. Old Town displayed much energy in the campaign. Surprising was the victory of the two Republican candidates, Dr. E. D. French and G. W. B. McDonald. The new Democratic supervisor, J. C. Riley, joined the Republicans, making a majority over Thomas P. Slade and John Forster. A young resident of Old Town wrote to the editor of the *Union* saying there were more important things to the county, than a costly, convenient and complete courthouse. He urged that plans be delayed until some improvement was made in roads, harbor and jail. He suggested fireproof safes for the records. The *Bulletin*, rival of the *Union*, answered by denying that the accommodations were ample. Horton then offered to donate Block 212 (in New Town) for court house purposes, and offered his brick hall at Sixth and F Streets, for the records. Thomas Whaley then offered to sell to the county the building then in use, and to let them build a jail on his adjacent land. The board took no action.

The struggle began in earnest when the "South" San Diegans presented a petition for removal of the records. The decision to accede caused excitement and disagreement. The second story of Horton Hall at Sixth and G was set aside, and the county also procured two rooms above Wells Fargo & Co. Express office at Sixth and G for the safe keeping of the records of county, the courts and the supervisors. Also it was declared that after Aug. 1, "All Courts must be held in said Court House." The matter, however, was by no means settled.

#### VIII — UPROAR IN OLD TOWN

One of the main leaders of the Old Town party was County Judge Thomas A. Bush, a colorful figure who is said to have adjourned court occasionally to partake of refreshment at the local saloons. Sheriff James McCoy, Supervisor Slade, and County Clerk George Pendleton made up the team. The feeling was intense, and the *Union* played up the events with a great flourish. Judge Murray Morrison had issued another order "directing the seizure by Sheriff McCoy of Old Town of the Whaley building." In August the Supervisors made arrangements to have the courtroom furniture moved out to Horton Hall, but Judge Bush and Sheriff McCoy blocked the order.

"Judge Bush has issued another order," the *Union* said, "the Sheriff has called out a posse and the deuce is generally to pay." Supervisors tried to meet at Horton Hall, but as George Pendleton was conveniently absent, the Board could not act legally. The Old Towners followed this up by serving a summons on three Supervisors, the ones who had voted for removal, claiming they had failed in their duties to sit as a Board of

RECEIVED  
\$15.00  
PAID

State of Cali  
County of San

having paid to  
dearly granted  
than one year in  
for Three Mont  
in conformity with  
the 8th Secs,

Received  
of Fifteen Dollars  
the Collector and

Opposite page: Court sessions were dull and dry in 1870—until Thomas Whaley came to the rescue!

—WHALEY PAPERS

nder of New  
omoter. New  
t be reached  
Republicans  
he Board of  
m was based  
n Old Town  
campaign.  
es, Dr. E. D.  
ervisor, J. C.  
omas P. Slade  
the editor of  
county, than  
hat plans be  
bor and jail.  
rival of the  
were ample.  
1) for court  
eets, for the  
he building  
The board

Diegans pre-  
on to accede  
Horton Hall  
d two rooms  
for the safe  
rvisors. Also  
held in said  
ed.

ounty Judge  
ourned court  
oons. Sheriff  
ge Pendleton  
played up the  
sued another  
own of the  
ngements to  
l, but Judge

"the Sheriff  
Supervisors  
conveniently  
followed this  
ho had voted  
as a Board of

as Whaley came

-WHALEY PAPERS

Printed and sold by Wm. B. Foster & Co., Reporting and Publishing Office,  
221 Montgomery Street, Montgomery, Ala., Jan. 1890.

# Liquor License.

**\$15.00**

**MONTHLY SALES,  
UNDER \$5,000**

**Third Class.**

State of California,  
County of San Diego.

*San Diego Oct 7th 1890*  
*Thomas L. Whaley.*

having paid to the Tax Collector Fifteen Dollars, License is  
herby granted to sell Spirits and other Liquors, in less quantities  
than one quart in The Court House Building, Old Town.  
for Three Months, from Oct 7th 1890 to Jan 2 7th 1891  
in conformity with the provisions of the Statute in such case made and provided in  
Act 8- Session of 1886.

*L. A. Pendleton* Auditor.  
*J. B. G. Spivack* Deputy  
*Wm. B. Foster* Treasurer

*San Diego Oct 7th 1890*

Received of *Thomas L. Whaley.* the sum  
of Fifteen Dollars for the above License, and also One Dollar for the fee of  
the Collector and Auditor.

*James M. C. Coy.* Collector.

Equalization. Judge Morrison's immediate decree, ordering the removal of the three supervisors plus the cost of damages caused the Supervisors to appeal the judgment to the California Supreme Court. Accepting for the moment the humiliation of defeat, the Supervisors repaired to their old place of meeting, where they sat as a Board of Equalization and prepared the county for the collection of its taxes. Judge Morrison's action was the topic of a mass meeting at Horton's Hall late in August. In a "loudly applauded" address Col. C. A. Jones discussed the unfair proceedings. The decision was that the removal action be ratified and approved; the Supervisors be supported in their court defense, and that S. S. Culverwell, G. D. Carleton, and L. N. English were endorsed for appointments to the vacancies.

The terms of the law provided for the fillings of the vacancies by a special election called by the County Clerk; the *Union*, on Sept. 22, 1870, suggested that the Clerk was *afraid* to call the election. Judge Bush, taking advantage of the confused situation, invoked a section of an old revenue act which would give him the right to appoint supervisors to fill the vacant posts. On Sept. 1 he appointed Charles Thomas, William Flynn and J. S. Manassee, and they were sworn in that same day. Both newspapers immediately voiced disapproval. On Sept. 5 the Board of Supervisors was ordered by Judge Morrison to pay the fees of the attorneys appointed by him to defend the county. These bills, \$400, were allowed. The *Union* protested saying that if Judge Morrison could order this bill to be paid, he could order the Board to pay the bills for any amount, and bankrupt the County at his pleasure.

The battle raged through the courts in late 1870 and early 1871. Carrying on its functions in the face of a general clamor for election of temporary supervisors, the Bush-appointed Board, dominated by partisans of the Old Town party, continued to meet in the Whaley house until the settlement of the case by the Supreme Court, in January, 1871. Thomas Whaley then again offered to sell the buildings in use by the county, and also proposed that the land occupied by the buildings might be used for the site of the county jail. Both petitions were laid over for further consideration. At the January session of the "Bush Board," one of its members, J. S. Manassee, gave notice that a certain structure known as "the jail" be removed from his land. A few days later he offered another lot for a court house and jail; the offer was first accepted but the land had an imperfect title, and acceptance was withdrawn. The board made a temporary arrangement for the County Jail by taking a six months' lease from E. W. Morse on the "Fitch House," paying \$12 a month. Meanwhile, plans were under way in New Town for the erection of a court house building.

The resolution of the "Bush Board" to fix the county seat and offices at Old Town was a bold one, but it was not reached soon enough. Within two weeks, the supreme court blocked the action by ousting the three appointees of Judge Bush, and reinstating Supervisors French, Riley and McDonald. Early in March one of the most active and effective of the Old Town faction, County Clerk George Pendleton, died.

Opposite Left: Parlor

—BERT SHANKLAND

Opposite Right: Parlor—Showing portraits of Anna and Thomas Whaley.

—BERT SHANKLAND



ing the removal  
the Supervisors  
Accepting for  
paired to their  
qualification and  
re Morrison's  
late in August.  
ssed the unfair  
be ratified and  
ifense, and that  
e endorsed for

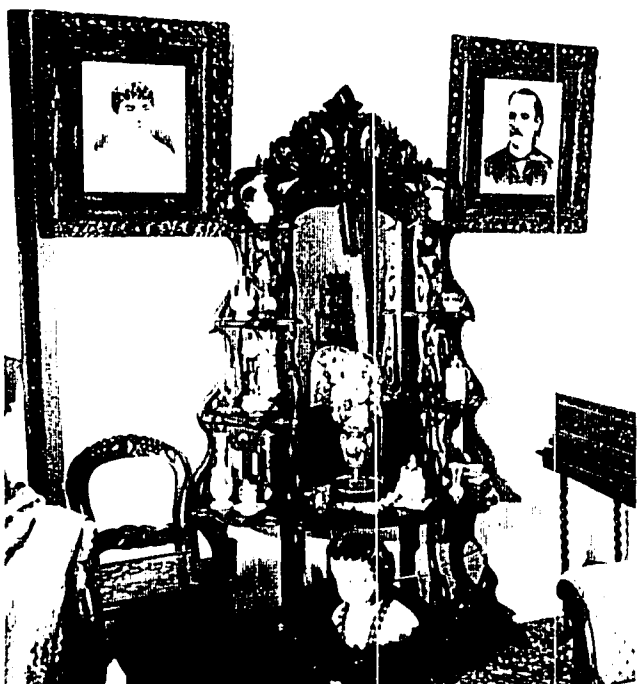
vacancies by a  
Sept. 22, 1870.  
n. Judge Bush,  
ction of an old  
supervisors to  
omas, William  
ame day. Both  
the Board of  
es of the attor-  
lis, \$400, were  
Morrison could  
ay the bills for

nd early 1871.  
for election of  
nated by parti-  
Whaley house  
January, 1871.  
s in use by the  
wildings might  
e laid over for  
Bush Board."  
ertain structure  
ays later he of-  
s first accepted  
as withdrawn.  
y jail by taking  
se," paying \$12  
Town for the

eat and offices  
soon enough.  
by ousting the  
rvisors French,  
citive and effec-  
ndleton, died.

BERT SHANKLAND

idly.  
BERT SHANKLAND



Chalmers Scott's appointment as his successor alarmed the Old Towners; he was an active advocate of the removal.

With threats and complaints the Old Town party publicly announced that any attempts to remove the records would be forcibly resisted by firearms. Judge Bush summoned a posse to aid Sheriff McCoy, a cannon was planted and a guard mounted in front of the jail. The *Union* put it that Old Town had seceded, and "Lieut General Bush," in command of the artillery, threw up earthworks in front of the jail and placed the field piece in position "... and now the immortal Bush seated astride the Plaza cannon, his soul glowing with heroic emotion, exclaims: 'This rock shall fly from its firm base as soon as I!!!' " Notwithstanding this "last ditch stand," County Clerk Scott lost no time. On March 31, in the evening, he and his friends took a couple of express wagons over to the Whaley House, loaded the records in, and carted them over to Sixth and G Streets, where they were stored on the second floor of the Wells Fargo building. The die was cast; the records and archives of San Diego County had passed quietly but effectively from the oldest city in California to its lusty young neighbor.

#### IX — DECLINE — AND RESTORATION

One person who was not pleased with the outcome of the affair was Thomas Whaley. He had been notified by the Supervisors that they would no longer be responsible for the rent on his building after it was vacated. Indignant, he wrote a series of letters to the board demanding rent and repairs on the building, pointing out that the lease between them had not expired, and the county was responsible for the rent until that date. He asked them to review the action. The board paid scant attention to the pleas of Whaley; the matter dragged on with consultations and the tabling of the letters. His demands had little or no effect. The matter of the lease of the Old Court House was indefinitely postponed. The controversy signified the end of Old Town dominance over San Diego political affairs; it was no longer the county seat, and its glory had departed.

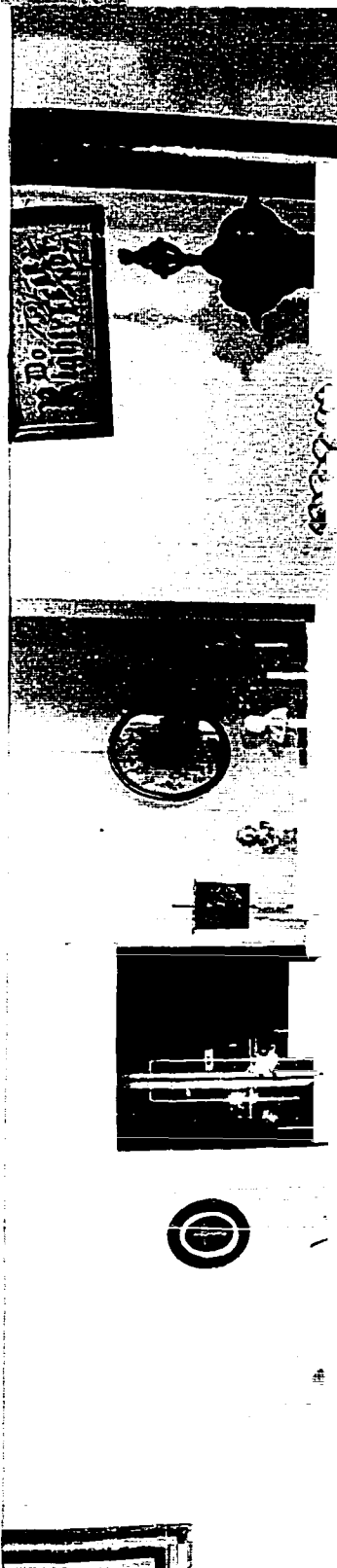
Thomas Whaley and his business partner, Philip Crosthwaite, moved to New Town, feeling it would be the city of the future. Their enterprise did not prosper. Whaley was called back to New York to settle his father's estate, and did not return to San Diego until 1879. He went into the real estate business with E. W. Morse and C. P. Noell, and later with R. H. Dalton. The firm erected the Morse-Whaley-Dalton building, which stood on Fifth Street between D (Broadway) and E; the site is now occupied by Long's Drug Store. Whaley continued with the firm until his retirement in 1888. He served as City Clerk, and as a Notary Public for the County for several years; he passed away Dec. 14, 1890.

The tired old house, many-hued in ruin, stood through the years, slowly rotting, farther from the changing river bed than in its youth. Now it was deserted, its records mostly forgotten, but it spoke of a distinctive people, uniquely classical architecture, and a way of life of a century ago. Even in ruin it was beautiful.

---

*Opposite Page: Parlor and Music Room*

—BERT SHANKLAND





he Old Towners:  
 plicity announced  
 ribly resisted by  
 McCoy, a cannon  
 he Union put it  
 in command of  
 it and placed the  
 seated astride the  
 claims: "This rock  
 standing this "last  
 March 31, in the  
 agons over to the  
 over to Sixth and  
 or of the Wells  
 ives of San Diego  
 ldest city in Cali-

ON

of the affair was  
 advisors that they  
 hiding after it was  
 board demanding  
 the lease between  
 for the rent until  
 board paid scant  
 on with consulta-  
 title or no effect.  
 indefinitely post-  
 i dominance over  
 any seat, and its  
 Schwarte, moved  
 c. Their enterprise  
 ork to settle his  
 879. He went into  
 well, and later with  
 Dalton building,  
 and E; the site is  
 eed with the firm  
 and as a Notary  
 ay Dec. 14, 1890.  
 through the years,  
 than in its youth,  
 but it spoke of a  
 a way of life of a



Admirers of the house borrowed money, and saved it from destruction by a hair's breadth. Its devoted sponsors then went about the heart-breaking task of trying to raise funds to restore and preserve it as a living memento of San Diego's lusty youth.

In 1956 the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Diego agreed to purchase and restore it to its original condition. Just as Thomas Whaley had said a century ago, "My new house, when completed, will be the handsomest, most comfortable and convenient place in town or within 150 miles of here." We think you will agree when you see it.

### THE MEN BEHIND THE SCENES

Just as the Whaley House today may be said to echo to the footsteps of those who wrote San Diego's history a century ago, so in the future will it echo to the footsteps of the little army of devoted men and women who are responsible for its preservation.

Restoration by the State of California of the Wells Fargo Building at Columbia, California, had proved that a tottering, two-story brick structure with no foundation could be saved. Thousands of hours of engineering and historical research went into the project, and work began, in a cautious and deliberate fashion. Operating in a constant danger of structural collapse, the County's workmen provided a sound foundation, and then "scalped" the inside courses of brick from the structure.

Bricks which were sound were retained for exterior patching. Steel reinforcing and concrete were applied from the inside; today the Whaley House is in effect a reinforced concrete structure with a brick outer facing, and will stand for centuries. Rotted and termite-riddled wood was ripped away, and structural members were replaced with new, chemically-treated wood. Mouldings and trim were carefully preserved for future use, and that which was too far gone was faithfully reproduced.

The people of California are indebted to the Board of Supervisors for their vision and sympathy in preserving for posterity an historical landmark of unusual value; may their trail-blazing action be recognized and followed elsewhere. A debt of gratitude is due also to the workmen from the County Operations Department, under the guidance of Rufus Parks, to whom the restoration was not merely another job of construction and repair. As they worked on the venerable structure they came to love the old place, and this attitude is reflected in the character of the work of restoration.

Credit is due as well to the Society of California Pioneers, of San Francisco; they made available the services of Dr. Elliot Evans, their curator, whose extensive knowledge of architecture of Nineteenth Century California was invaluable.

To list those who donated time, effort, furniture and priceless heirlooms would take a book as long as this one. To them we owe our sincere thanks, and we are grateful as well to Leopold Kalish, owner of the property, who was willing to accept the knowledge of having performed a public service, in lieu of the profit which would have come from commercial use of the ground on which the building stands.

JAMES E. READING, President  
Historical Shrine Foundation

April 25, 1960



Top: Study

Bottom: Jenny Li

from destruction  
about the heart-  
preserve it as a

San Diego agreed  
just as Thomas  
completed, will  
place in town or  
you see it.

footsteps of those  
will it echo to the  
responsible for

ling at Columbia,  
with no founda-  
historical research  
the fashion. Operat-  
orkmen provided a  
from the structure.  
Steel reinforcing  
house is in effect a  
stand for centuries.  
ral members were  
rim were carefully  
was faithfully re-

supervisors for their  
ndmark of unusual  
elsewhere. A debt  
ations Department,  
n was not merely  
venerable structure  
n the character of

San Francisco; they  
whose extensive  
s invaluable.  
heirlooms would  
hanks, and we are  
no was willing to  
lieu of the profit  
which the build-

ING, President  
Foundation



*Top: Study*

—BERT SHANKLAND

*Bottom: Jenny Lind Piano 1853*

—BERT SHANKLAND





In case you are not  
 W'aley House, it is  
 the time of Thomas  
 Railway — later the  
 Angeles & San Diego  
 With those train  
 porch of the house,  
 this did the tottering  
 good, either. Perhaps  
 wilder, to the point u  
 by rows of three, with  
 At any rate, it is a

Opposite page: Kitchen



### THE VILLAIN OF THE PIECE?

*In case you are wondering what a locomotive has to do with the story of the Whaley House, it is possible that it had more than a little to do with it. About the time of Thomas Whaley's death, trains of the San Diego & Pacific Beach Railway — later the San Diego, Pacific Beach & La Jolla and finally the Los Angeles & San Diego Beach Railway — began running right in front of the house.*

*With those trains pounding along on their light rails, almost on the front porch of the house, there was quite a bit of vibration. It is not established that this did the tottering brick structure any harm, but it is unlikely that it did it any good, either. Perhaps this was what caused the walls to sag and the cracks to widen, to the point where the original rows of five windows had to be replaced by rows of three, with a lot of added brickwork for strength.*

*At any rate, it is an interesting theory.*

—HISTORICAL COLLECTION, UNION TITLE INSURANCE CO.

*2*

*Opposite page: Kitchen*

—BERT SHANKLAND