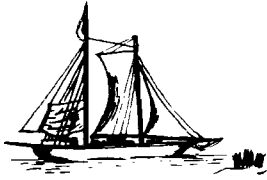


SAN JOAQUIN HISTORIAN



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



VOLUME XIII

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1977

NUMBER 4

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE WOODBIDGE, CALIFORNIA

By Celia Adams Myers

(Continued from the July-September 1977 Issue)

EDITOR'S NOTE:

As a follow-up to Mrs. Celia Myers' three-part history of the San Joaquin Valley College in Woodbridge we present in this issue excerpts from the reports of the presidents of the institution, miscellaneous entries from the college catalogs, a complete list of graduates who were granted their Bachelor of Arts degree by the college, as well as the annual index covering the last four issues of the HISTORIAN (January through December, 1977).

The following quotations, taken from a number of annual reports between 1884 and 1890, are interesting not only for

their content but for their form and tone as well. It was through these reports that each of the succeeding presidents of the ill-fated college kept the Board of Trustees officially informed concerning the operation of the school, its shortcomings and its problems--and the suggested solutions to both of the latter. Two recurring themes run through these reports almost from the very beginning--the need for a larger enrollment and the need for greater financial support--and in the end it was these two basic needs which forced the closing of the college.



ANOTHER VIEW OF THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE in Woodbridge. The size of the trees on the school grounds

would indicate that this photograph was probably taken sometime in the late 1890's.

Courtesy of the San Joaquin County Historical Museum.

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**EXCERPTS FROM THE ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE
PRESIDENTS TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES,
SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE**

May 1, 1884

Dear Brethren:

Through the abundant mercy of God, we are permitted to present to you today this, the 5th annual report of the condition and prospects of the San Joaquin Valley College.

We are pleased to report a year of continued prosperity, in which the most pleasant relations have existed among the Faculty, the students and the patrons. Sickness has not materially interfered with our work and death has called away but one of our number. The department of the students has been high, and with a few exceptions we report them attentive and studious. There were three suspensions during the first term and one during the second. Unanimity of council has characterized all the meetings of the Faculty. The teachers in all the Departments have been punctual and faithful to their trusts and are hereby recommended to you for re-election.

The patronage of the college has gradually increased. Our enrollment in all departments for this year is 137 against 102 for last year

There are many facilities and appliances necessary to successful college work which we do not possess. There are yet too many duties resting upon a few. Never before have we needed money as we need it now. And we must have it. Faint heart, narrow legislation, scanty expenditures of funds, mean more than 40 years in the wilderness. They mean a crippled, embarrassed, short-lived institution. There is but one way to accomplish this, and that is for everyone to put his own shoulder to the wheel and push until it moves. No matter what another may say or do, every true friend of the college and every wise man in the Church must do this until we would succeed. We are not sufficiently aroused to the exigencies of the case. We do not realize what a power for good we have in this college. I tell you, my Brethren, we, the California Conference, cannot get along without it. Our Church work demands it of us, our own children demand it of us

May 28, 1885

. . . The number of students enrolled during the year [just concluded] in the college proper was 76, in all departments 131, a decrease in the regular attendance of 6 This decrease has been owing partially to the dull wheat market, but far more to the want of a hearty conference cooperation, a thorough canvas for students and the limited amount of advertizing. It is a fact worthy of our attention that our Conference membership does not patronize the college as it ought. Parents of means send their children to State Normal, to some private schools or allow them to learn a trade, when the best interest of the child and the parent and the Church points to S.J.V.C. as the place for preparation for usefulness. Another fact still more vital should be noticed here. The County of San Joaquin has not as yet recognized S.J.V.C. as a place especially adapted for the higher instruction of her children. If I mistake not, this is of prime importance to us. We must, if we would succeed, interest the people of the county in our college. They must be made to see that here is the place for their sons and daughters to be educated. Steps should be taken by this Board to enlist the prominent men of the county in this college

As a rule the conduct of our students has been good. Honest work and faithful attendance is reported in all departments. We have noticed a tendency upon the part of some to become somewhat careless and indifferent in their studies and coarse in their conduct, while a very few have done but little good. So far as possible we have

endeavored to check and control this latter element. We have found great difficulty, however, in some cases on account of the irregular system of boarding, the popularity of the skating rink [opened that school year in town], and the great amount of time devoted to classroom duties . . .

The health of both teachers and students has been good during the entire year. While "colds" have been unusually common, no serious illness has occurred and the attendance has been but slightly affected on this account. We believe the healthfulness of this locality should be made prominent by all those recommending parents to the patronage of our college

As regards our future it is difficult to judge. Our past has been successful almost without precedent considering our circumstances. Our future depends in great measure upon wise legislation and the hearty cooperation of the community at large. The citizens of Woodbridge should feel a warm interest in this college and if there is anything necessary to be done to further secure this cooperation, such should be done immediately. The question should not be one of retrenchment so much as advancement. Our present teaching force, our present grade of instruction, our present facilities cannot be lessened without great harm; but rather all these should be increased. Two ways are open for this. One is an increase of attendance. The other an increase of endowment. The number of young people within a radius of 20 miles of Woodbridge in need of an education and who if properly approached would take a year or more in college is very large indeed. Some of them are drawn off to other schools. Many of them attend no school But more than all things else we need an endowment sufficiently large to meet all current expenses Cannot the Church membership be made to take sufficient interest to raise the \$10,000 proposed for a Conference Chair [a professorship at the college, paid for through the income from an endowment]? Can not the business men of the county be induced to endow a chair in behalf of the college? If these two things were accomplished we would be in a measure in a condition to hope for a continuous prosperity.

In view of our past record, our present situation and our future needs allow us to suggest the following items for your consideration:

- 1--The employment of an agent who shall work especially for college endowment.
- 2--The thorough canvas of so much of the state as possible by the faculty during summer vacation and the necessary funds by which this canvas may be made.
- 3--The erection of a Boarding Hall upon the college grounds.
- 4--The adjustment of the Boarding facilities [so] that each boarding student shall be under the practical control of the faculty.
- 5--The advertizement of the college in some of the prominent journals in the state.

May 23, 1887

. . . Financially the progress this year has been backward. The Committee of Finance has done nothing. No agent has been employed and consequently but little money outside of tuition and interest on endowment notes has been secured. The attendance has been far below the number necessary to pay the actual expenses of the college. The result of all which is that the institution has fallen behind some \$1700 this year.

The condition of the college we think a precarious one. It has run itself along as it can and unless the Board and the Conference take vigorous interest in its future direction the sooner it is closed the better. These lines we write after

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Careful study and with a heavy heart. But we are at a crisis which nothing but genuine church devotion and personal endeavor and personal faith upon the part of the directors of its interests can save it. The United Brethren Church in California must be made to feel the worth of this college and rally quickly to its support if they wish it to live Our debt is upward of \$3500--and no effort made to pay it. The monied men of the community have lost confidence in the Church so far as their desire to support the college is concerned. The teachers are discouraged and are borrowing money to pay their living expenses The interest upon the part of the managers has been such for the past 12 months that the call meeting of last November adjourned without a quorum and the Executive Board have held but few sessions. Several influential members of the Board refuse to serve under the present circumstance. . . .

May-- 1890

Dear Brethren:

With this week's work we complete the 11th year of this institution--the 7th year of college work. The year has been one of embarrassment and discouragement in many particulars. . . . The expectations of a year ago have not been realized. The work laid out at that time in the way of aggressive movement has not been done. The hearty cooperation of many who should be deeply interested has been wanting. The enrollment of each succeeding term has been slightly less than its immediate predecessor until the close of their term finds but 35 regular students in attendance. Vague rumors of dissatisfaction and disinterest of management and the likelihood of the institution closing at the end of this school year have come to our ears the tuition has come more than a thousand dollars short of paying the salaries of the professors The question naturally arises in view of these facts "What shall we do?" I answer we must do one of two things. Close the school, surrender our rights to the property, settle up our accounts and give up the educational work in the state, or we must go down into our pockets and get the members of this Church and the people of this community to go down into their pockets and put the institution in a financial condition that will restore public confidence and public patronage. . . . There is, in my opinion, no middle ground here We must wake up. The faculty, Board, Conference, Church must do something positive, something aggressive

NOTEWORTHY INSTRUCTORS AND/OR STUDENTS OF THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE

Cyrus B. Newton, instructor in Elocution--later served as a member of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors.

W. J. Ham, last president of the College, remained in the area. He developed land along Ham Lane (named for him), planting it to grapes and trees. The family home was in the vicinity of the present Zion Reformed Church. He passed away in Lodi in 1910.

Mark Keppel, professor of Natural Science at the College and an 1892 graduate of it, served later as the superintendent of the Los Angeles County schools.

John Francis, also an 1892 graduate and then principal of the College's Business Department, pioneered the night school program in Stockton schools, founded the Polytechnic high school system, and later served as the superintendent of the Los Angeles City Schools. One of the schools was named for him.

Alfred L. Cowell, also an 1892 graduate, served as president of the Board of Trustees of the S. J. V. C. the last several years of its operation. He then became the

vice-principal of Lodi High School, and later served as editor of the **Modesto News**.

Charles Palmer was an attorney in Lodi. Later he served as the District Attorney of San Luis Obispo County.

Robert L. Beardslee, a Stockton attorney, was elected to the California Assembly and served as its Speaker.

Marion DeVries practiced law in Stockton until his election to the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C. He later served as Chief Justice of the U. S. Court of Appeals.

Many of the graduates went into the teaching profession. Two outstanding ones were Charles Bryant and John Willms. Both taught many years and also served many years as elementary school principals in San Joaquin County.

BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREES GRANTED 1885-1897

The following is a list of the College graduates from 1885 through 1897. This does not include the graduates of the Business School or the Teachers' Course.

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1885--W. O. Lowe | 1890--C. L. Bryant |
| J. A. Snell | Mary Corell |
| E. R. Thompson | Helen Corell |
| A. C. White | L. Lou H. Francis |
| 1886--Marion DeVries | J. T. Huron |
| Lee DeVries | Eila Jahant |
| Gussie Folger | Jennie Newton |
| S.E.R. Fowle | Susie Plummer |
| A. C. Glenn | 1891--R. L. Beardslee |
| Alice Thompson | W. L. Blodgett |
| 1887--Edith Field | J. H. Willms |
| Mattie Folger | 1892--A. L. Cowell |
| Chas. A. Palmer | J. H. Francis |
| A. L. Walker | Mark Keppel |
| 1888--Mary Morey (Bentley) | 1893--Amy Keen |
| Camden Keen | Lorah Boyce |
| Ella Northrup | Estella Smith |
| W. S. Snedigar | Frank W. Beckman |
| 1889--B. C. Bentley | 1894--W. G. Fischer |
| Edith McMurtry | Chas. Bissett |
| Jennie Jahant | Mabel McMurtry |
| S. N. McBride | 1895--Ethel Mae Schomp |
| Emma Smith | Lizzie Nicewonger |
| Mamie Snedigar | Walter Garrison |
| John H. Thompson | 1896--Grant Overholzer |
| | Elsie Wilkinson |
| | Clarence T. Williams |
| | 1897--Maude King |

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS FROM COLLEGE CATALOGS

San Joaquin Valley College Catalog published spring 1886:

"Students will be graded on each recitation. A perfect grade is 100. At the close of each term, oral and written examinations will be held. The average of the sum of the daily grades and the examination grade will represent the student's standing. Students receiving such an average below 75, will not be allowed to enter a more advanced class until such standing shall have been received. Any student absenting himself from the regular examination will be required to submit to a private examination or continue the study at the discretion of the Faculty."

"Lectures by the leading educators and public speakers of the State will be delivered before the students from time

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to time. The following Course of Lectures was delivered in the College Hall during the present year:

- Rev. E. S. Chapman, D.D., San Francisco--'Serious and Humorous Reminiscence of Five Years in Washington City.'
- Rev. Dr. Lane, Lodi--'Cranks.'
- Rev. A. J. Frost, D.D., Sacramento--'Liars.'
- Adeley M. Cummings, Esq., San Francisco--'The Study of Man.'
- Hon. Chas. A. Sumner, San Francisco--'Scenes and Impressions Abroad.'

"The moral sentiment of Woodbridge is not excelled by any community in the State. Here the student may pursue his studies without any of the annoyances, and enticing pleasures so likely to ensnare the young. Four religious denominations hold services in the town, and the young are invited to all their exercises. There are also two flourishing Sabbath Schools to which the students are cordially welcomed."

Number of students enrolled in all departments--135. Tallest student, 6 feet, 3½ inches; shortest student, 4 feet, 9½ inches; oldest student, 25 years; youngest student, 14 years; heaviest student, weighs 208, lightest, 79½. Largest hat, 7¾; smallest hat, 6-5/8; largest boot, No. 9; smallest boot, No. 1. Average weight, 140 pounds; average age, 19 years.

Per cent of religious, 45
Per cent of politics: Republican 46½ per cent, Democrat 33½ per cent. Prohibition 20 per cent.

Catalog published spring 1894

San Joaquin Valley College owes its existence to the fortunate meeting of two factors: First the desire of the citizens in the vicinity of Woodbridge for better school advantages, and second, the need of the California Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ for an institution of higher education. The first factor manifested itself in the public-spirited citizens purchasing seven acres of land in the suburbs of Woodbridge and erecting a commodious college building. The property was deeded to an association known as the San Joaquin Valley College Association, on the condition that a school of the grade of a high school be maintained. The said corporation is composed of members nominated by the California Annual Conference of the United Brethren in Christ . . . The original intention of the founders was to make the institution a preparatory school for the State University, but the growth of the school was so rapid and the location so healthy and central, that the managers thought it best to establish a central college for the youth of California, and consequently the courses of study were enlarged to full courses, covering three years of preparatory work. On the 13th of May, 1883, the name of the institution was changed from Woodbridge Seminary (by which it had previously been known) to San Joaquin Valley College.

[The Boarding Hall is] a substantial and commodious building of two stories besides the basement used for a spacious dining-room and heating purposes. This supplies a large number of good-sized, well-furnished rooms, and is designed especially for a home for young ladies. It contains also a reading-room and a library of over a thousand choice volumes, and the beautiful hall of the Zetegathean Literary Society. A building more handsome, healthful and desirable could not easily be found.

The purpose of the institution is to afford instruction in the Latin and Modern Languages, Sciences, Mathematics, History and Fine Arts, to give special attention to all branches belonging to a Complete Business Course, and those necessary for efficient teaching in the public and advanced schools of the State. It is the aim, moreover, to develop the highest and noblest character, to inculcate precepts and principles of Christian morality, and to hold before the students the worthiest ideas of life and citizenship.

Splendid boarding and rooms, including fuel, light, etc., are furnished at the boarding halls for \$3.85 to \$4.00 per week. Boarding, without rooms, can be had for \$3.00 per week . . . If notice is given to any member of the faculty, stating the time of the student's arrival, he will be met at the station and taken at once to his future home.

Many parents find it to their advantage to locate at Woodbridge for the purpose of educating their children. Houses can usually be had at very reasonable rates. The public schools of the village also are second to none in the State and offer excellent privileges to those children of a family that are too young to enter college.

A well-selected library is open for the use and benefit of students. On its table are leading magazines and papers of the day, which are especially profitable for literary and rhetorical work.



WOODBRIDGE MONUMENT (California Historical Landmark No. 520) marking the site of the United Brethren institution. The plaque was dedicated in May, 1956, by the State Park Commission and the Northern San Joaquin County Historical Society.

With this issue we complete five years of publication of the SAN JOAQUIN HISTORIAN in its commercially-printed format. We would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank our fellow-member Don Smith, owner of the printing firm, LINDEN PUBLICATIONS, and his staff for the excellent service they have given us. And our special thanks goes to staff member Dale Thomas for his continued personal interest and untiring assistance to us in the preparation of each issue.

THE EDITOR

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The Quarterly of the
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
 Published Four Times Each Year
 P.O. Box 21, Lodi, California 95240

Editor: Robert Bonta

The San Joaquin County Historical Society, a non-profit corporation, meets the fourth Monday of each month except for July and August. Annual memberships are: Individual - \$5.00, Corporate - \$8.00, and Junior - \$1.00, and include a subscription to the **San Joaquin Historian**. Non-members may purchase individual copies from the Society's Secretary at \$1.00 per copy. The Society also operates the San Joaquin County Historical Museum at Micke Grove. Persons wishing to donate items should contact the Museum Director.

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