

GONZALES CENTENNIAL BOOK

1874 - 1974



GONZALES, CALIFORNIA — 1894

Gonzales Centennial Book 1874 - - - 1974

A Pictorial Look at Gonzales' First Hundred Years

Committee: ART BRUSA, *Chairman*
MRS. FRANK MCGINLEY
MRS. CLARA COSTA
RUDY PRADER

Published by the Gonzales Centennial Committee

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Gonzales' Oldest Natives



Mrs. Edith Patten Boekenoogan, on the left, is Gonzales' oldest native still living here. Shown with her are two sisters, Mrs. Ina Lewis (who will be 90 years old in August) and on the right, Mrs. Ruth Cartwright (who was 84 years old May 7). The young fellow is a nephew, Tim Lipp.



Emil "Barney" Danini, oldest living native son still in Gonzales.

DEDICATED TO THE LATE

MISS GRACE V. WIDEMANN

1882 - 1972

in appreciation

FOR FIFTY YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE
TO THE COMMUNITY OF
GONZALES

TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL

1902 - 1952



SCHEDULE OF CENTENNIAL EVENTS

JUNE

- 26 Salad Bar, Gonzales IOOF Hall, 11:30 to 2:00 P.M.
Sponsored by the Gonzales Young Homemakers.
Abby Violini, Chairman.
- 29 Gonzales Youngmen's Club Dance.
St. Theodore Parish Hall.
Dancing 9:30 to 1:30 A.M.
Music by the Bandoleros.
\$6.00 per couple.
- 30 Mexican dinner, Gonzales American Legion Hall.
Serving from 1:00 to 7:00 P.M.
Mariachi band to play from 2:00 to 4:00 P.M.
Sponsored by the Gonzales Community Women.

JULY

- 3 Old Timers' Party, 1:00 to 5:00 P.M.
LaGloria School Cafeteria.
Refreshments to be served.
Ed Whalen, Chairman.
- 3 Gonzales Booster Club Centennial Dance.
St. Theodore Parish Hall.
Music by Nellie and the Casuals.
Dancing from 10:00 to 2:00 A.M. \$6.00 per couple.
- 3 Teen Age Western Dance.
Sponsored by Gonzales 4-H leaders.
Gonzales High School Cafeteria.
Music by Art Walker.
Dancing 8:30 to 12:30 A.M.
- 4 Centennial Parade, 10:00 A.M.
Fred Green, chairman.

JULY

- 4 Centennial Barbecue, Chunk Style Sirloin.
11:30 to 2:30 P.M.
Perry Bassetti, chairman.
Bassetti and crew, with Salinas Elks' cooks.
- 4 Fun booths, La Gloria School.
Gonzales Youngmen's Club, Richard Castillo, chairman.
- 4 Historical display.
La Gloria School Library.
Sponsored by the Mite Society and the Senior Citizens group.
Rev. Tom Patten, chairman.
- 4 Talent show, LaGloria multi-purpose room.
1:30 P.M., Nellie Ruiz, chairman.
- 4 Antique car display, 1:00 to 4:00 P.M.
La Gloria School.
- 4 Gymkana Rodeo, Ray Stanfield, chairman.
(Site undecided at this time).
- 4 Horseshoe Tournament, starts at 1:00 P.M.
Old City Park, Henry Fanoë, Jr., chairman.
- 4 AT THE GONZALES SPARTAN STADIUM, starting
at 7:00 P.M., the following events will take place:
Awards presentation of days events.
Entertainment, Jerry Willis, chairman.
Tug of war contest.
Ladies cow milking contest, Abe Marquez, chairman
Bicycle race.
Swiss sausage barbecue, American Legion.
After dark, fireworks.
Stadium events chairman, Richard Piffero.
- 4 Teen Age Dance.
Old City Park, 2:00 to 6:00.
Music by the Counts.

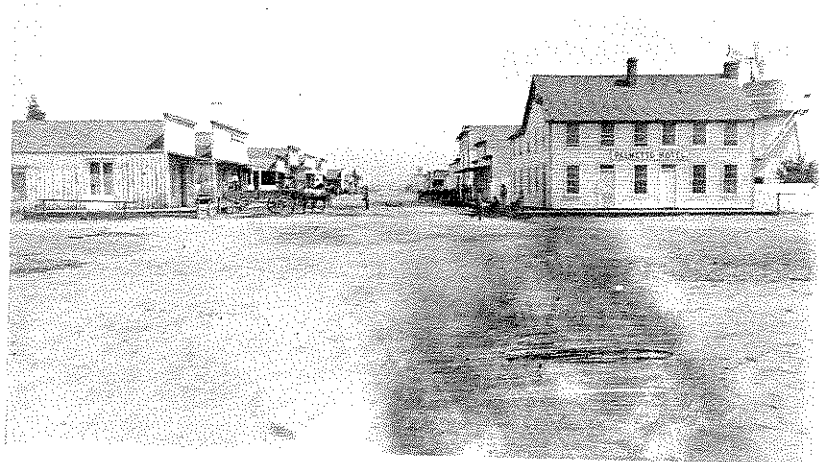
INTRODUCTION

By Art Brusa

I hope everyone who looks at this Gonzales Centennial book enjoys it as much as I enjoyed putting it together. It has been a big project but I feel every minute spent on it was gratifying. I am a native of Gonzales, born on May 13, 1926. I have considered myself a Gonzales young-old timer. However, it certainly made me feel humble talking to many of the real old timers from Gonzales. I found out so many interesting facts about the area that they could have filled ten books this size.

Many people contributed toward this book but I feel that I should mention three in particular. I wish to thank Brian Juri for allowing us to use his History of Gonzales. I would especially like to thank Mrs. Frank McGinley for some great help in obtaining most of the photos seen in this book. She also contributed many facts that are incorporated into the book or photo captions. I would also like to thank Ray Rianda for contributing some written material which was also used for photo captions and material references.

At first it was planned to use Mrs. McGinley's and Mr. Rianda's material as a portion for the book. So many photos of historical value were collected that the written material had to be cut.



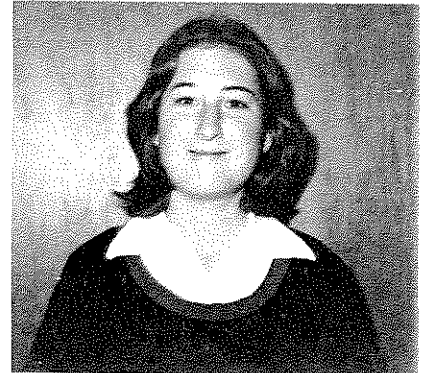
Oldest known photo of Gonzales. The year is 1874 when the town was laid out. The photo shows Fourth Street looking toward the present Fairview Middle School.



Centennial Queen Maxine Bernard, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bernard. Both her parents are native born Gonzalesites.



Centennial Princess, Cindy Cheatwood, daughter of Robert Cheatwood and Jackie Cheatwood.



Centennial Princess, Jennifer Fellows, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Fellows.

Our Centennial Queen was born 17 years ago and will be entering her senior year at Gonzales High School this fall. She will be presiding over all the activities during the Centennial Celebration that will run from June 26 to July 4.

A STUDY OF GONZALES

Between 1836 - 1947

By Brian Arthur Juri

CHAPTER I

I plan to put forth in this paper the history and characteristics of the town of Gonzales, most of which have never been combined in a written, cohesive form. At first I will explain the early days of the land grant before the town was established. The development of the town will follow. Then a few interesting facts that I have found are important but are not directly related, will be mentioned. I will then enumerate and explain the four phases of the growth of Gonzales.

The town of Gonzales is situated 18 miles south of Salinas and 130 miles south of San Francisco in the fertile Salinas Valley. The Valley is approximately eight miles wide and 50 miles long. On the east side is the Gabilan range of mountains, and on the west side is the Santa Lucia range. The Salinas River, the famous "upside down" river, twists and turns through the valley and empties into the Pacific Ocean at Twin Bridges, which is between Castroville and Fort Ord.



Grave of Teodoro Gonzalez in Monterey Cemetery. He received from the Mexican government the land grant that includes the city of Gonzales in 1836.

Gonzales is an old town. Its history is fascinating. It all started years ago with the coming of Teodoro Gonzalez to Monterey from Mexico in 1825. He was 19 years of age at this time and must have been a very capable young man because he became acting alcalde in Monterey in 1836.

On September 26, 1836 he received from the Mexican government a land grant, "Rincon de la Punta del Monte" (cornering on the point of a hill). This grant was composed of 15,218.62 acres of land in the Salinas Valley. The original Mexican grant document is presently in the possession of Mrs. Winifred Gonzalez Wolf, a granddaughter of Teodoro Gonzalez and a local resident.¹

Teodoro Gonzalez married Guadalupe Villanel de Rico. Two sons were born of this marriage. Alfredo was born on August 24, 1845, and Mariano was born on July 26, 1848. Both boys were born in Monterey. When Mariano was 17 years of age his father put him in charge of the large ranch. When he was 20 years old he went into the mercantile business in Monterey. At the age of 30 he decided to study medicine and attended Cooper Medical College in San Francisco. He graduated from that institution in 1883, but never practiced his profession except to help the poor in emergencies. In 1872 he was a delegate to the National Republican Convention which nominated U. S. Grant for president of the United States.² He was married twice. He had one daughter, Anita, by his first marriage. His second wife was Edith Westphal who was quite a few years younger than he. Neither Mariano nor Alfredo claimed Gonzales as their permanent place of residence. They both had homes in San Francisco and came to Gonzales for short stays.³

Alfred Gonzalez was highly educated. He married and had one daughter, Winifred. He was a director of the Bank of Gonzales which was taken over later by the Monterey County Trust and Savings Bank and this in turn by the American Trust and Savings Bank which was merged with the Wells Fargo Bank.

On January 10, 1868, Teodoro and his wife deeded the ranch to their sons, Mariano and Alfredo. In 1890, the boys divided it between themselves, each receiving about 5,500 acres. Alfredo subdivided a large part of his share of the ranch and gradually sold off these ranches.

People farmed the land for the Gonzalez brothers, giving them one-fourth of the crop for rent. One of the first persons to engage in farming on the Ganzales ranch was Thomas F. Faw.

¹ Gerald Bougher.

² "Resources of Monterey County and Midwinter Fair Editor of the Gonzales Tribune" (Gonzales and San Francisco: Renison and Farley, January 1894), pp. 12-20.

³ Arthur Juri.

The Southern Pacific laid tracks from Salinas to Soledad in December, 1872. It wasn't until quite a few years later that the depot was erected. The Southern Pacific Company did not feel that this area was sufficiently important to warrant the erection of such a structure or to allow their trains to stop for freight and passengers. It was only through the efforts of Thomas F. and George E. Faw, who then were in the warehouse business, that Gonzales became a stopping point of the railroad. They financed the construction of the first depot. George E. Faw became the first depot agent.⁴

The town of Gonzales was laid out in 1874 by the Gonzalez brothers. It consisted of 50 blocks, the streets running north and south from west to east were named Alta, Belden, Center, Day and Elko, and those running east and west started with First Street on the south and extended to Tenth Street on the north.

The name of the town, Gonzales, was, of course, named after the Gonzalez family. The spelling of the town is incorrect, however, as the family spelled its name with a final "z" instead of an "s".⁵

People started moving into the town. Many of these conducted businesses in the town. The others farmed land for the Gonzalez brothers. The town grew until in 1894 the population was 500.⁶



Mrs. Winfred Wolf, daughter of Alfredo Gonzalez. Lived in Gonzales for years.

With the coming of people to this new town a school and churches were started. The first school was started in 1874, and was located on the corner of Fifth and Day Streets. Later there were two other grammar schools—one across from the Lester Johnson home on Belden and Third Streets, and one on Fourth Street between Belden and Center. The first school that housed all of the grades was built in 1893. This was located near the present elementary school. It was a two-story building with four rooms and exceptionally wide

⁴ Renison and Farley, loc. cit.

⁵ Bougher, loc. cit.

⁶ Renison and Farley, loc. cit.

halls. Three of these rooms were used for the grammar school and one was used for high school students. Just north of the elementary school the high school was started. This school consisted of two one-room wooden structures joined by a smaller wooden building that was used for dressing rooms. Later the two classrooms were moved to the present high school property that was purchased from Mr. Joseph Juri, the writer's grandfather. The smaller wooden structure that joined the two classrooms is used at present by the elementary school as a storage and shop room.⁷

The first high school graduation was in 1911. Mary Harney Struve was the only graduate. The second graduating class was comprised of Perry Patton, who is now living in Berkeley, and Julia Larson Anderson, who resides in Salinas. The high school student body in 1910 had as its members Perry Patton, Henry Fanoie, Matthew Stirling, Elmer Forden, Ted Collins, Otto Sommer, Rubin Rodriguez, Edith Rossetti, Iva Coffey Cooper, Annie Asmussen, Agnes Young Sarmiento, Rita Hargens, Julia Larsen Anderson, Mary Harney Struve and Edith Brockmann Sully.⁸

The Catholic Church was built in 1883, and was named after Teodoro Gonzalez who had given property on which the church was built. The original church, still standing, was moved from the site on which it was constructed to the east side of the property to allow for the erection of a new church.⁹



Gonzales' Fourth Street sometime between 1893 and 1906. Brick building on the left side was built in 1893. It housed the Bank of Gonzales, now DeRoza Real Estate.

⁷ Miss Grace V. Widemann.

⁸ "High School", Gonzales Tribune (Gonzales: 1958).

⁹ Bougher, loc. cit.

In 1884, "while times were exceedingly dull, with the generous aid of her citizens they erected the Baptist Church . . . giving our people a suitable place to hold divine worship."¹⁰

A Methodist church was also built on Belden Street between Seventh and Eighth. Later this church was moved to the town of Greenfield and is still being used by the Methodist denomination there. The property on which these churches were erected was given by Gonzalez.

In gathering material for the history of Gonzales, I have found many interesting facts about the early days which I would like to tell about.

The first cemetery was located on Fanoe Lane near Johnson Canyon Road. There were just three graves there of children of the Parsons family who had died of diphtheria. They were later removed and placed in the new cemetery on the Gloria Road.¹¹

Sarles and Widemann built the first store in Gonzales. The building was made of brick which was made in Gonzales where the P. G. and E. substation now stands on the corner of Alta and Seventh Streets.¹² Their store was filled with dry goods, clothing, groceries, hardware, and provisions. Mr. Widemann came from Illinois. His home is still standing on the corner of Fifth and Belden Streets and is owned and occupied by Mrs. Mae Parsons.^A Before they formed the partnership, Mr. Sarles served the town as postmaster. He also was the clerk of the Board of School Trustees.¹³

In the 1880's and 1890's, Gonzales boasted an undertaker, an upholsterer, a harnessmaker, a cigarmaker, and a couple of lawyers. Dr. Gordon was the doctor and he had a very classy team of horses and a driver.¹⁴

In 1897, Alta Street had a Chinese laundry on its far north side, Sarles and Widemann store, Gonzales Hotel (where the Wells Fargo Bank now stands), an opera house (where the Bank of America is situated), Joe Ramsay's drug store, Jack Platz' and Bob Clark's blacksmith shops, and several saloons, ending with D. L. Rodriguez's general

¹⁰ Renison and Farley, loc. cit.

¹¹ Clyde Patton (Monterey: April 15, 1962).

¹² Widemann, loc. cit.

¹³ Renison and Farley, loc. cit.

¹⁴ Clyde Patton, "Clyde Patton Concludes Reminiscences," Gonzales Tribune (Gonzales: May 28, 1936).

A Since died.

store. Further down the road toward Soledad was the slaughter house.¹⁵

Cal Hardwick and Lee Ireland had saloons. The jail was 8 by 8 feet square. It was made of old railroad ties. There were wooden sidewalks in the town and the old timers would sit and talk under the eaves of the saloons. There were hitching racks running along the sidewalks and a few water troughs here and there. The last hitching rack to go was the one that ran along the brick store that is now Frank's Market. This was taken out about 1917 when the tin lizzies began to take over.¹⁶

The Brockmann House stood approximately where Botill's Men's Store is today. It was a first class establishment. Mrs. A. S. Brockmann was the proprietress of it in 1894, and had been since 1886, since her husband died.¹⁷

The Gonzales Tribune, the leading weekly newspaper of the county, was published in the town since 1890. Charles Coffey, Sr., former editor and postmaster, purchased the newspaper in 1896, and it has been in the Coffey family ever since.^A



Hearse kept in Gonzales by Muller's Mortuary of Salinas. The driver is Frank Mojica, related to Mrs. Lottie Whalen, Mrs. Frank McGinley, Ed and Rudy Prader.

¹⁵ Clyde Patton "Clyde Patton Continues His Innocent Ramblings,"
Gonzales Tribune (Gonzales: May 14, 1936).

¹⁶ Clyde Patton "Oldtimer Tells of the Episode of Characters in Gonzales Area in 1880's,"
Gonzales Tribune (Gonzales: January 20, 1936).

¹⁷ Renison and Farley, loc. cit.

A—Since sold to Maxwell in 1967 and Al Helseth in 1968.

The fire on September 23, 1914, was the most disastrous in the history of Gonzales. It destroyed every frame building on the north side of Fourth Street from Belden Street to the Bank of Gonzales building. The fire started in the shoemaker's shop from an over-heated wood stove which had been stuffed with excelsior. The heat from the burning Brockman House was so intense that Fred L. Widemann's Palmetto Livery Stable on the other side of the street began to smoke. Water was turned on it to cool it. The Soledad Fire Department arrived on the 10:48 local train, bringing hoses, but there were no hydrants. They joined the bucket brigade, though. The heaviest loser was Joseph Juri, the writer's grandfather, who owned the Brockmann House at the time, Judge Harry Brockmann's Court, Cochran's butcher shop, the vacant Rochdale store, the post office, the shoemaker shop, and the Brockmann House annex. Fred L. Widemann lost the barber shop, the jewelry store, and Joe Scattini's saloon. The estimated loss was \$20,000. They did not have any insurance.¹⁸ The large mirror which hung in the Brockmann House was saved from the fire and is hanging in the writer's grandmother's home here in Gonzales.^B There were many ideas on the best way to stop the fire before it destroyed so many buildings. One of the plans the firefighters carried out was to blow up an old wooden building between the fire and the Brockman House. The group of men placed a few sticks of dynamite in the building and there was an explosion. It did not blow up the building and when they went back to investigate, they found that it had only blown out a little board from the floor.¹⁹

Some of the old timers like to tell this true story about the bandit, Vasquez, who lived near Gonzales. He had a camp at Mud Creek, which is now part of the Armstrong Ranch east of town. Vasquez came into town without his guns to get supplies, buying his meat at the Cochran Meat Market. He was known for being extremely polite to the women. Although no one actually was frightened of him, each did walk a pretty straight line when he was in town.²⁰

At one time Vasquez lived with a frail, beautiful girl who died of tuberculosis. He brought her body into town and demanded that Mr. Cochran make a coffin, which he did, using planks he tore from his barn. He was told to load the coffin on his spring wagon. Then Vasquez climbed upon the seat with Mr. Cochran and made him drive over the Gloria Grade into San Benito County where he buried her.²¹

¹⁸ "From Our Album," Gonzales Tribune (Gonzales).

^B—Mrs. Juri died in 1964. House sold in 1966. Writer Brian Juri now has the mirror.

¹⁹ Joseph Juri.

²⁰ Widemann, loc. cit.

²¹ Ibid.

Under the leadership of A. R. Patrick and the Meyenberg brothers, John and Walter, and their father, J. P. Meyenberg, the first electric lighting plant was established in the community at the Alpine factory. With power generated through the use of semi-diesel engines, distribution of electricity was limited to most of the business houses and to a few private homes. Several years later the Coast Valley Gas and Electric Company purchased the franchise, and the extension of electric power to the district became widespread.²²

From about 1888 until 1916, an annual May Day picnic was held in Johnson Canyon. Schools and business houses closed for that day and everyone went to the picnic. There was a big barbecue at noon. Many activities took place that day. Races, baseball games, pie-eating contests, and other events were enjoyed by both young and old.²³

The first bridge over the Salinas River was built about 1900. There

STREET SCENE, GONZALES, CAL.



Gonzales' Fourth Street shortly after 1906 when the Widemann building on the right was built. It was razed just a few years ago to build the present Bank of America.

²² Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rianda "Recollection of Gonzales Area Dairying in Early Days," *Salinas Californian* (Salinas: February 1949).

²³ Widemann, loc. cit.

was a large dedication with Garabaldi Battaloni the speaker. A few years later the river washed away a few spans out of the center. An emergency cable was stretched from span to span and a "flying Dutchman" was installed. This was a heavy wooden box suspended in the air and was navigated back and forth for the benefit of the community until a new piling was put in.²⁴

The growth of Gonzales may be divided into four phases.

1. Cattle raising — This is the time prior to April 27, 1874, when vast holdings were leased by Hildreth and Dunphy, cattle kings of California.²⁵

2. Grain raising — This period included the time when grain was raised. There were many warehouses to care for this grain.

In 1894, Beatty and Sommer of Gonzales were the most prominent threshing men in Monterey County. They started business together in 1882.²⁶ Hans Sommer, the junior member of this threshing team, lived on the corner of Elko and Eighth Streets. He had a fairly large family and many of his children are still making Gonzales their home.

3. Dairying — With the coming of many Swiss people to the area grain farming gave way to dairying. The first dairies were started around the 1890's along the Salinas River and in the La Gloria Valle. Among the first dairymen were John Lanini and Anton Badasci on the Somavia ranch, Batista Silacci on the Matt Williams place, Vincenzo Tavernetti and Panelli Brothers on the Thomas Field ranch, and Phil and Paul Bianchi on the Soberanes property. In the La Gloria Valle Jerry and Jacob Pura were engaged in dairying.²⁷

Along the river, the dairies were large with 100 or more cows each. There was plenty of volunteer pasture along the foothills where the cows could graze, but during the winter and early spring they were grazed on the bench land. When the pastures dried, cows were moved to clover near the river. Hay for the winter was usually barley made on dry farm land. Cows cost from \$15 to \$30 each in these days.²⁸

During the 90's and at the turn of the century, a gradual change began to take place. Cheese making was begun. Dry years had brought the necessity for irrigation. A canal company was formed, the Gonzales Water Company. A dam and headgate were built on the

²⁴ Clyde Patton "Patton Adds P. S. to Local Early Days Tales," *Gonzales Tribune* (Gonzales).

²⁵ George Craig.

²⁶ Renison and Farley, loc. cit.

²⁷ Rianda, loc. cit.

²⁸ Ibid.

Field's ranch with a main canal that extended eight or nine miles to the southern boundary of the Jack's ranch with a series of laterals to take care of several thousands of acres.²⁹

Cheese was the almost exclusive dairy product until 1907, when the Alpine Condensary was started in Gonzales. Ninety per cent of the milk produced went to the condensary in 1915.³⁰ The milk plant was established by Meyenberg, a German Swiss. Meyenberg was the originator of the condensed milk process. He lived in Gonzales with his family.

There are still a few large dairies in this area, but the milk is trucked out. The condensary closed down because the dairies were gradually converted into row crop farms.

4. Vegetable raising — This was made possible by irrigation, modern machinery, and improved transportation facilities. Farmers of-



September 23, 1914 fire, most disastrous in the history of Gonzales. Present DeRoza Real Estate Office is shown.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

ferred more rent per acre than was twice the assessed value in the days. Dairy farming began to give way to farming of row crops such as beans, lettuce, carrots, and sugar beets in 1928. Field labor replaced the milker. Filipino field workers began to arrive to do the stoop in the field. Now Mexican Nationals do most of this. They live in camps run by the labor contractors.

All of the land Alfredo Gonzalez owned has been sold. After Mariano's death, his second wife and his daughter by his first marriage shared his part of the ranch. They bought out the Rico heirs for \$100,000 each. The daughter traveled extensively and claimed France as her home. As she needed money she would sell a ranch in Gonzales, and her holdings were gone. Upon the death of Mrs. Gonzalez Heister (the second wife) her niece and family, Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Meyer Herbert, and a nephew, Richard Westphal, were left her ranch heirs. This part of the ranch is still held by the heirs. It amounts to about 2800 acres of the original land grant of Teodoro Gonzalez.



Mrs. Hazel Widemann Miller driving the Golden Spike to open the first bridge over the Salinas River at Gonzales. Her father, Alfred Widemann, was a County Supervisor from 1894 until his death in 1901. The bridge was built during his first term of office, placing the date between 1894 and 1898. The cost was \$32,000.

Since 1874, when Gonzales was originally laid out, the town has been noted for its hospitality and public spiritedness and as a trading center for a large surrounding area.

Voters voted to form a municipality on January 10, 1947. Since that time the citizens have been working toward city improvement and beautification.

I have told in this paper how the town of Gonzales grew from a mere stopping place of the railroad to a leading town of the county in the 1880's and 1900's. Now, as in the early days, the wealth of this community depends on the agriculture of the surrounding area which is one of the richest and most fertile in the state.



Mrs. Ruth Patten Cartwright riding the "Flying Dutchman" across the Salinas River in 1914 when the bridge washed out.

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Mozzettini home stood on the present-day Farmer's parking lot. L. to R., Paul, Mrs. Bianchi, Mrs. Mozzettini, Bill, Phillip and Mr. Joseph Mozzettini.



Wedding photo of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Corda, Sr. They were married in 1902.



Mills home about 1900. L. to R., Mrs. Mills, Rosy Mills Juri, Ellen Mills Mooney. Site on Second St.



Parsons farm home on Johnson Canyon Road, still standing. Three Parsons children were buried here until moved to the Gonzales Cemetery which opened in 1901. This photo around 1912.

GONZALES AND ITS PEOPLE

Whenever an area has been settled in our history, the first people who settled it were usually a hardy breed. We had many such families in early Gonzales. With a few exceptions this portion of the book will deal with people who started it all and still have descendants in the area.

The first family known to have settled in the area and still to have descendants here is the Jeremiah Pura family. Mr. Pura was born in Switzerland in 1844 and came to California in 1862. He lived in Marin County for five years and then came to the Gonzales area. In talking with his daughter, Esther Pisoni, I found out that Mr. Pura said there was nothing but mustard where Gonzales is now in 1867 when he came here. He settled in the La Gloria area, clearing land and building up a dairy herd. Mrs. Pisoni recalls that he used to make butter and haul it to Moss Landing to ship it by boat since in those early days there was no railroad. He married Esther Leiberandt in 1882 and they had seven children, all of them born in the La Gloria Valley. Mrs. Pisoni is the only one still alive and in the area. There are a number of grand children and great grand children including Walter Rianda and his sons; Ed Pisoni and his children; Lucille Corda and her children, and Arnold Pisoni and his family. Mrs. Pisoni also said her parents told about their relations with the famous bandit Tiburcio Vasquez. Vasquez would travel the La Gloria Valley on his way either to a foray or back from one to his hideout in the Pinnacles. He would always stop and eat with the Puras. Sometimes he would be driving cattle which Mr. Pura guessed (most probably correctly) had been stolen. However, he never questioned Mr. Vasquez as to how he had acquired the cattle. In about 1905 Mr. Pura bought land on Corda Road north of Gonzales and moved his dairy operation there.

In 1868 Phillip Collins, born in County Cork, Ireland in 1849, arrived in Gonzales. He built the first house in Gonzales in 1869 on the site where his granddaughter, Mrs. Joe Fregoso now has a home at First and Center Streets. Mrs. William Panziera, of River Road is also his granddaughter.

In 1869 two more families with descendants in Gonzales today arrived on the scene. One was the Samuel Oscar Pugh family that settled in the Fairview District eventually. Like the Pura and Collins families they have an uninterupted line of descendants in the Gonzales area. Mrs. Daisy Kelly, who lives at Fourth and Center Streets now, is his daughter. The other family was the Parsons from West Virginia. Wells H. Parsons, father of Harry Parsons, arrived with his uncle and aunt (Mr. and Mrs. John Kalar) in 1869, settling in Chualar Canyon. Harry now resides on Cielo Vista, but the Parsons didn't always live in the area.

There are many other old time settlers of Gonzales who still have descendants here. Following is a list of them, hopefully with not too many missing. The pioneer member of the family will be named first, his arrival date in the Gonzales area next, and finally his closest descendant now living in Gonzales.

Martin Velenzuela	1871	Grandfather of Mrs. Albert Dewey
William Woodworth	1873	Grandfather of Irma Handley
Hans P. Sommer	1874	Grandfather of Wynona Baldwin, Roy Twisselman, Alan Sommer
Neils C. Fanoë	1874	Grandfather of Neil Fanoë and Anker Fanoë, Jr.
Garrett Patten	1875	Father of Edith Boekenoogan
Vincent Tavernetti	1876	Grandfather of Pauline LaFranchi, Fred Rianda, Ray Rianda, Anita Fanoë and Gene Tavernetti, Sr.
F. L. Widemann	1876	Grandfather of Harold Widemann
George Boekenoogan	1879	Grandfather of Ken Boekenoogan
Antonio Motta	1885	Father of Lottie Whalen and Anita McGinley
John Prader	1886	Father of Eddie and Rudy Prader
W. F. Doemsky	1890	Father of Louis Doemsky and Esther Odell
Frank Corda	1893	Father of Frank Corda, Jr., Inez Botill and Josephine Rianda
Claus Twisselman	1886	Grandfather of Wynona Baldwin, Roy and Herman Twisselman
Joseph Juri	1886	Father of Art Juri
Silvio Franscioni	1888	Father of Rena Silvio, Jr., Joe and Valerio Franscioni and Erma Eckman
Acquilino Franscioni	1891	Father of Tillie, Paul and Lester Franscioni
Peter Danini	1893	Father of Emil "Barney" Danini
James Rianda	1893	Father of Jacomina Rianda
Severino Foletta	1893	Father of Albert Foletta, Mabel Kreigh and Lillian Travali
Edward Hugh Berry	1887	Grandfather of Warren "Hony" Johnson
Paul Angelo Danucci	1899	Father of Joe Danucci
Joseph Mozzettini	1895	Father of Paul and Phillip Mozzettini

OLDEST NATIVE SON AND DAUGHTER STILL IN GONZALES

It has been officially (hopefully) decided that the oldest living native of the area, still here, is Mrs. Edith Patten Boekenoogan. Mrs. Boekenoogan was born near the present day Martignoni Dairy on Old Stage Road on June 3, 1887. She is now 87 years old and has lived in the Gonzales area her entire life. The oldest living native son is Emil "Barney" Danini. He was born on the Valerio Vosti ranch northwest of Gonzales, on June 29, 1897. This makes him 77 years of age, all in the Gonzales area.

One Gonzales resident I feel should be given recognition, because it was a technicality that kept him from being the oldest native son, is Louis Doemsky, who was born on October 4, 1892 in San Jose. His parents had moved to the Gonzales area in 1890 and lived here the rest of their lives. Mrs. Doemsky just went to San Jose to give birth to Louis. She returned to Gonzales shortly after and Louis spent his entire life in the Gonzales area. He has actually lived in the area longer than any other man.



The Hans Sommer family, circa 1910. Seated, l. to r., Mr. Sommer, Anita, Minerva, Frank, Mrs. Sommer. Standing, Fred (Alan Sommer's father), Emma, Carl, Mae (mother of Roy Twisselman and Wynona Baldwin), and Otto.



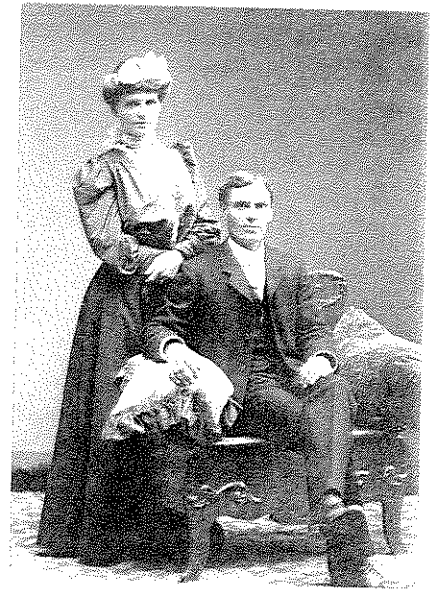
Earl Widemann (Harold's father) with his sister, Grace Widemann, about 1890.



Maria Motta, mother of Lottie Whalen and Anita McGinley.



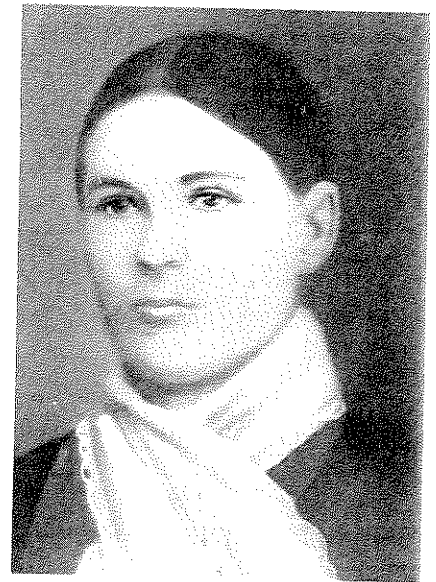
Jasper and Alida Patton. Wedding day, November 6, 1879. Parents of Edith Boekenoogan.



Wedding photo of J. Chris and Mae Twisselman. Married in Gonzales in November, 1905.



Neils C. Fanoë, born in Denmark in 1846.



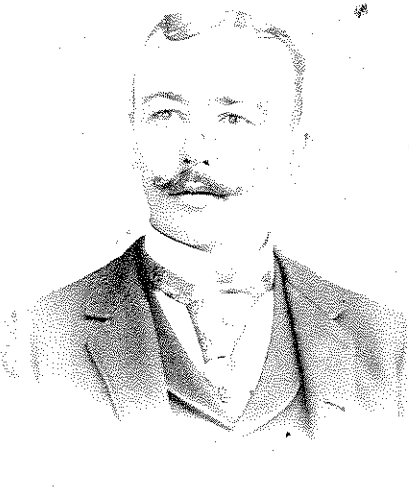
Mrs. Neils Fanoë.



*Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Tavernetti.
Wedding day photo taken
in 1874.*



*Refugio Ramos, grandmother of
Lottie Whalen and
Anita McGinley.*



*Charles Coffey, Sr., first of a long
line of Coffeys to own the
Gonzales Tribune for over
70 years.*



*Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rianda, Sr.
Wedding photo taken in 1892.*



Wells H. Parsons. Photo taken in 1877 when he was 20 years old.



Judge Harry Brockmann came to Gonzales around 1876 and was first elected Justice of the Peace in 1884. Served on and off until he was elected in 1906, from which time he served until he died in 1946.



Antonio Motta with Robert Tanner on the horse. Born at San Felipe, Ca. in 1839.



Mr. and Mrs. Claus Twisselman with sons, Henry and Chris. Photo taken about the time they settled on Johnson Canyon Road in 1886.



*Mr. and Mrs. Fred Widemann,
grandparents of
Harold Widemann.*



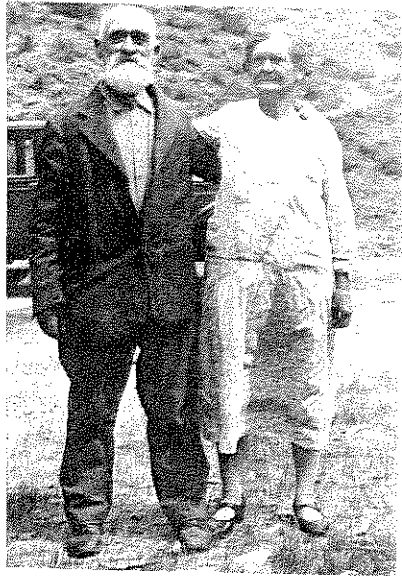
*Louis Doemsky was born in San
Jose but his parents were living
in Gonzales at the time.*



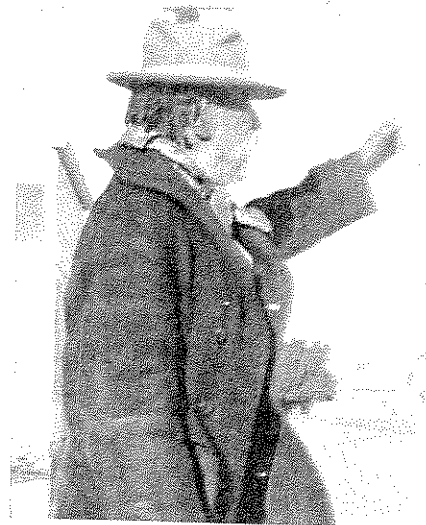
*Phillip Collins with granddaugh-
ters Loretta Collins Panziera and
Joine Collins Fregoso.*



*Miss Grace Widemann, Gonzales'
beloved educator in the early
1900's.*



Mr. and Mrs. Jeremiah Pura. Settled in the La Gloria in the late 1860's. Patriarch of one of the largest family of descendants still living in the area.



Joe Arrana, noted town orator in the 1910's and 1920's.



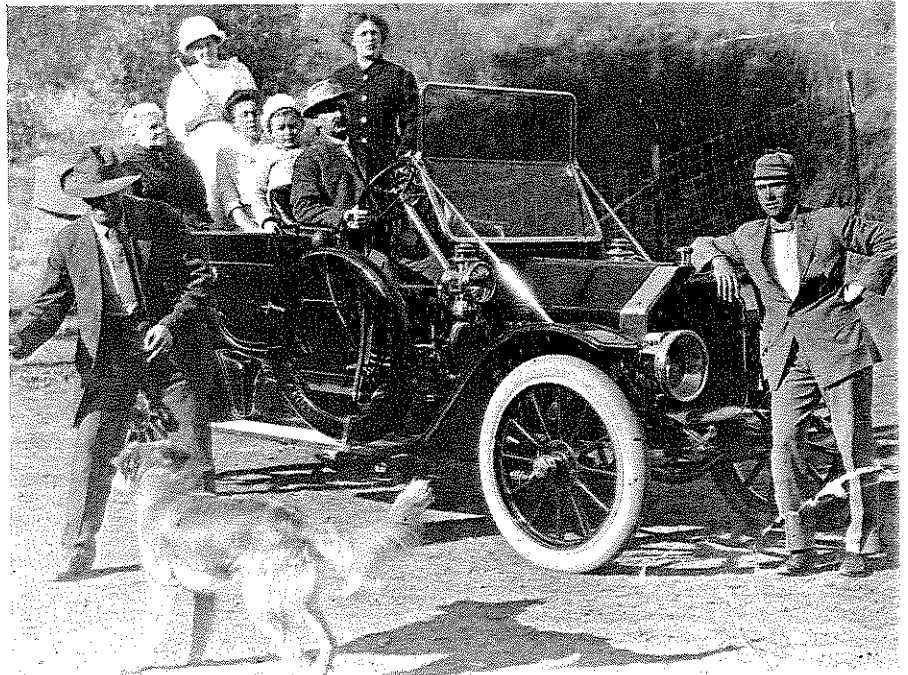
Rianda-Tavernetti clan gathering. The year 1943 at the Squat in the mavia area. This family is probably the leading progenies in the maviales area. Present day local residents seen in the photo include: Lily La Franchi, Rose LaVa, Mrs. Arnold Pisoni, Sonny Rianda, Mrs. Jim Caraccioli, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Rianda, Mr. and Mrs. Neil Fano, and Fred Rianda.



Acquilino and Victoria Frascioni on their wedding day in 1906.



Silvio and Maria Frascioni on their wedding day in 1909.



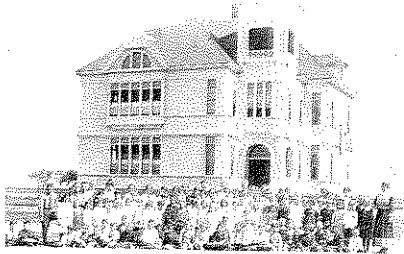
The Escolle Family — prominent early Gonzales residents. Their father, Honore, came to America from France in 1847. He bought 1,400 acres across the river above the Tom Rianda ranch in 1872 and spent a large amount of money improving it. The driver of the car is his son, Leon, Sr. Mrs. Leon Escolle is seated in the back. Sons Leon, Jr. (playing with dog) and Joe (leaning on radiator). Other four women are his daughters.

GONZALES' SCHOOLS AND OLD CHURCHES

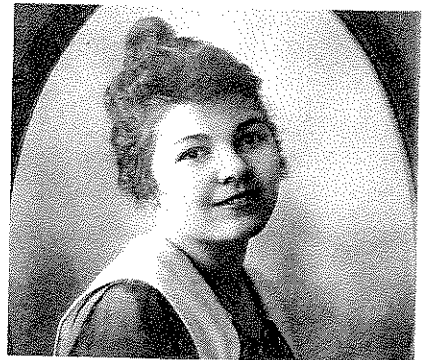
Gonzales has always been proud of its schools and old churches. Brian Juri in his brief history of the area, opening this book, gives a rundown on the different schools and churches along with their locations. We think they should be of interest to you.



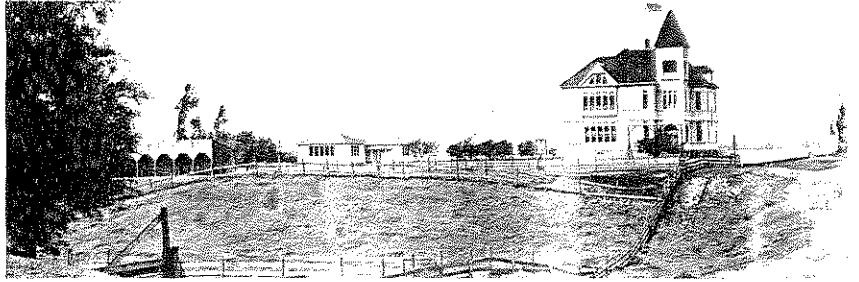
This is reported to be the first school and its student body. Conflicting reports put this building at Fifth and Belden or Fifth and Day (where Felix Marquez now resides).



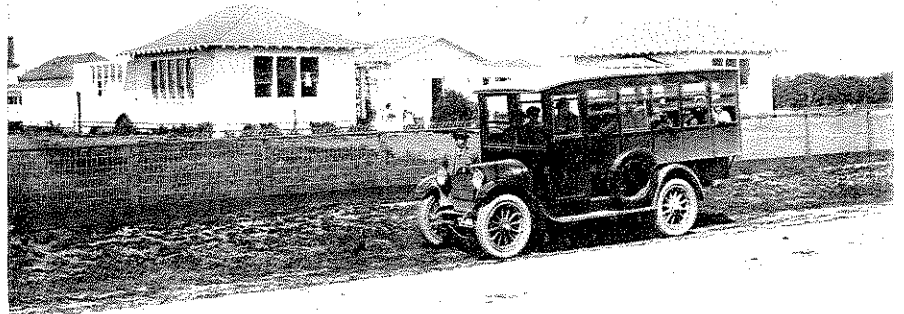
The popular two-story school built in 1893 just north of the present middle school.



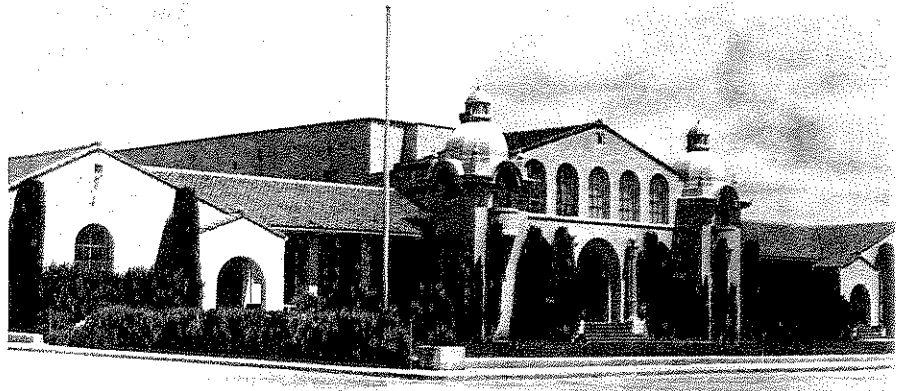
Mary Harney Struve, first and only graduate from Gonzales High School in 1911. Now lives in LaSelva Beach near Santa Cruz.



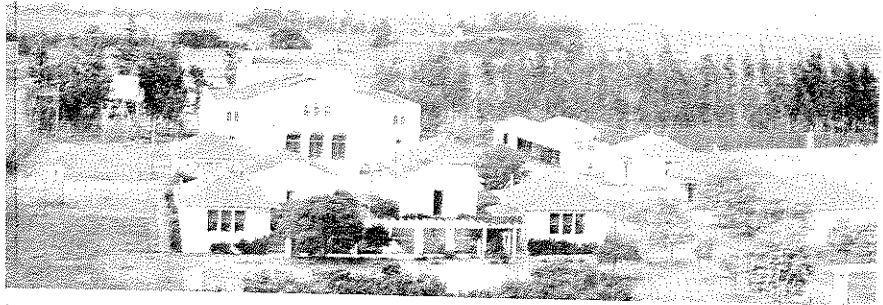
Another view of the two story school. This photo shows the first high school which was two rooms on the elementary school grounds. Later moved across the street. Fourth Street and the slough may be seen.



The high school after it was moved to its present location. The first bus is shown and was driven by Vic Binsacca from Soledad. Circa 1920.



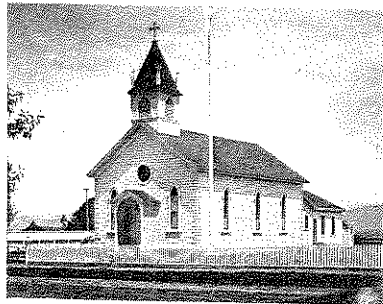
Another loved Gonzales edifice. The elementary school that replaced the two story one in 1925 and was torn down in 1967.



the high school around 1925. The gym and auditorium is shown. This building was the center of Gonzales activity for 35 years. Some of these buildings still stand.



Irview School, 1905. Teacher, Bertie Ben. Students include: George, Henry, Adeline and Louisa Rosa; Dora and Adele Rianda; Perry and Eth Patten; Weaver and Daisy Pugh; Eva Boekenoogan; Frances and Myrtle Hook.



Theodore Catholic Church. Built in 1883 and used until 1970 when it was razed.



Gonzales Community Church was built in 1885. Still in use at the corner of Fourth and Day.

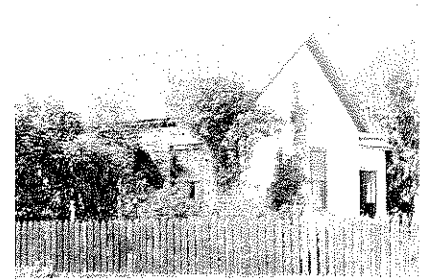
OLD HOMES AND BUILDINGS — STANDING AND GONE

In this portion of the book we will show you some homes and buildings of Old Gonzales. Some are still with us but many have "Bit the Dust." We have already noted that Phil Collins built the first house in Gonzales. We would like to establish that it is almost certain that the oldest home still standing in Gonzales is the one at Second and Belden Streets owned and lived in by Mrs. Albina Brusa. The Stag Saloon is thought to be the oldest commercial building. Both the Brusa home and the Stag are tabbed as having been erected in 1873.

On the following pages are some interesting photos of old homes and buildings.



Phil Collins home, the first in Gonzales. 1869.



The Motta home built in 1896. Torn down in 1973. Site on B Street.



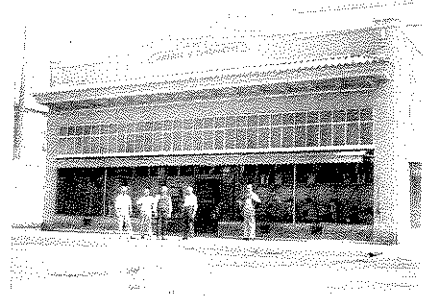
Albina Brusa home, oldest still standing. Don Schmidt photo.



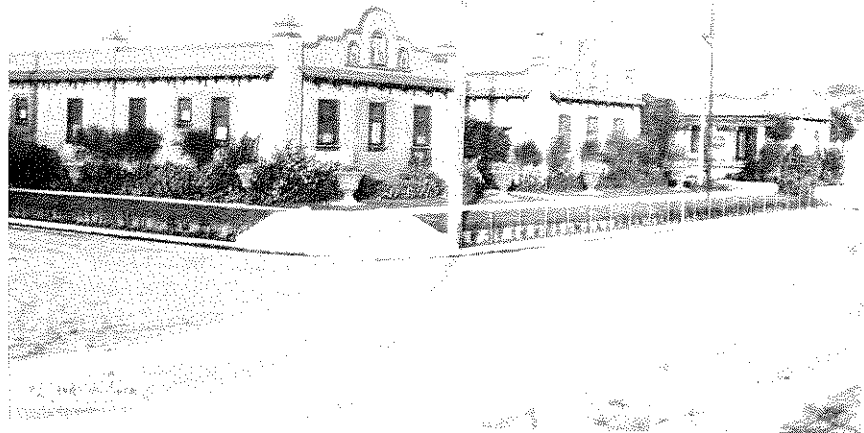
Boekenoogan home built in 1885, still standing at Fairview site.



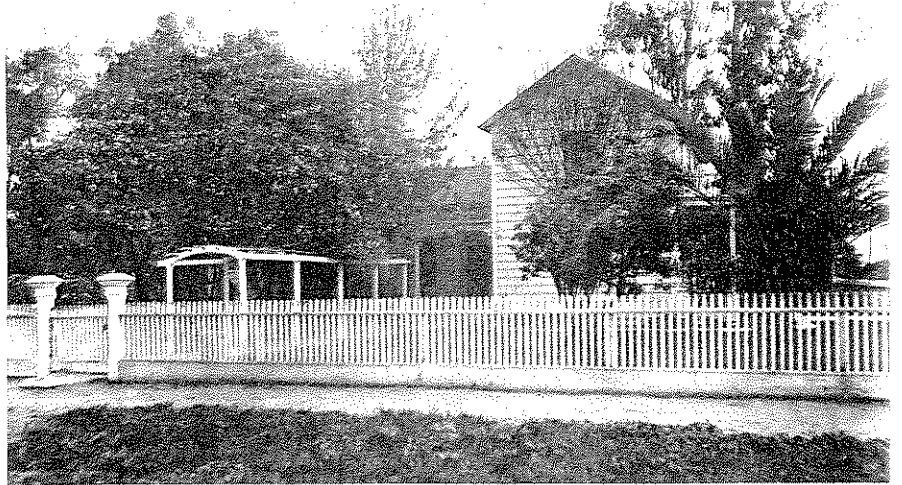
The Stag Saloon, Gonzales' favorite watering hole for over 100 years.



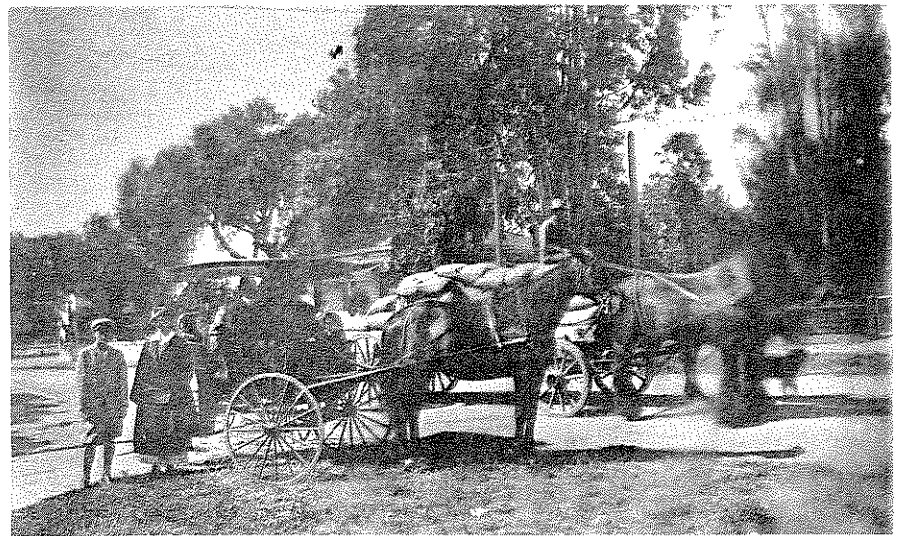
Sneible and Tavernetti building, built in 1913, now houses Kings Food Market. L. to R., Carl Frudden, Clayton Gunnell, Knudt Johanssen, Grant Gunnell and Otto Sommer.



The Alpine Tavern, built in the early 1920's. It was advertised "On the road to Romance." It was a must stopover by many Hollywood stars passing through. It was a central social center for miles around and was originally owned by the Alpine Milk Company.



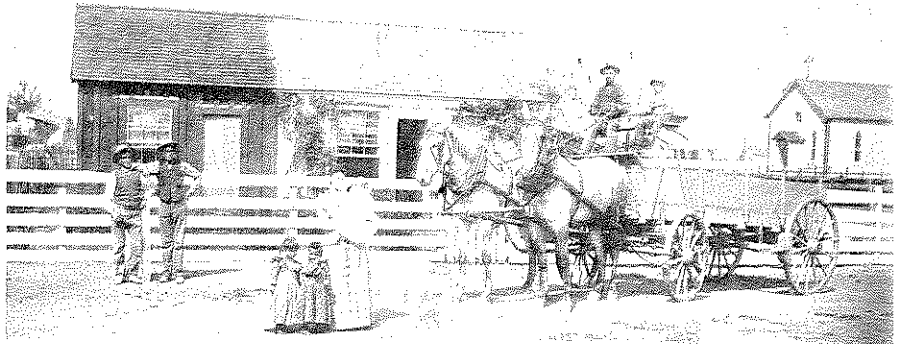
The Parsons home, still standing on Fifth and Belden Streets. Built around 1883 by Fredrick Widemann, a cousin of Harold Widemann's grandfather. The Parsons family bought it around 1905.



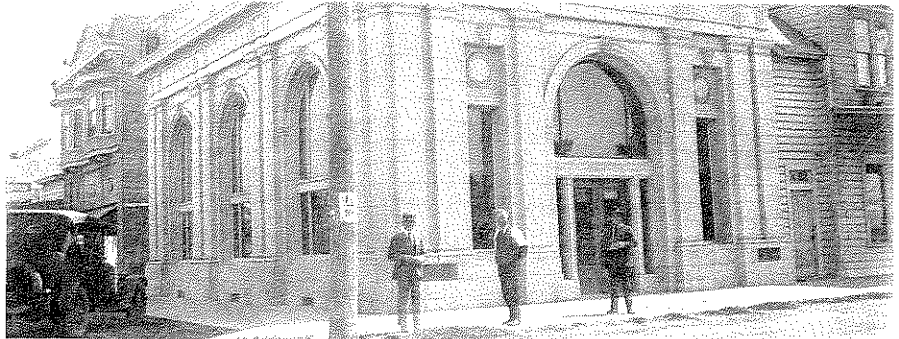
The Parsons family with a horse and surrey. Photo taken on Belden Street in front of the Grace V. Widemann house. Miss Widemann's father bought this home around 1889. It was built around 1883 by Sarles, a prominent merchant in Gonzales' early days. That is Harry Parsons in front of the surrey with his mother. His father and the rest of the family are in the surrey. See the wagon hauling grain in the rear.



The Moon residence in the Fairview district in 1874. One of our two oldest photos. L. to R., Jess, Willie, Amelia, Nelson and Matt Moon. The Moons were related to Mrs. Daisy Kelly.



Refugio Ramos home, 1893. L. to R., Angelo and Isaac Ramos, Mercy Motta, Lupe Ramos, Mrs. Marina Prader holding daughter, Vivian; John Prader and son, Dan. Notice Catholic Church without belfry.



Wells Fargo Bank building. Built in 1917 as Monterey County Bank. L. to R., Louie Vidoroni, Bill Tavernetti and Gene Tavernetti, Sr.



Photo taken in the 1890's shows Jess Ramos (extreme right), uncle of Lottie Whalen and Anita McGinley, with an eight-horse team breaking land for barley planting.



Hans Sommer's thresher and crew. Photo taken in the early 1900's.

WHAT THEY DID AND HOW THEY DID IT

You might wonder how Gonzales got started and what people did to earn a living in the beginning. Well, by Brian Juri's writings the indication is that we've done all right through the years. We may even have come the full circle as the feed lots of the past decade or so puts the area back where it started. First came the cattle barons, then the grain farmers, followed by the dairies, row crop farmers and now the vineyards. Gonzales has always been an agriculture orientated area. All its industrial ventures have been agriculturally related, starting with the Alpine Milk factory that opened in 1907 and employed over 200 people at its zenith. This plant closed in the mid 40's. We have had lettuce packing sheds, potato packing sheds, pickle packing operations, seed packaging operations, and in the future the wine industry.

Following are some photos showing the old timers working, how they did it or where they did it. We hope you enjoy them.

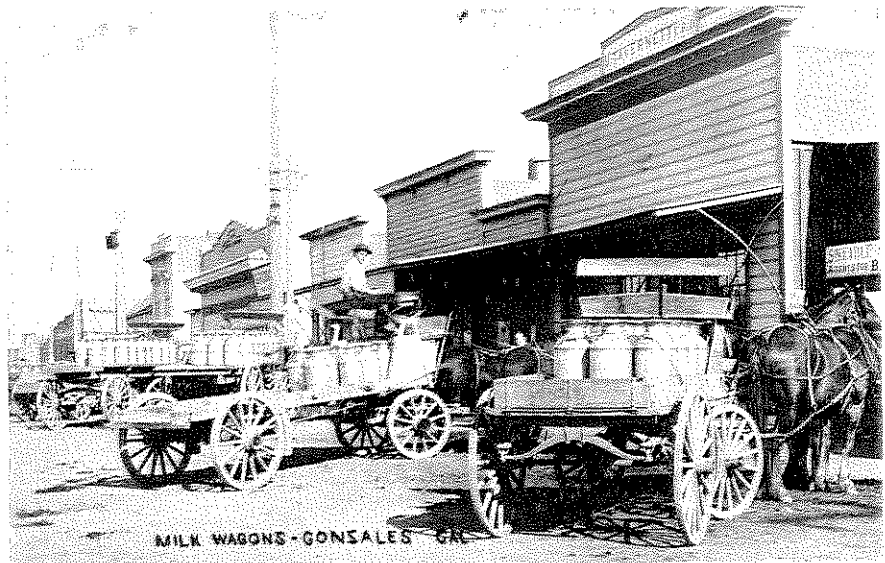
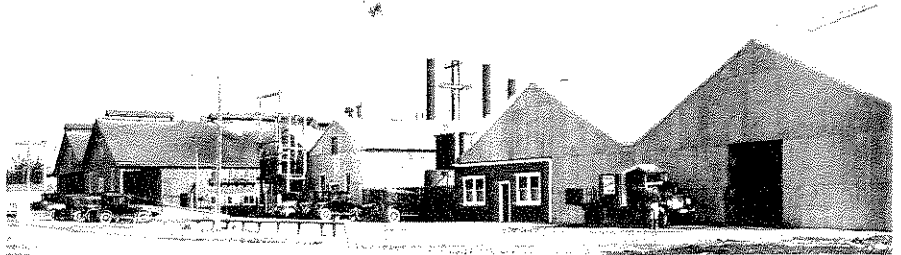


Photo taken in 1913 shows milk wagons lined up on Alta Street. Swiss dairymen would bring milk into the Alpine factory and stop off at the local stores and saloons for groceries or refreshments. Check out the Stag, Sneible and Tavernetti's and the Widemann buildings.



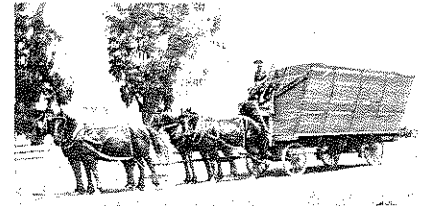
Typical dairy scene in early-day Gonzales. During the high point of this dairy era over 90% of the milkers were of Swiss descent.
Photo around 1910.



The Alpine Milk factory, Gonzales' "Life Blood" for some 35 years.
Photo around 1919.



Jack Prader and Ed Berry. Prader delivered groceries with this horse and wagon for over 40 years. Berry is Hony Johnson's grandfather.



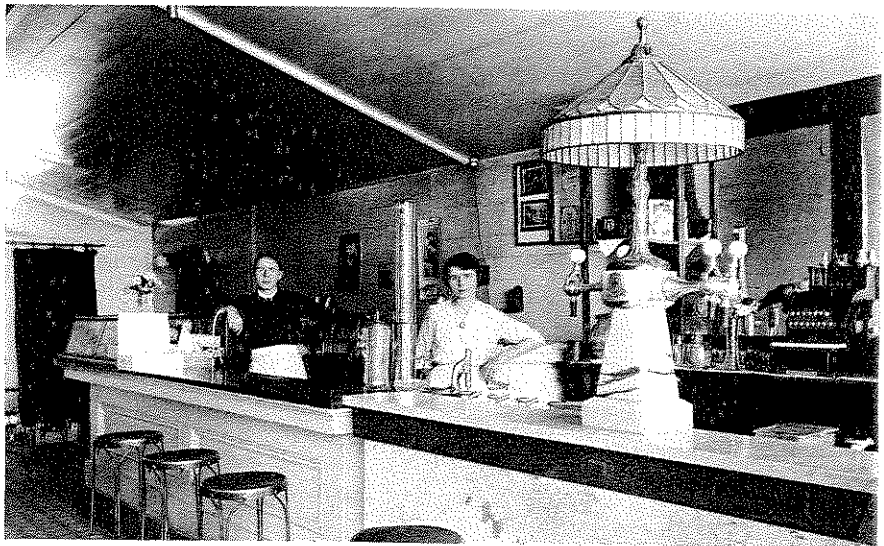
Four-horse team and header bed.
Photo, 1912 at Louis Doemsky's.



Albert Rianda on the left (Walt Rianda's father), Bill Imwalle on the right. Rianda had this blacksmith shop where Vincent Hotel now stands. Photo about 1920.



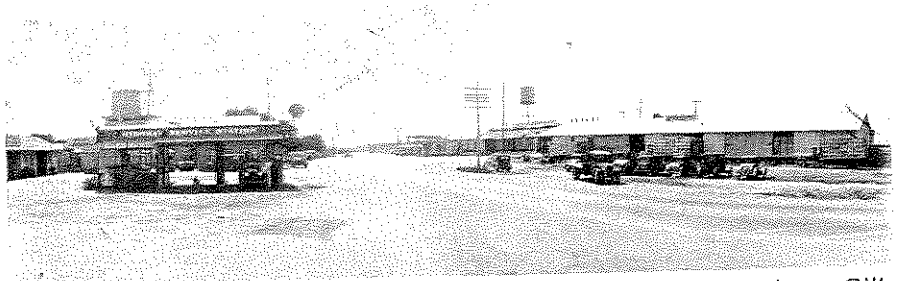
Soquel Soto, watering the Gonzales streets at Sixth and Belden. Photo taken in 1920. Note dirt streets.



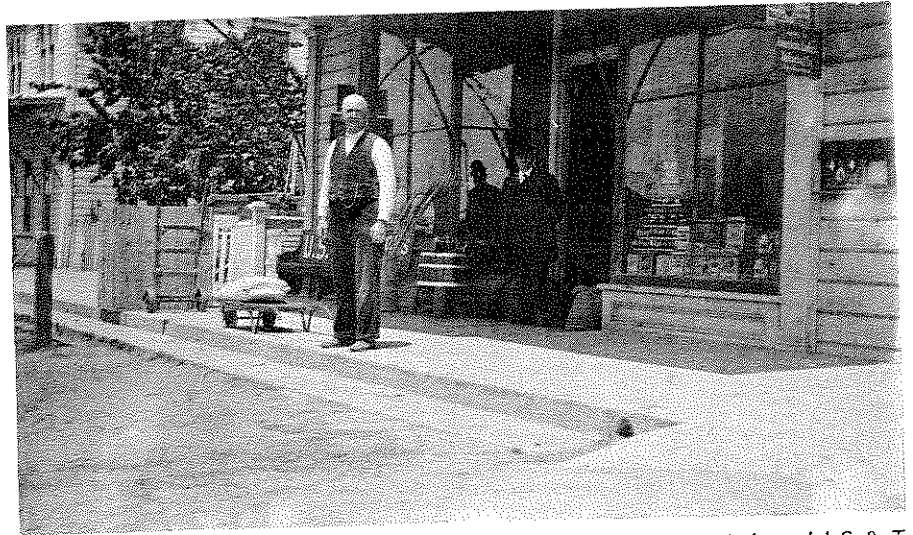
Whitie's ice cream parlor, 1912. Oswald "Whitie" Wilford and his sister, Mrs. Fred Sommer (Alan Sommer's mother). Wilford also operated a cigar factory in Gonzales for a number of years.



Gonzales hardware store around 1910. Young fellow at left front is Julius Hargens, an old-time Gonzales native who recently moved to Alvin. This business was housed in the Widemann building that was recently razed to make way for the new Bank of America building.



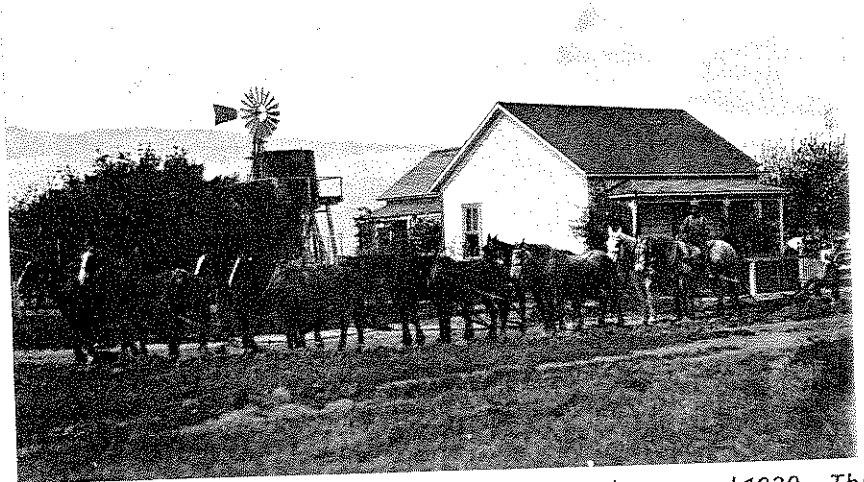
Scene in the late 1920's or early 1930's. Service station is where Gil's Union Service is now located. Lettuce industry was trying its hand at packing in Gonzales.



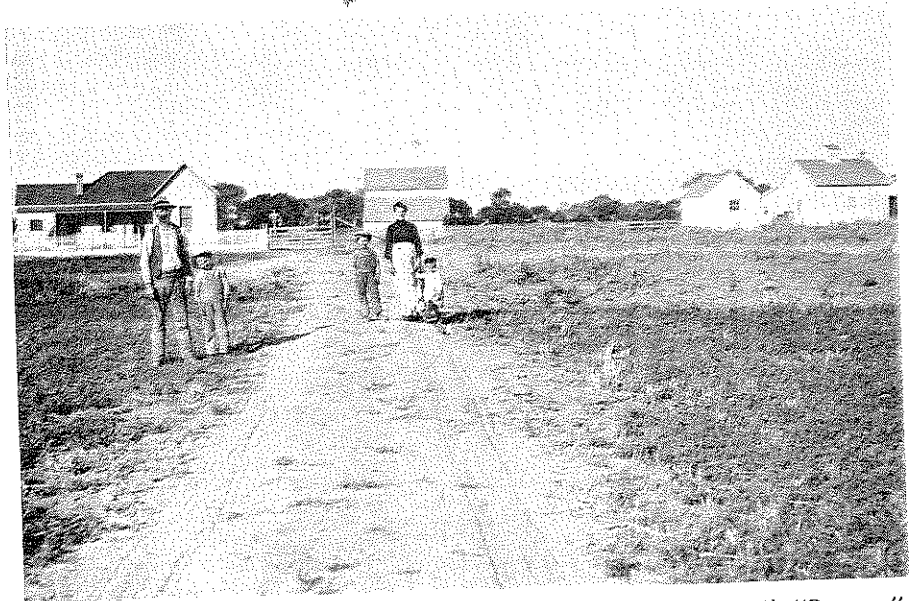
Fred Sneible, prominent local merchant, stands in front of the old S & T Store. Mr. Sneible was killed in an explosion around 1914.



First concrete pipe laid in the Gonzales area. L. to R., Manuel Villa, Mr. Ferrasci, Lauro Pinon (father of Maria Marquez, Jane Pedroza and Alex Pinon), Alex Pinon. Pipe was all hand made by Pinon in Gonzales. Photo in 1927.



Ten-horse team ploughing up the streets of Gonzales around 1920. This house sat on the corner of Belden and B Streets. It was moved out to the Hansen property on Gloria Road some years ago and in May of this year (1974) it burned up. It was the home of Jack Prader, Sr. and his family.



The Danini clan in 1904. L. to R., Mr. Pete Danini, Emil "Barney", Henry, Mrs. Pete Danini and Walter. This is the ranch where Barney still lives. Notice the two men standing on the gate.

IN CONCLUSION: BITS AND PIECES

Finally we come to the last portions of our Centennial Book. We will fill this part with photos from here and there. Some other added things of interest. Might add that we're sorry it all had to end so soon.



The Getsinger garage fire, July 4, 1938. Your book chairman remembers his fire well. Hearing the fire siren I jumped out of bed a little after 5:00 A.M. and as I ran out our back door there were flames that seemed 100 feet high. It destroyed buildings covering the area now housing Johnson's Body Shop, Al's Liquor Store and formerly Dan's Automotive Shop.



Another scene from the disastrous 1914 fire. This shows Brockman House which stands near present-day Botill's.



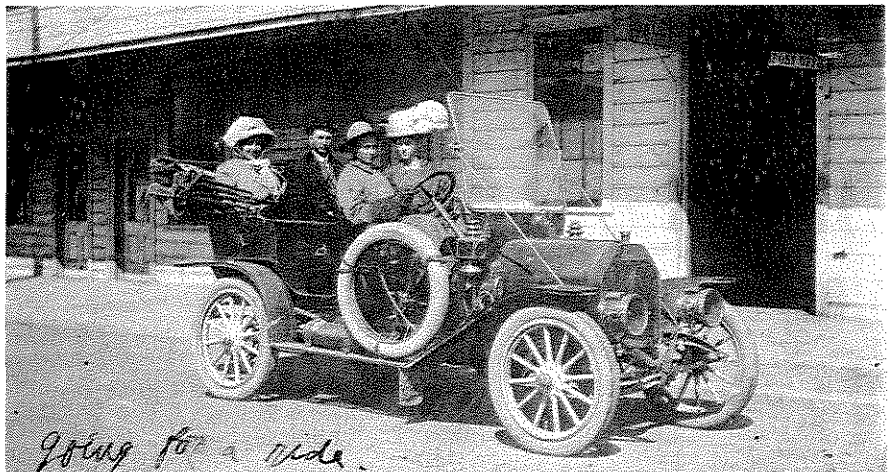
Gonzales' famous train wreck of 1915. A switch was left open and the above scene is what happened just at the north end of town.



Photo taken circa 1910, shows many of the buildings destroyed in the 1914 fire. Brockman House, Mills Grocery and part of Cochran's Meat Market.



The old S & T store that was moved to Fourth Street across from the present drug store when the new S & T store was built in 1913. After the move the upstairs was called "The Opera House," Centennial Book Committee Member Anita McGinley recalls. She said, "I can remember seeing 'The Perils of Pauline' with Pearl White. We called it the Pearls of Pauline and we could hardly wait from one episode to the next."



1911 — on the way to the first Salinas Rodeo. In the driver's seat are Frank Cooper, with Ethel Patten Kitchen beside him, and Mr. and Mrs. John Boekenoogan in the back. The post office was located where the Friendly Market is today.



Celebrations have always been a big thing in Gonzales. First, the May Day celebrations, then Swiss^e celebrations, later Mexican celebrations, and for the past 10 years or so the Fourth of July celebration. This photo taken in 1926 at Herald's Grove across the tracks shows one of many Swiss events held there between the early 1900's and the late 1930's. If you look close, you can spot Alfred Prader, Jack Prader, Carl Rianda, Jack McEntee, Lloyd Amaya, Walter Danini, Barney Danini, Manny Woodworth and James Rianda.

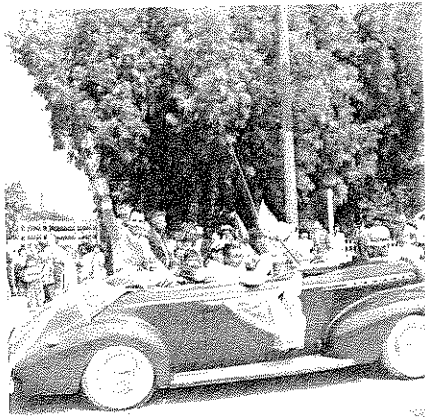
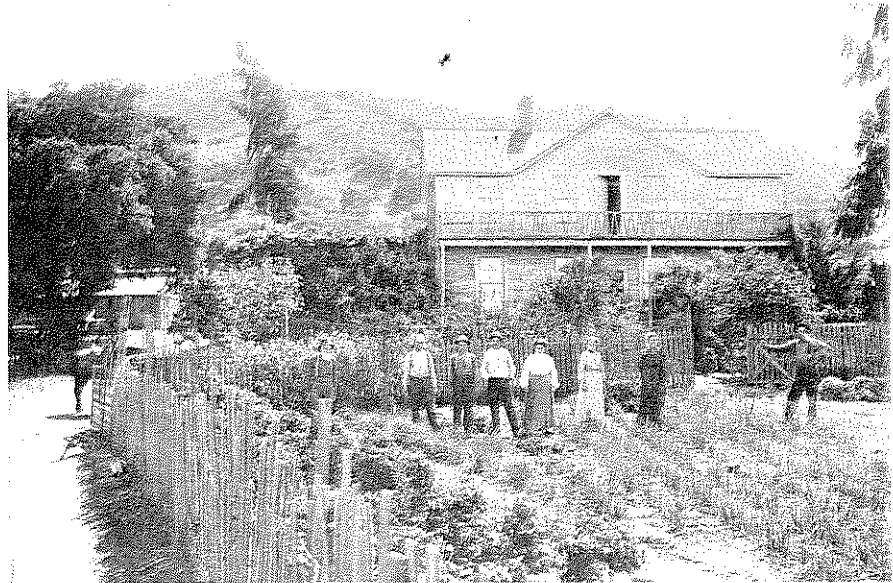


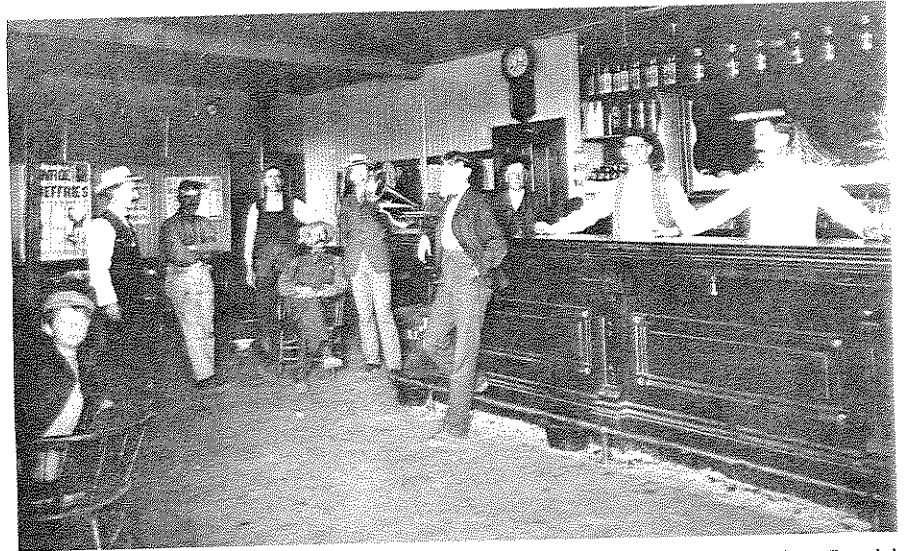
Photo taken in the late 1940's or early 1950's when several Mexican celebrations were held. Shows present city councilman Charles Villegas waving from a car during the parade. These celebrations were held at the City Park each September.



The elegance of the Alpine Tavern dining room is shown in this photo taken in the 1920's.



The Pugh home in Fairview district about 1906. L. to R., grandfather James Pugh, Henry, Weaver, Rube, Alice, Daisy, Mrs. Pugh and father, Samuel Oscar Pugh. This family, along with the Moons, was one of the first Gonzales area settlers.



The old Gonzales Hotel bar, 1904. L. to R., Otis McKinsey, John Gould, unknown, Fred Sneible, Fred Widemann, Dan Mills, Dr. Ned Gould, Bill Graves, Loren McKinsey and Bill Pettitt.



Sneible and Tavernetti's in 1923. L. to R., Frank McGinley, Eddie Prader and Loyal Coates.



Frank Mojica residence built in 1876. L. to R., Mr. and Mrs. Mojica and family; great uncle of Lottie Whalen, and Anita McGinley.



The Stag in 1910. L. to R., Pete Galetti, Chas. Bedolla, Mr. Corda, Fred Sneible, Mr. Robasciotti, Chas. Coffey, Sr., Albert Rianda, Pete Hook, Mr. Picornia, G. P. Codoni, John B. Abadie, Butch Abadie, Leon Escolle.



Mozzettini's Saloon in 1910. Located where Farmer's Market parking lot is now. Mr. Mozzettini is at the door in the white coat. Youngster is his son, Phillip.

THE DOCTORS WHO SERVED US SO WELL

Gonzales has been very fortunate to have been serviced by the medical profession in an uninterrupted string since the year 1882. In appreciation of this fact we would like to include a list of these doctors:

1. Dr. C. A. E. Hertell1882-1888
2. Dr. H. C. Murphy1888-1889
3. Dr. S. B. Gordon1889-1897
4. Dr. Rankin1897-1901
5. Dr. N. B. (Ned) Gould1901-1915
6. Dr. Baxter1915-1919
7. Dr. Elmer Bingaman1919-1921
8. Dr. William Bingaman1921-1928
9. Dr. Werner D. Meyenberg1928-1929
10. Dr. Patrick L. Davlin.....1929-1941
11. Dr. Gustav Eberhardt1936-1966
12. Dr. James R. Fassett1949-
13. Dr. June Dunbar1960-
14. Dr. Leonard Nevarez1969-

MAYORS OF THE CITY OF GONZALES

On January 10, 1947 the voters of Gonzales voted to form a municipality. The issue was a heated one and the vote indicated this as it was 141 to 140 for incorporation. Since this date the following men and women have served as mayors for the City of Gonzales:

- Joaquin Bondietti.....January 17, 1947 to April 17, 1956
Dr. Gustav Eberhardt.....April 17, 1956 to April 15, 1958
Ernest Bougher.....April 15, 1958 to April 17, 1962
Ray Rianda.....April 17, 1962 to April 19, 1966
Gene Tavernetti, Jr.....April 19, 1966 to April 18, 1972
Mrs. Ellen Turner Morgan.....April 18, 1972 to—