

SAN MARINO HISTORY

PASADENA COURIER

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1770

The home of James de Barth Shorb overlooked the rich lands of "San Marino Rancho" which today takes in a great deal of the City of San Marino. Later Henry E. Huntington acquired the property on which stands the Huntington Library, Art Gallery and Botanical Gardens.

1966

a visit to

SAN MARINO

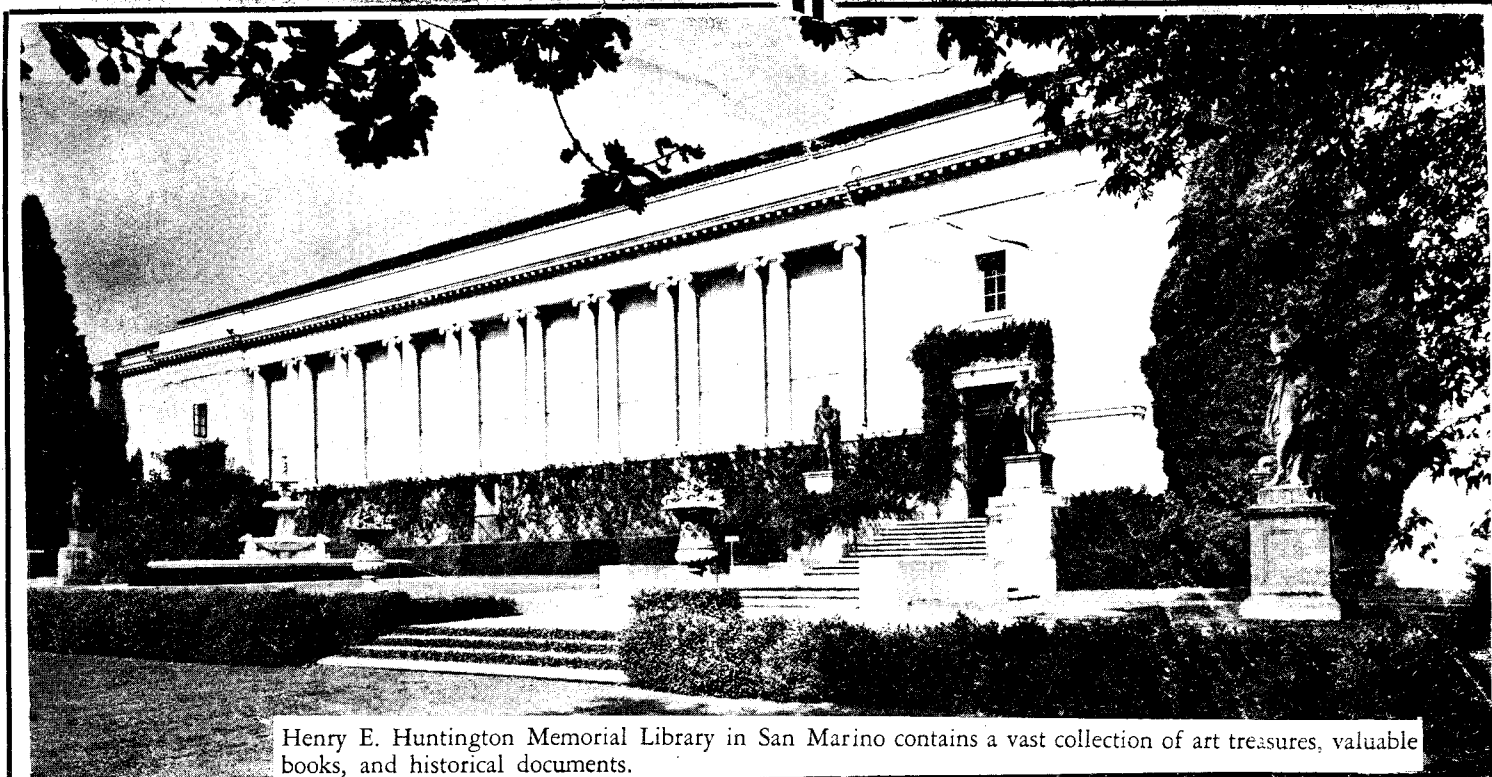
Ever hear of Sonanga? Sounds like some faraway place that you'd find in a travel folder, doesn't it? But actually it's right next door, if you're a Pasadenan. It's even closer if you're a resident of San Marino. As a matter of fact, you're LIVING there right now. Because Sonanga, is what San Marino was once called.

Of course, that was centuries ago, when the Gabrielinos, a branch of the Shoshonean Indians, called it home. These primitive people, attracted by the abundance of wild life and the full streams that rushed down from the Sierra Madres, lived in peace with only the simplest of crafts and tools. It was these same Gabrielinos, who first welcomed the Spaniards when they arrived here in the valley in 1770.

While Spanish Explorer Juan Rodriques Cabrille had discovered Alta California in 1542, when he sailed into what is today San Diego Bay, it was not until the Spring of 1770 that a group of his countrymen, led by Gasper de Portola, Father Junipero Serra and two other priests, passed through what is now San Marino.

So impressed were these adventurers with the serenity and rich abundance that the valley offered, that one year later they founded the mission in nearby San Gabriel. It became the richest of all missions and until the middle of the 19th Century, remained an important influence in the lives of valley inhabitants.

As it grew, a grist mill was desperately needed to process the abundant crops that grew on the vast San Gabriel Mission lands, which comprised what is today San Marino. To accommodate this need, a mill was constructed in about 1890. It was located on a small stream where two small shallow but rugged canyons came together at the foot of the Pasadena



Henry E. Huntington Memorial Library in San Marino contains a vast collection of art treasures, valuable books, and historical documents.

table land. These are the present Los Robles and Mills Canyons.

This two-story mill, located on old Mill Road, was California's first water-powered grist mill. After turning the mill wheel, the water from the stream continued on its way into a natural lake known through the years by a variety of names — Wilson Lake, Lake Vineyard, Mission Lake, Kewen Lake until finally, today it is called LACY PARK.

As urgently as the mill was needed, it unfortunately was not too successful in its operation. The vertical shaft that turned the millstone was so short and the second story of the building so close to the water wheel, that the spray splashed up through the shaft housing into the granary. Result — the newly grown meal

was doused. This brought about the building of a new mill and the original mill was referred to as "El Molino Viejo" — or the OLD MILL.

This OLD MILL, which incidentally, is the oldest building in San Marino, has had an interesting career. Colonel E. J. V. Kewen acquired the land in 1860 and remodeled the building, adding a Southern style portice and made it his home. Later it became a warehouse and even a caddy-house.

In the late twenties, the building was restored to its original beauty by James R. Brehm, who later donated it as a historical monument to the City of San Marino.

During this time, Southern California itself, was undergoing a startling change. From the east-going, fiesta-loving

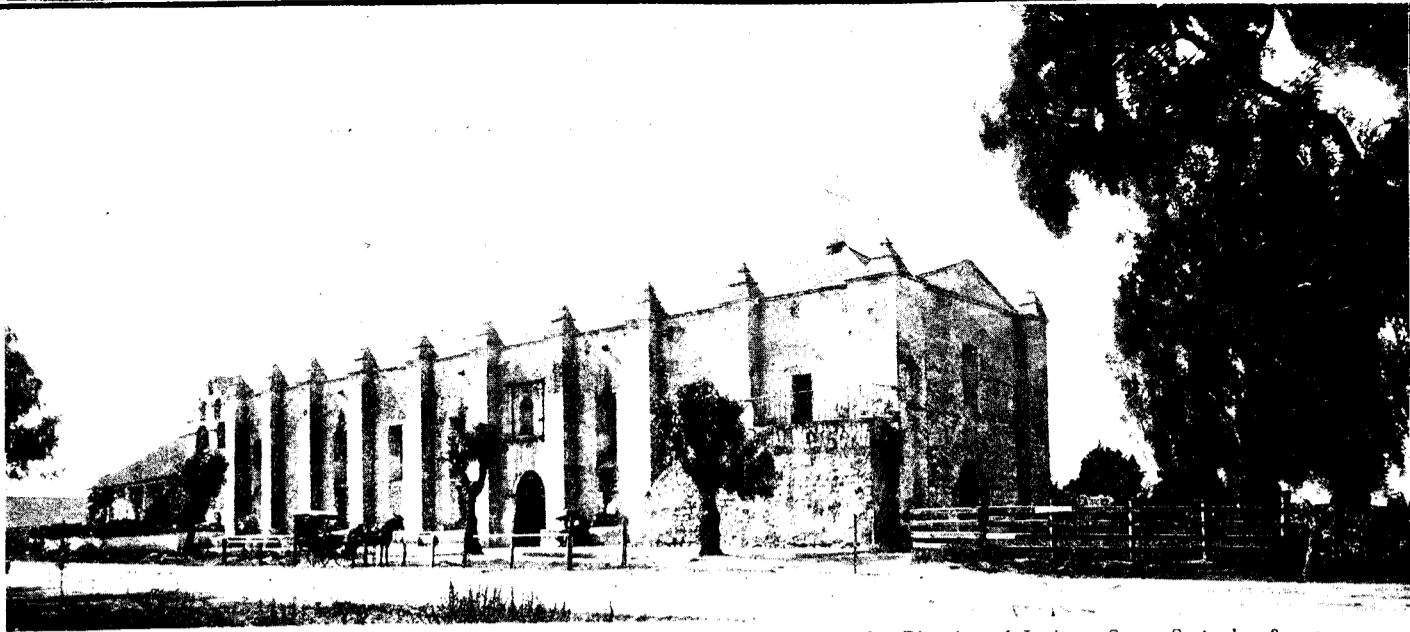
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SAN GABRIEL MISSION—Founded by the Padres Benito Cambon and Angel Somero, under Direction of Junipero Serra, September 8, 1771.

SAN MARINO

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days of the 19th Century, it had been turned into a booming agricultural and residential area. Holders of early land grants either sold or lost most of their property to businessmen, adventurers and land developers who flocked to Southern California from the south and from the east.

Among these early arrivals, was Benjamin Wilson, a Tennessean, who had been actively engaged in trapping in New Mexico from 1833 to 1840. Immediately upon his arrival on the west coast, he began to buy up land. In 1844, he wed Romona Yorba, daughter of Don Bernardo Yorba who owned the famous Rancho Santa Ana. Wilson became known as Don Benito Wilson.

Of this marriage, a daughter was born, and she became the wife of James de Barth Shorb. As a wedding present from her grandmother, the bride received the land which was later to be known as San Marino Rancho.

Following the death of his wife, Romona in 1853, Wilson married Margaret S. Hereford. They had two daughters. One of these two girls became the wife of George S. Patton, San Marino's first mayor, and father of the celebrated World War Two hero, General George S. Patton, Jr.

James de Barth Shorb, who had wed the daughter of Wilson's first marriage, named the

property that his wife had received from her grandmother "San Marino" after the original Shorb estate in Frederick County, Maryland. His grandfather, John Shorb, is said to have given the name "San Marino" to his estate in Maryland, because it had the same acreage as the Republic of San Marino near Italy's Adriatic shore, the oldest independent republic in the world.

As Southern California basked and prospered in the economic boom of the late 1800's, and Pasadena and South Pasadena were both incorporated, San Marino Ranch and the adjoining area continued along in its blissful tranquility.

The three and a half miles that now comprise the City of San Marino consisted of three major ranches. The Shorb, or San Marino Ranch of which the Huntington Estate was a part, covered 750 acres. In addition to its main function as a citrus ranch, it also produced peaches, apricots, alfalfa and grain.

In the southwestern part of the city was the 100-acre Huntington Ranch. This, too, was planted basically for citrus by Colonel Mayberry who purchased the property in 1893. Two years later, soon after the first trees were set out, the big freeze of '95 destroyed practically all of them and they had to be planted over again.

The third of these three big ranches was perhaps the most famous. The Sunnyslope Ranch at the eastern end of the city. L. J. Rose purchased it in 1860 — one year before the start of the Civil War. He worked in-

cessantly against financial odds to build it into a successful operation. By 1880, he had succeeded in creating one of the most complete wineries in Southern California. It produced 500,000 gallons of wine and 125,000 gallons of brandy each year. Rose's Sunnyslope Ranch became famous the world over. Also he was highly successful in establishing a race horse breeding ranch which became famous for its fine horses.

A man who left his stamp on San Marino as much and perhaps more than any other individual, entered the scene in the spring of 1892. He was Henry Edward Huntington. While enroute from the East Coast to make his home in San Francisco, he stopped off at the San Marino Ranch of James de Barth Shorb. Huntington's job was to share the management of the Southern Pacific Railroad with his uncle, Collis P. Huntington, as well as represent the Huntington interests on the west coast.

Impressed was Huntington with the beauty and serenity of the San Marino Ranch, that in 1903 — just ten years before San Marino was to become a City — he purchased the Shorb property. He planted and farmed the land as he built the stately Georgia-Colonial home which later became the Huntington Art Gallery. However, he eventually sold most of the acreage, retaining only 270 acres of which the Huntington Estate consists. By 1920, across from his residence, a library building had been erected and Huntington's already tremendous collection of manuscripts, rare books and priceless art objects were shipped to San Marino from New York.

Meanwhile, progress was on the march. In 1903, the Pacific Electric Railway opened the way from Los Angeles to Monrovia; passing through San Marino along what is now Hun-

tington Boulevard. This convenience made it possible and practical for businessmen to live in the San Gabriel Valley and commute to work in downtown L.A. In turn, it helped to bring about the general division of huge estates in San Marino and the construction of new one and two acre home-sites.

As the land rose in value, with the great influx of people to Southern California, there was considerable pressure brought to bear to break up the old citrus groves and make them into a real estate subdivision. Property in the immediate vicinity of San Marino was suddenly at a premium. But the residents weren't selling. They wanted to preserve its beauty and tranquility and maintain its standards as a high class residential community.

In fact, living was so pleasant in this lovely area that the inhabitants of San Marino would have been perfectly satisfied to continue living under the county government. However, the cities surrounding this choice morsel, eyed it, longingly. Attempts were made by the adjoining cities to lure the resi-



Statue of Father Junipero Serra, who with two other priests, accompanied Gaspar de Portola in 1770, to the San Gabriel Valley, where he later returned to found the San Gabriel Mission.

dents of what is today San Marino, into merging with their communities. But after a friendly meeting with one such delegation, the good people of San Marino decided that not a thing could be gained by such a merger and the group was bid a pleasant but very definite and final goodbye.

With the threat of annexation hovering over them, it was finally decided that the wisest and safest course that residents of San Marino could pursue was to incorporate. This would not only protect them legally

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Wilson Lake, into which flowed the waters of the small stream upon which stood the original Old Mill. Known at different times as Mission Lake, Lake Vineyard, and Kewen Lake, Wilson Lake is today the location of Lacy Park.



A group of early Gabrieleno Indian Women, members of a Shoshonean tribe, who once lived in the area of San Marino, then known as Sonanga.



The original Old Mill, built about 1810, to process the vast crops of the San Gabriel Mission. It is the oldest building in San Marino.

A few of the men prominent in the birth and progress of the City of San Marino.



George S. Patton



Richard H. Lacy



William L. Valentine



William Hertrich



Henry E. Huntington

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but end, once and for all, the possibility of being absorbed and thus lose their identity and individuality.

Such leading citizens as George S. Patton, E. H. Greenendyke, W. L. Valentine, Richard H. Lacy (for whom Lacy Park was later named), E. G.

Hart and William Hertrich together with others, met with H. E. Huntington to discuss the important matter of incorporation. It was definitely decided at this meeting to go ahead with incorporation proceedings.

However, it was required that there must be at least 500 bonafide residents living in the area in order to qualify. A petition was circulated regarding the information and 519 signatures were collected — just enough to get safely under the wire.

On April 25, 1913 — the petition having previously been filed with the Los Angeles

County Board of Supervisors — San Marino became a sixth class city. The original board of trustees was composed of George S. Patton, chairman; E. H. Greenendyke, E. G. Hart, W. L. Valentine and R. H. Lacy. W. B. Reese was clerk; Hugh F. Stewart, treasurer; Thaddeus Lowe, recorder; and Dr. LeMoyné Wills, health officer. S. M. Haskins was named city attorney.

Although he took an active part in incorporating and developing the city and at one time paid nearly 50% of the taxes, H. E. Huntington refused to hold office. The first city

hall was the old Mayberry home which had been moved from up on the hill to the corner of Oak Knoll and Monterey Road. It also served as the first school-house.

At the time of incorporation, incidentally, this property was owned by Huntington and loaned to the city. In 1917, he also gave the city a building site on the southeast corner of San Marino Avenue and Huntington Drive. But it was not until 1922 that the construction of the present City Hall was begun. San Marino Avenue at the time Huntington donated the property, was known as

Olive Avenue.

While the city was still in its swaddling stage and traffic was almost nil and homes scattered, the only police protection was that of a City Marshal, Norbet Murray who held the job by appointment, prided himself on the fact that he never had to make an arrest.

Just one year after San Marino became an incorporated city, its first school building was erected. Named the San Marino School, it was located at the eastern end of the property where the present Huntington School now stands. This

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zoning ordinances, which are efficiently enforced by police power, certain businesses are prohibited, including cocktail bars, second-hand stores, laundromats, drive-in-restaurants, mortuaries, motels and commercial storage warehouses, etc.

San Marino also prohibits under its zoning regulations, markets, service shops, banks, professional offices and small enterprises.

However, strict zoning regulations are in effect in San Marino, in an effort to preserve the single-family residential zoning it has known since its incorporation. Under these same period.

The Art Gallery consists of seven principal galleries and fifteen smaller galleries and halls, in which there are shown approximately 4000 objects of art, including about 65 paintings and tapestries, furniture, rugs, clocks, porcelains and miniatures produced in England and France in the eighteenth century. Virtually all of these were acquired by Huntington between 1910 and 1927.

Principal collection is a representative group of eighteenth-century British paintings, including characteristic works in portraiture and landscape. The most popular paintings include "Sarah Siddons as the Tragic Muse" by Sir John Reynolds, "Pinkie" by Sir Thomas Lawrence, and "The Blue Boy" by Thomas Gainsborough.

Of equal importance to the community's culture and education is the San Marino Public Library which was established in 1932 with a total of 1219 books and 280 library card holders. Today the San Marino Public Library is considered one of the finest in the entire State of California. More than 10,000 residents now hold cards and take advantage of the 57,384 books currently on its crowded shelves.

As an example of San Ma-

rino's growth. Those 122 residences with 519 citizens back in the days of incorporation in 1913, have increased to more than 4,400 homes and a population of about 14,000. There are four attractive business districts conveniently located throughout the City, which provide the essential needs such as apartment houses or any type of multiple-family dwelling, and permits only one resident per lot. Also it is illegal for any resident to take in roomers or boarders.

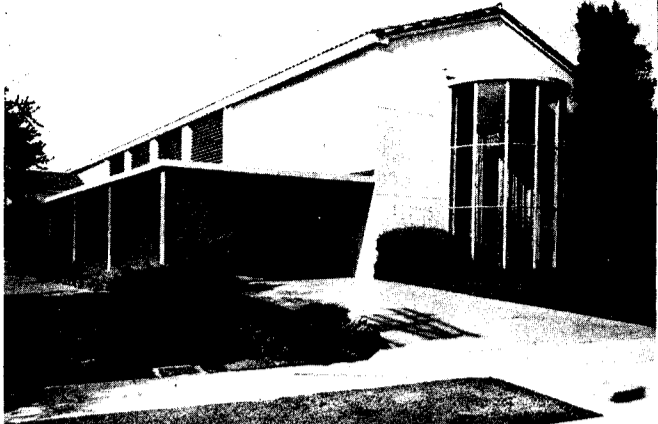
All improvements or repairs made on homes or store buildings must be done by competent City-licensed contractors. This type of work includes that performed by plumbers, electricians, painters, carpenters and roofers.

No trees may be planted, removed or replaced without permission, and for any type of construction, change or removal affecting parkways, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, etc., a permit must first be obtained from the Department of Public Works.

As for that one man police department, maintained by City Marshall Murray back in the 'teens, San Marino's highly trained and very capable Police Department is headed by Police Chief James Moore, two Lieutenants and five Sergeants. The department maintains a patrol of all streets on a 24-hour basis, residential and business district checking at all hours.

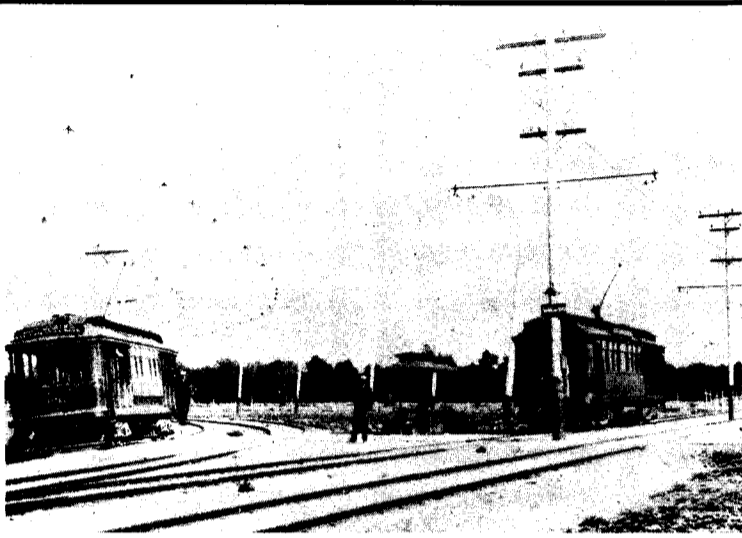
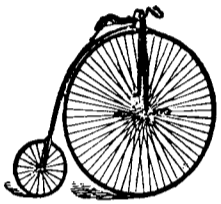
San Marino's Fire Department with Thomas Almond as its Fire Chief, provides fire protection for its more than 4400 homes and business houses, valued at more than \$180,000,000 in addition to the commer-

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San Marino Public Library

San Marino Avenue and Huntington Drive in 1912.



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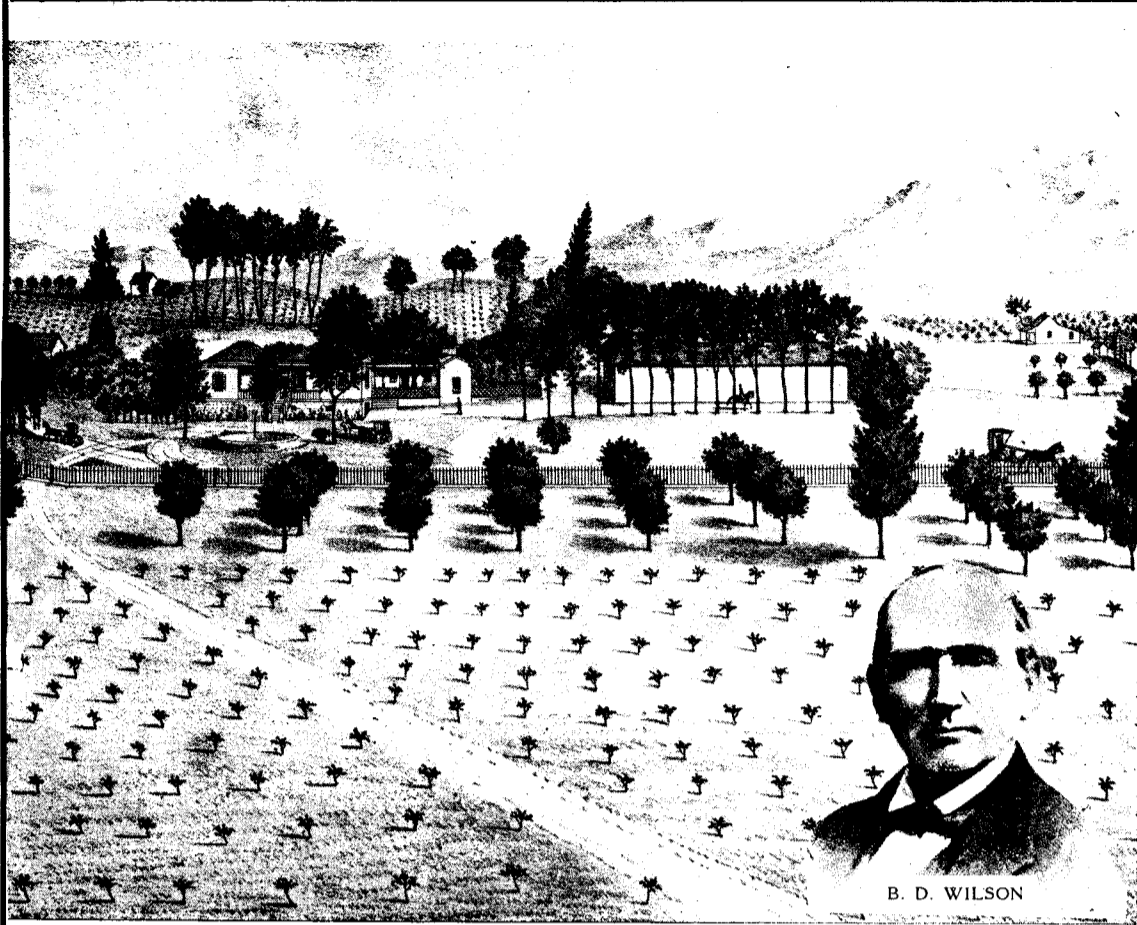
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Don Benito built a home in the San Gabriel Valley on a site which is now a part of the city of San Marino.

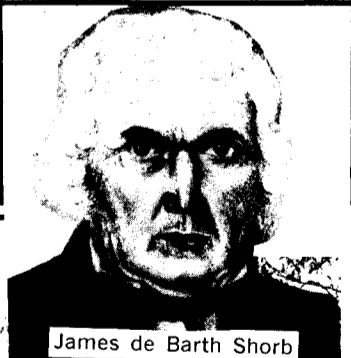


Henry Edward Huntington

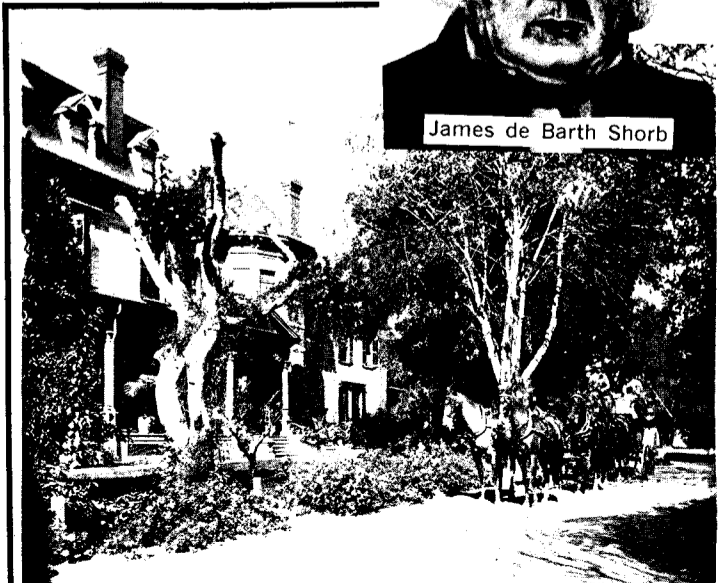
SAN MARINO

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cial districts and public buildings. With 2 engine companies on duty on a 24-hour basis, San Marino property owners enjoy the benefit of favorable fire insurance rates due to the high degree of efficiency and fire fighting training of this department.



James de Barth Shorb



COACHING PARTY AT THE SHORB RESIDENCE

Other current City of San Marino Officials include Mayor Harry W. Hitchcock; Councilmen Allen Lama, Vice Mayor; T. S. Burnett, W. L. Chadwick and Maurice Jones, Jr. City Manager is Richard Malcolm, City Treasurer Arthur W. Oliver, City Clerk E. C. Russell. Paul Dobbins is Park Supervisor; June Bayless, Librarian and Red Shettler, Department of Public Works. Charles R. Martin is City Attorney.

Yes, fifty-three years IS a long time. Two world wars have been fought and settled during this span. The airplane, television, rocket ships and trips through outer space and to the moon, as well as giant steps in science, technology, medicine and industry have all been accomplished since San Marino was first incorporated. But for all its advancement and keeping pace with its neighbors as well as the entire world, the City of San Marino still bears traces of the beauty and serenity that it knew centuries ago when the Shoshoneans called it "Sonanga."

stuff.. From Page 12

drawer and takes out Mr. Prizzy's long, curly, black whip — and everybody cheers.

"Hooray for Fenwick — a man of the people!" they yell because they know that Fenwick is going to roll up that whip and tuck it away in the bottom of the broom closet. As a matter of fact, they are very surprised when Fenwick suddenly cracks the whip over their heads very loud and says, "From now on you will call me MISTER Fenwick — and there will be only one coffee break a day — and only one half hour for lunch — and anybody I see stalling on the job will get a demerit — and six demerits — and you will no longer have a job to stall on! Yes sir, you will think that Mr. Prizzy was a kind hearted Sunday school teacher compared to me. Now back to your desks — I have spoken!"

* * * * *

Which proves that a sheep is very easy for other sheep to get along with as long as he is one of them — but turn him into a watchdog — and he will suddenly not be a sheep anymore!



The way some people drive, you'd think they owned their cars . . .

* * * * *

D'ja hear about the spinster who complained to the psychiatrist that every night she dreamed a handsome young man tiptoed into her room and kissed her. "So you want me to stop you from dreaming that this young man kisses you?" guessed the psychiatrist. "Of course not," replied the spinster indignantly. "I just want you to make him stop slamming the door when he leaves."



The Mayberry Home, at Oak Knoll and Monterey Road, was San Marino's first City Hall, as well as its first school house.



San Marino's City Hall



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