

The Novato Historian

The Quarterly Publication of the Novato Historical Guild and the Novato History Museum

FEATURE SECTION
Contents © 2003 Novato Historical Guild, Inc.

March 2003

Preserving Novato's History

Vol. 27, No. 1

Novato One Hundred, Ten Years Ago

Excerpted from *Marin Journal*, June 1893

New Novato, one of the youngest towns of Marin, (its name derived from the Latin novus "new"), has been making rapid strides in prosperity within the past year. It is looking its fairest just now, and it recalls to mind Whittier's description of Maryland's most beautiful town:

*Round about them orchards
sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited
deep,
Fair as the garden of the Lord.*

When approaching Novato from the south by train the first things which attract attention are the thrifty fruit orchards and carefully kept lawns bordered with roses in endless profusion in front of the elegant residences of Surveyor General Reichert and D. L. Hayden, the latter having placed his house on an eminence from which may be had a view of the entire valley in

every direction with the majestic coast range in the background, the bay in front, and the Contra Costa hills in the distance. From the verandah can be seen the Stockton and Petaluma steamers crossing the bay and trains of cars traversing three different railroads. On a still higher point, Mr. Hayden has constructed a reservoir of concrete, having a capacity of fifty thousand gallons. The water for domestic and irrigation purposes is forced up from the valley below. Still higher up on the summit are beautiful recreation grounds reserved for public use by the Novato Home and Farm Co.

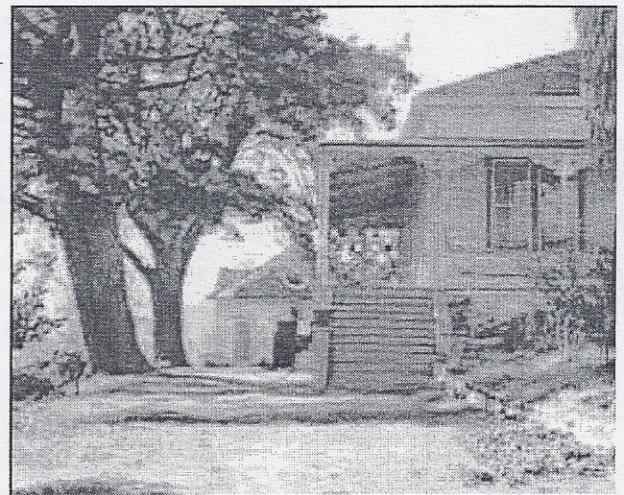
Theodore Reichert has been making numerous improvements on his place,

Items of Interest Concerning This Flourishing Place.

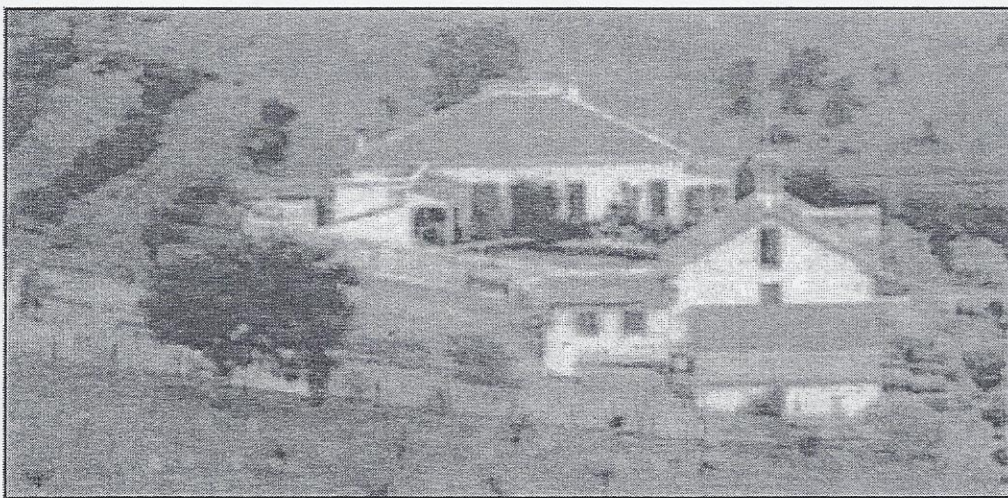
Many Signs of Prosperity.

Beautiful Homes—
Flourishing Orchards

Thrifty Farms—
Prosperous Dairys—Social News.



Reichert's, looking up the driveway. Stairs lead to the front door, which faced Lamont Avenue



Reichert's "Illawarra Villa". The two story building with cupola is the barn. View is looking north from hilltop of Hayden property.

until he has converted "Illawarra Villa" into a sort of terrestrial paradise. Among the pets in his menagerie are a tame coon and a New Zealand dodo.

Judge Haven's old residence, destroyed sometime since by fire, has been replaced by the "Standish," a commodious two story structure, surrounded by a handsome lawn and the prettiest of flower gardens, the choicest of rose plants beginning to put forth large blossoms when scarcely an inch above the ground. The fairy which

continued on pg F2, see Novato

Novato

continued from page F1

produces all of these transformations is the gracious water, to obtain an abundant supply of which Judge H. keeps his pumping apparatus going night and day if necessary.

The town site is dotted all over with trim cottages, and a number of new places of business have been opened up on the principal street. Reichert Avenue has been laid out with a double carriage way, the two drives being separated by a row of handsome poplars.

A mile from the station, in the direction of Petaluma, the new residence of Hon. J. W. Atherton looms up conspicuously. In building it every provision having been made for home comfort and the dispensing of a generous hospitality.

In the old town the Catholic residents of Novato and Olema have erected next to the church an elegant and spacious residence for their pastor, Rev. Father O'Neil.

Among the most interesting features of Novato valley is the famous fruit ranch of Senator De Long, one of the largest orchards in the world, embracing over three hundred acres in one tract, and containing nearly forty thousand fruit trees. Of this number, 25,000 are apple, 50,000 peach, 35,000 pear, and 3000 apricot. There will be an immense yield of apples, peaches and pears from this orchard during the present season. The only falling off will be in apricots, which is due to the backwardness of the seasons. Owing to the prolific bearing of the peach trees, workmen are now busily at work thinning out the fruit, leaving only a single peach to mature in a cluster of half a dozen, thereby greatly improving the quality and size of the same. Thanks to providence, the fruit pests have let the orchard alone this season. Besides supplying local canneries the fruit from the De Long ranch every year

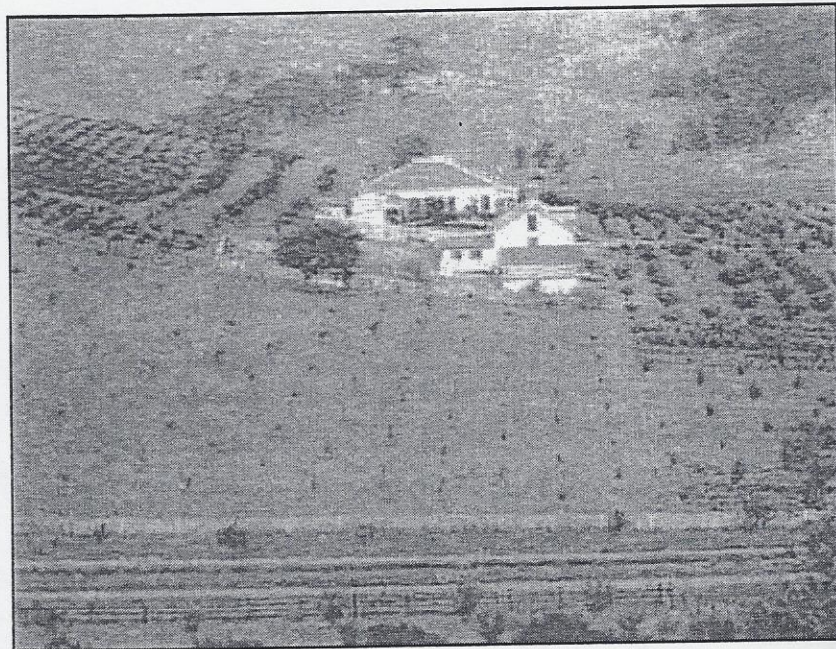
finds its way to all quarters of the globe. Australia alone furnishing a standing order for 15,000 boxes of apples.

Through the kindness of foreman G. W. Oliver, our reporter saw in active operation the machinery of the California Creamery Co. in Novato. The machinery and pumping apparatus are driven by steam power. Two Alexander separators which remove the cream from the milk were making 6000 revolutions per minute. The two churns used in butter making have a capacity of 400 gallons each. During the month of May, the average receipts of milk daily amounted to 23,000 lbs. The daily product of the creamery for the same period has been 1,200 pounds of butter and 2,000 pounds of cheese. The firm ships butter and cheese to Los Angeles,



The Novato French Cheese Co., formerly the California Creamery Co. is in the foreground. The row of olive trees, leading up the hill, in the center of the photograph are on Theodore Reicherts' property and are standing to this day. The Daniel Hayden residence is visible at the top of the hill in the distance.

San Diego, Santa Barbara, San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, and other principal towns of the coast. Several carloads have found a market in Elgin, Ills. Twenty five thousand pounds of cheese are in the storage room awaiting shipment. Three hundred swine subsist on the refuse whey and buttermilk. The creamery



Reichert Avenue, "laid out with a double carriage way" is in foreground. Although still divided, the "handsome row of poplars" was removed by the city.

continued on page F3, see Novato

Novato

continued from page F2

total of 113 children in the district, 90 of whom draw public money. All of the young people who have gone out from the Novato public

just graduated from the Denman grammar school, Jos. Faggiano is taking lessons from Mr. Libby, master mechanic and builder. Flora Kynoch has graduated from the Petaluma grammar school.



"The Largest Orchard in the World". DeLong mansion is atop knoll, left of center

apparatus embraces all the latest improvements and the management are giving entire satisfaction to their patrons. Six other creameries in California and Nevada are owned and operated by the same corporation. The general managers are Hegler and Johnson of San Francisco.

school are making good records for themselves. Clarence Atherton is in the employ of one of the leading business houses on Battery Street, San Francisco, Eugene Connell is bookkeeper for a firm in Port Costa, George De Long is entering upon his second year at Stanford University, Lewis Haven is with the well known firm of Lilienthal & Co., San Francisco, Hugh Gallagher is about to graduate from one of the leading educational institutions of Oakland, Acton Haven is at Heald's Business College, Wilbur is a leader in the working department of the home ranch, Troy Brown is chief engineer at the Deer Island Creamery, Florence De Long has

The school population of Novato is steadily increasing, so that now the district has two public schools in place of one heretofore. Both schools are prospering under the capable management of Miss Peters and Miss Collins. The recent enumeration made by Census Marshal Fred Sweetser shows a

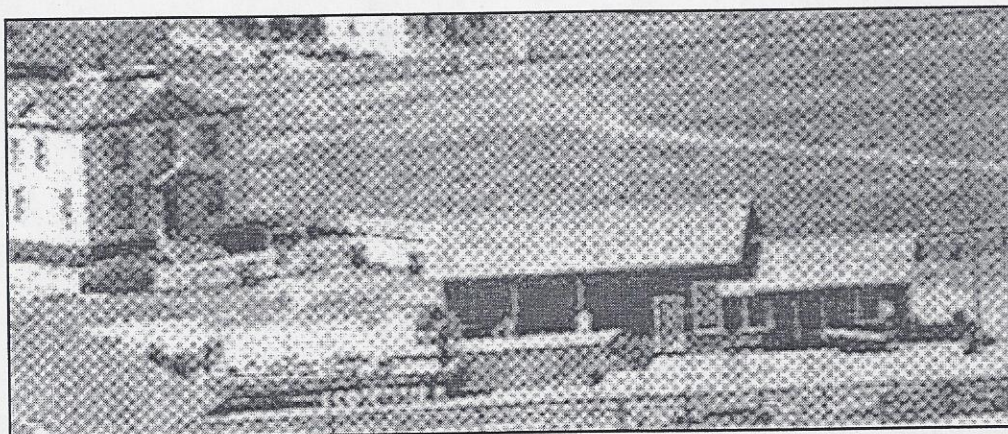
The schooner, Solferino is tied up at the Novato landing, having made her last voyage under Captain Frank. One day the captain after dining with some friends in Novato, lay down to rest and wakened not again. The schooner California, Capt. Leon, replaces the Solferino, making weekly trading trips between Novato and the city.

Mr. J. B. Burdell, manager of the Burdell ranch, has established himself in a delightful home on the estate and is enjoying life greatly with his accomplished young wife (nee, Jossie Sweetser). Dr. Burdell left Novato last week to join his family in Europe. His daughter, Mabel, aged 18, has entered upon a course of study in one of the leading educational establishments of Berlin.

Hon. J. J. Dunn of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, is recuperating his health at the residence of Rev. Father O'Neil in Novato. Gilbert McDonald, formerly of this place, is manager of the race track in Petaluma. His daughter, Lillie is married to the manager of Hon. J. G. Fair's ranch in Sonoma county. [Gilbert and his brother Daniel, owned two mercantile stores. They sold out to A.D. Scott.] James Nugent, the famous exterminator of wild animals, is now employed as gardener and general utility man on the premises of the Rev. Father O'Neil. Ex-Governor Machin has been re-employed as agent of the Novato Home and Farm Co., and has already been instrumental in effecting a dozen or more sales of landed property. The company could not have made choice of a more capable man for the position.

On Sunday last, high mass was celebrated at the church of Our

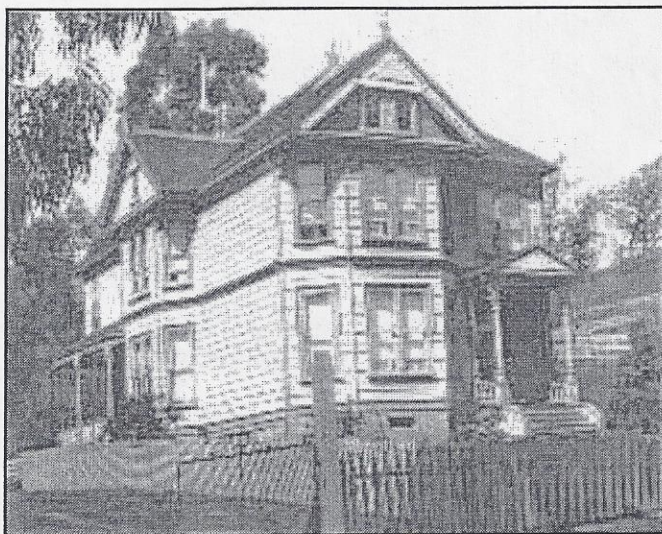
continued on page F4, see Novato



Judge Haven's house, "Standish" to the left rear of the first train depot. The depot was two attached buildings, the larger of the two was moved behind Loustaunau Hall, where it sits today. The dirt path on the right is Scott St.

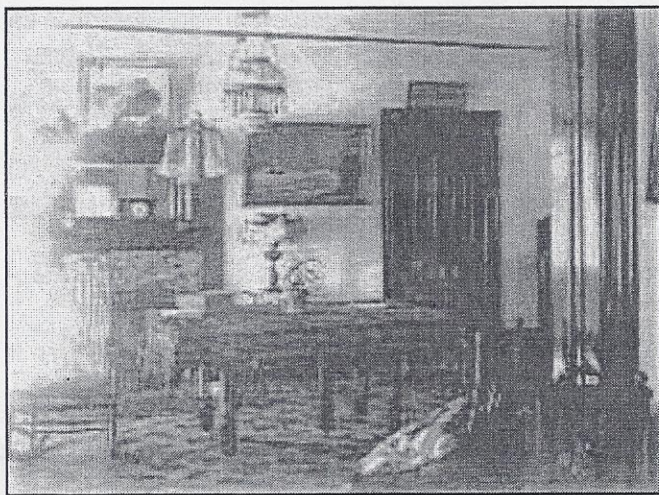
Novato

continued from page F3



Completed (1892), a year before this article, the home of J.W. Atherton awaits removal for condominiums.

Lady of Lourdes, (sic Loretto) the resident clergyman officiating, and a select choir from the city rendering the music. Among the enterprises lately begun in Novato may be mentioned the new creamery of Antoine De Borba on Deer Island, and the manufacture of concentrated milk by the American Condensed Milk Co., organized as follows: President, F. H. Green of the Milbrae dairy; vice-president, Hon. F. C. De Long; general manager, F. D. Smith; secretary and treasurer, F. C. De Long.



Interior photo of the parlor of J. W. Atherton.

The present output is 1,000 gallons per month at \$1.50 per gallon. The condensed milk is being furnished to ocean steamers and to manufactures of ice cream and candy in San Francisco. There is a steadily increasing demand for the milk which is said to be of superior quality and richness, from four to six gallons being concentrated into one by hydraulic pressure.

The recent death of Mrs. A. D. Scott a most estimable lady and a universal favorite, has cast a gloom over the entire community. The flag belonging to the Novato public schools was placed at

half mast on Memorial Day.

The Novato ranches are engaged at present in cultivating their hay crop. The yield will be lighter this year than usual owing to the lateness of the season. Plenty of hay is being cut in the public highways, cattle not being allowed to roam at large.

The public spirited citizens of Novato

are going ahead with their improvements, voluntarily opening up streets and laying sidewalks without any aid or counsel from town trustees or municipal authorities. They are also giving their attention to the

cemetery, thinning out the trees and otherwise beautifying the "silent city." A social club of young people has been organized and gives weekly entertainment on Saturday evenings in Scott's hall. Mr. M. E. Essner, proprietor of the Novato hotel, in running a long refrigerating tunnel into the hill alongside the railroad track struck a fine stream of water, which he immediately proceeded to utilize. The daily shipment of milk by rail from Novato to San Francisco amounts to 800 gallons. The family of Mr. Olbers since leaving Novato have been called to mourn the death of two children by diphtheria. Since left undisturbed, the deer family are increasing rapidly in the canyons of the Coast



The California Creamery Company, seen here after it was purchased by Judge Herman Rudolph and renamed, The Novato French Cheese Co.

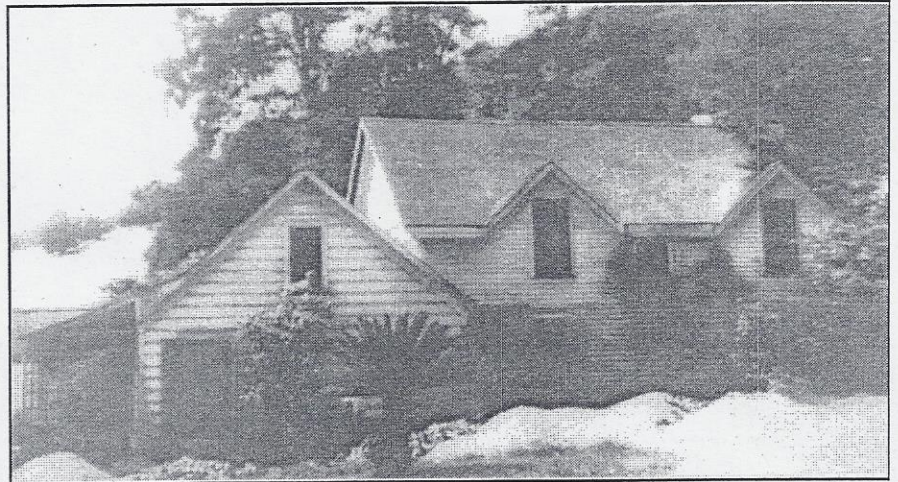
range. The voice of the quail is also heard in the land. Mrs. E. E. Enlow, wife of the former principal of the Novato public school, has taken her departure from San Francisco, to the World's Fair in Chicago, Illinois. Before returning, Mrs. Enlow expects to spend several months with relatives in western Maryland. ❖

Novato

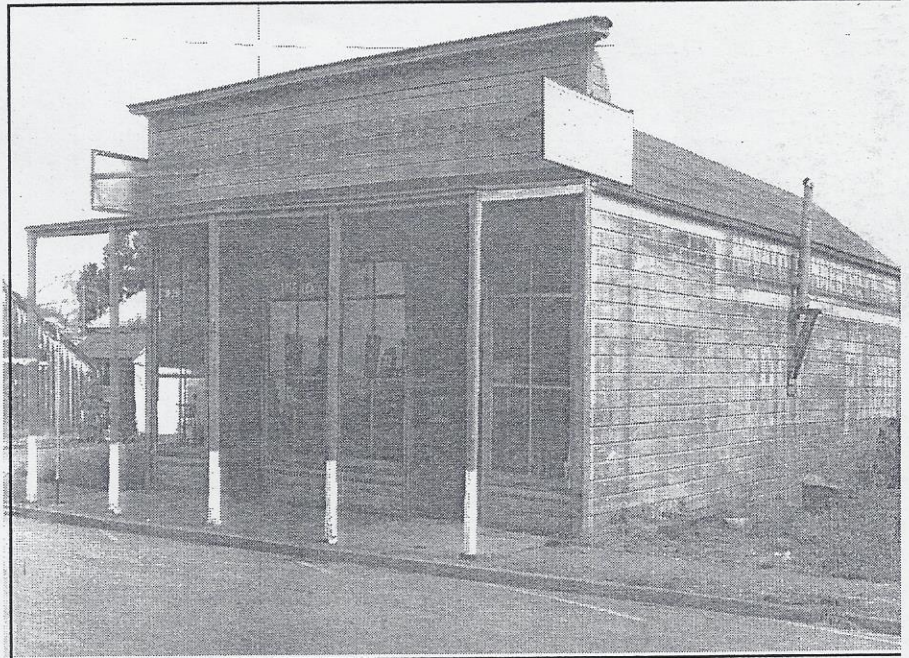
continued from page F3



The Novato Grammar School



The residence of Dr. Galen & Mary Burdell



Office of The Novato Home and Land Company, later Samuels' General Merchandise Store. Its final days were Vogel's "Disabled Veterans Thrift Shop", a semi-antique/juntique store. Located on the N.E. corner of Grant and Reichert.



Cut hay, lying in the fields of DeLong Ranch. Photo is looking north west from Center Rd. at Rica Vista. The apple barn (pictured), stood to the north west of the residence.

A History of Novato...



...wouldn't be complete if there were no mention of the town's oldest businessman, spry C. E. Carlile. The seventy eight year old merchant runs a flourishing hardware business in one of the town's oldest Grant Avenue stores, built in 1911. He came to Novato in 1895, when he was eighteen and served until 1909 as the station agent for the Northwestern Pacific Railroad, the town's only carrier in those days.

'Half of San Francisco used to come up to visit on Sundays' he reminisces, 'That's when the train was crowded. But on weekdays we shipped milk — twelve hundred gallons in the morning and eight hundred gallons at night. And poultry and eggs too. Why, we were second to Petaluma then, in the poultry business, and almost all the small ranches around town sold eggs and chickens. And of course we did have a few commuters even then. Some of the passengers were high school students and private school pupils, going to San Rafael or Petaluma.'

Carlile opened his hardware store as a side-line, handling the Wells Fargo Express when he left the railroad station employ. Ten years later he gave it back to the NWP office, and devoted his attention to the store which he has owned and managed ever since in the same location. 'I remember when there was only my store, the E. R. Samuels merchandise store across the street (now used as a second hand store owned by the "fix -it" man, Ernest Vogel), and Scott's Store down the street. Silva's grocery and saloon across from that and three or four other saloons, and the Porcella blacksmith shop. Porcella died last year after more than sixty years in business. He ran the "Fashion Shop" as we called it, until recently.'

'Grant Street was laid out in the eighteen- eighties before I came here, and while it was graveled, it was still muddy and dusty until macadam was put down about nineteen twelve.. I remember Sweetser — he was a supervisor then — put in the street we have now. He had bulldozers level off a hill in front of my place, and that made my sidewalks raised above the level of some of the others.'