

A HISTORY OF
THE HERITAGE
1853-1970

By
CAROL GREEN WILSON

For
my dearest Charlotte Vickery,
who has been a helpful
partner in this project -

Affectionately

Carol Green Wilson

San Francisco
July 25, 1970



HORACE HAWES

whose generosity underlies the service of more than a century.

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PUBLISHED BY
THE LADIES PROTECTION AND RELIEF SOCIETY
SAN FRANCISCO
MCMLXX

DESIGNED AND PRINTED BY LAWTON AND ALFRED KENNEDY

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P R E F A C E

At the request of the Board of Directors I have prepared a short history of what is now known as THE HERITAGE, San Francisco's unique retirement home for citizens whose earlier years have contributed constructively to their communities. This is a supplement to "INASMUCH . . ." published in 1953 to celebrate the 100th birthday of The Ladies Protection and Relief Society.

At that time I edited a long manuscript written by the late Rowena Bean who had served many years on the Board of Managers. That contains much information and detailed quotations from annual reports. Five years later the merger with The Crocker Old Peoples Home, formerly located at 2507 Pine Street, brought radical changes and enlarged the scope of service.

Thus, as we enter the Space Age, this seems an appropriate time to combine the stories of these two institutions so permeated with San Francisco history. On July 21, 1969 this congenial family of *both* men and women who have experienced the transition from Horse and Buggy to Automobile to Jet Age watched "one small step for a man; one great step for mankind" as TV recorded for mankind Neil Armstrong's first step on the moon. Now as they share with great-grandchildren the wonderment of an era which for all their lives seemed only fantasy the pages of this little book will recall the progressive steps which have given them and others the comforts and security of this red brick home at 3400 Laguna Street.

As I have spent these many days delving into scrap books and minute books of both Homes, it has also been possible to discuss the happenings that led to the merger with those most intimately concerned. Mrs. Anna B. Pogson who had served the Crocker Home, first as Secretary and then as Superintendent for twenty-nine years as well as for ten more in the same capacity for The Heritage, shared her rich memories with me. Mrs. Warren Perry, then President of the Board of The Ladies Protection and Relief Society, and Mrs. Charles Porter of the Crocker Home, long-time friends of mine, gave me their version, and as did another friend, Mrs.

THE HERITAGE

Donald Craig, who served as liaison member of both Boards in the transition period.

Special thanks go, too, to Mr. David L. White of the Board of Trustees, for giving me details of the leasing of the Franklin Street property for the Jack Tar Hotel project. And I add appreciation to Mr. Herbert S. Anderson, long-time Assistant Treasurer and bookkeeper for the organization, whose memory helped in assembling facts and figures. He was now, as in the past, always hearing and helping those with problems.

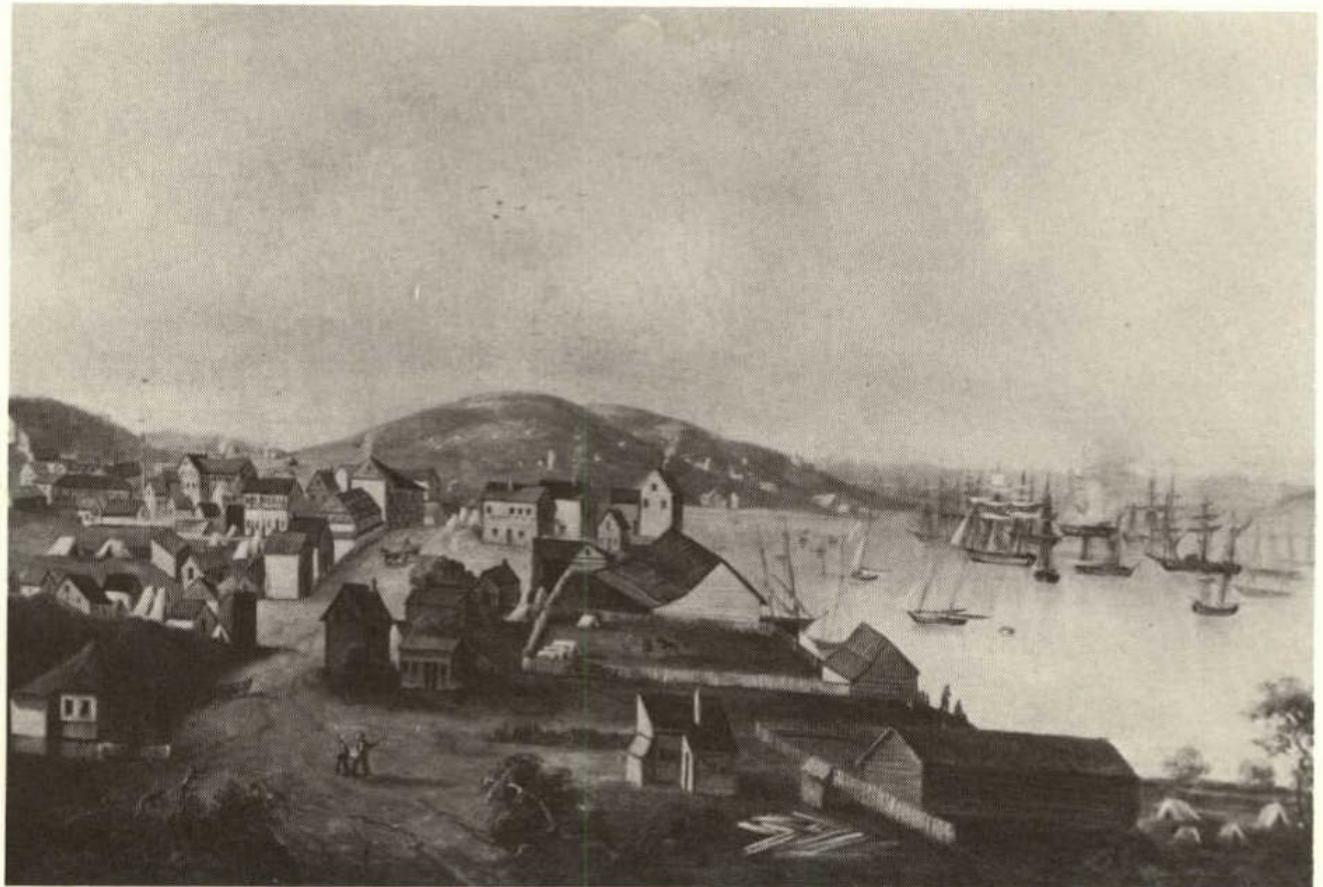
Mrs. J. W. Maillard, Jr., whose grandmother Mrs. S. B. Peterson and great aunt Mrs. Charles Nelson founded the Scandinavian Benevolent and Relief Society which became the Old Peoples Home, related tales of the early years and the succeeding period when some member of her family served the entire time until the merger. I thank them and the present staff of The Heritage, Mrs. Marian Bell, Administrator, Mrs. Ursula Casper, Mrs. Marjorie Fry and Mrs. Jerry McCombs as well as the current president Mrs. Lawrence Metcalf and immediate past presidents Mrs. Jack Logan and Mrs. William H. Nigh Jr. for help in presenting the recent history of the combined institutions.

CAROL GREEN WILSON
San Francisco

May 1, 1970

P A R T O N E

History of The Ladies Protection and Relief Society



San Francisco as it looked when this all began.

*Painting by Henry Firk
California Historical Society*



The "Old Brown Ark" at Geary and Franklin in 1884

California Historical Society



The red brick "Heritage," designed by Julia Morgan, at 3400 Laguna Street
Morton, Waters, Co.



Hospitable living rooms provide a welcome to "The Heritage"
Photo by Dickey & Harleen

CHAPTER I

"For Ladies in Need"—1853-1906

San Francisco in 1853 consisted of a small settlement of square whitewashed "portable houses" nestled around a Bay filled with the masts of deserted schooners. From the window of one of these makeshift homes on Second Street near Minna, Mrs. A. B. Eaton was startled to see a breathless girl climbing the wooden steps. She opened the door and the sobbing stranger poured out her tale. She had arrived that afternoon after a four months journey around the Horn expecting to find her brother on the dock. But neither he nor any emissary was there. Maybe he was dead, or off in the mines and had never received the letter saying she was coming. A ship's acquaintance had directed her to a place nearby, but one look at the rouged cheeks of the woman who had answered her knock had convinced her that this was no place for a lady. Mrs. Eaton's friendly face in the window had given her courage to come here for help. Would she give her protection until they could trace her brother?

The girl had come to the right place. Mrs. Eaton's husband, a major in the Army's "Commissary of subsistence," was a member of the Board of Trustees of Howard Presbyterian Church, which had been built in Happy Valley—between Mission, Market, First and Second Streets. In this area, with its good spring of water, were the homes of people like the Eatons and their pastor, Dr. Samuel Willey. This minister was the founder of a mission school which later developed into the University of California. The portable homes had replaced the hundreds of tents pitched in the feverish days of '49.

Dr. Willey listened sympathetically to Mrs. Eaton's young guest. He, too, had just befriended another New York girl who had crossed the Isthmus of Panama following a brother who had planned to open a store in San Francisco but had sickened and written home telling of his illness. His sister, hoping to nurse him back to health, had arrived just in time to see him die.

The minister agreed that some attention must be paid to

women stranded in this city with its gambling dens, saloons and prostitutes. True, there were by now eighteen churches, two government hospitals, an almshouse, several orphanages and some secret and benevolent societies. But not one of them provided the hospice visioned by Mrs. Eaton and Dr. Willey.

Thus it was that on August 4, 1853 Mrs. Eaton gathered a group of representative women of her church, as well as from the First Presbyterian, First Baptist and First Congregational (all founded in 1849). They met with women of Trinity Episcopal in their church on Pine Street between Montgomery and Kearny. The constitution of The Ladies Protection and Relief Society which was the outgrowth of that meeting has served with very few changes for over a hundred years. Its object "to render protection and assistance to strangers, to sick and dependent women and children" was made the individual responsibility of each member of the society. To insure this Article X specified: "It shall be the duty of all members of the Society to search out the condition of the poor, the sick and needy women and children, as they may have opportunity, and to report their circumstances and necessities to any member of the Board."

A "Board of Managers" was chosen to carry on the essential business, meeting once a month between the yearly gatherings of the entire organization. There were three classes of members: Annual at \$5, Honorary at \$20, and Life at \$50. But the income was uncertain and the work experimental. At first proteges were boarded in the homes of needy poor. The centrally located office on Sacramento Street below Kearny soon became a clearing house, not only for relief, but also the first employment office in the city. Wives of the newly-rich successful miners clamored for the services of domestic helpers. But most of the young wives left without funds while husbands headed for the Mother Lode were unprepared for any kind of work, their toddlers clinging to their skirts and babies cuddled in their arms.

Kindly Board members volunteered their time to advise

and encourage these women paying for the care of little ones while the mothers were trained or went to work.

Articles of Incorporation were presented at the first Annual Meeting on August 4, 1854, and five businessmen—William H. Dow, William A. Darling, Samuel M. Bowman, J. B. Crockett and A. B. Eaton—became the Board of Directors in charge of financial arrangements. The Certificate of Incorporation, signed by Mary Ann Darling, President, and Catherine D. Kellogg, Secretary, was recorded in San Francisco County records on May 28, 1855.

By 1857 it became apparent that more than an office was needed. Violent disagreement over the proposal to sponsor a home for the women and children who needed shelter almost disrupted the Society. A vote in favor was finally cast by a majority of two. The President, Mrs. Holbrook, and Mrs. Darling, by then Secretary-Treasurer, swept from the room, never to take part again in an organization entering upon "such a rash undertaking." Whereupon the seven remaining members reorganized, elected the Vice-President, Mrs. Nathaniel Gray, as President and Mrs. E. B. Goddard, who had proposed the action, as Secretary.

Mrs. Gray, whose service as president was to continue for thirty years, understood the needs. She had come to San Francisco in 1852, when her husband, founder of the N. Gray undertaking firm, had returned to New York for his family. After traveling with two small children on the perilous trip up the Chagres River on the Isthmus of Panama, they had arrived in Acapulco when that Mexican seaport was overflowing with people from a wrecked ship. Passengers on their ship offered to accept half rations of food and water in order to share with stranded women and children on the remainder of the voyage on to San Francisco.

By September 1857 the energetic Board had rented a house at Second and Tehama Streets for \$25 a month, furnished it with gifts from their members and employed a matron, Miss A. O. Strong. Mr. McKee, husband of a Board member, drove a large wagon along Front Street, inviting

merchants to contribute provisions of every sort and very soon the city's first "Hospitality House" was ready. Hand-bills advertising the change of scene were distributed throughout the city, reading "The office of the San Francisco Ladies' Protection and Relief Society is removed from 151 Sacramento Street to the corner of Second and Tehama Streets. All persons acquainted with any case of destitution or want are requested to give information at the office. All respectable women in want of protection, employment in families or as needle women, by applying at the office, will receive immediate attention. Families who need help in either of these departments of labor are also requested to apply to the agent at the office."

Among the new Managers were wives of two historically important California men—Mrs. Thomas O. Larkin, whose husband was the first American Consul in California while this territory still belonged to Mexico, and Mrs. James King, wife of the Reformer-Editor of the *Bulletin*, known as James King of William. These and other thrifty members questioned the wisdom of paying rent and set about looking for a building site.

Another Board member, Mrs. Denny, had the courage to approach a generous citizen, Mr. Horace Hawes, with the suggestion that he give a lot to the Society. This man, who proved to be a permanent benefactor, was a New Yorker who had let his ship sail on without him when it stopped in San Francisco in 1848 enroute to the Sandwich Islands where he was scheduled to serve as the first American Consul. He became the Prefect of the first Supreme Court of California, later District Attorney of San Francisco, and the author of the Consolidated Act of the City and County of San Francisco.

Horace Hawes' philanthropy knew no bounds. Pope Pius X awarded him a medal for his gifts of land to the Catholic Church. Now Mr. Hawes offered what seemed a far-out bit of sand dunes to this Protestant-sponsored charity. On July 10, 1860, a square block of land bounded by Van Ness, Geary, Franklin and Post Streets was deeded to the Society,

with the proviso that the recipient should never mortgage or otherwise endanger the title, nor could any of it be sold for many years. What satisfaction would be his today, knowing that the long-term lease of this property to the Jack Tar Hotel means perpetual and gratifying income to The Heritage at 3400 Laguna Street!

Before this gift was finalized the small rented house on Second and Tehama had overflowed and Mrs. A. B. Reese, an early Board member, had donned her paisley shawl, tucked a rose under the brim of her poke bonnet and departed for Sacramento on the riverboat to seek assistance from the State Legislature for the purchase of the more adequate house on Tehama Street as an interim home. She came back with \$3,000. The twelve women now on the Board then set out to raise the balance toward the \$5,000 purchase, directed not to return without at least \$200 apiece. The house and repairs cost \$6,369, but the women succeeded in securing the money. Soon they were asking for more as the work continually enlarged. The rapidly growing city had expanded to Larkin Street, with Bush, the one improved street, stretching far out to reach the new Laurel Hill Cemetery on the sandy lupine-covered wastes toward the Presidio.

A well-known architect, S. C. Bugbee, volunteered his talents and soon what came to be known as "The Brown Ark" rose on the sandy Hawes lot. This building that would mean home to thousands of orphans, half-orphans, and abandoned children, as well as temporary shelter for hundreds of women of all ages, was begun in the winter of 1862-63. Before work could commence a plank road had to be built from Larkin Street over which building materials could be transported and a wooden sidewalk was stretched along Post Street for workmen and other pedestrians.

By 1863 the secretary proudly recorded: "No estimate can be furnished of the assistance rendered by donations of second-hand clothing, groceries and provisions which have been sent in by the friends of the Society, and which have materially contributed to our resources. Still after due allow-

ance for this kind of aid, we do not believe a parallel can be produced for economy in the use of charitable funds."

The city was by now fully aware of the great service of this Society and gifts poured in from many an unexpected source. The Swain bakeries made it their responsibility to supply bread, cakes and crackers. The daily newspapers, *Alta* and *Bulletin*, published notices gratuitously and ran many articles that enlisted public support. Each Christmas a kindly gentleman named Samuel C. Harding enlisted the help of the Morton Drayage Company, driving teams and trucks from store to store asking for donations. "Sam Harding Day" became a gala event as the train of teams laden with groceries, provisions, drugs, drygoods, fire wood and "willoware" china arrived to be greeted by excited children and a thankful Board. Then all would join in a service of praise for the God-given necessities for another year.

As the Society entered its second decade of service the Home was still only a part of the welfare program. The Board continued to give help to the sick and needy wherever necessary, paying rents sometimes for families in distress, buying provisions and providing nurses, medical attendance, clothing and fuel for fifty-one families and in so doing aiding 141 children beyond those in the Home. They also helped clear the streets of beggars by instituting a system of tickets which protected the ordinary citizen from imposters. These tickets, sold for three dollars a dozen, became at the same time a small source of income. Those who bought them could hand one to a solicitant, knowing that the Society would investigate and give assistance only to the deserving.

Children placed in the Home were given schooling, trained for some useful occupation or sent to homes in the country (under an Act of the Legislature in 1858 giving them authority to "bind out," under proper conditions, any child in their care until he or she became of age—or for a shorter period). Thus, as the report of the secretary for 1863 records, children could be "removed from the evil influence

of the city, and especially from the influence of idle, dissolute and intemperate parents."

By 1865 the same secretary comments on the effect of the move into the commodious building on the sand dunes: "It has secured for our institution a position among the other noble charities of the city . . . no longer an experiment." The large number of children now in its care called for rigid house rules revealing a discipline in the 1860's inconceivable in the 1960's. "The children at meals always to raise the hand, and wait until the matron or teacher is ready to serve them. They shall enter and retire in regular order; also wash their hands and faces after every meal."

"Parents and friends may visit their children the first Thursday in the month, and at no other time, unless a special permission is granted by one of the Committee on Admissions."

General rules also covered observation of the Sabbath: "No visitor shall be admitted on Sunday, either to see the matron, teacher, or hired persons; and none may stay in the house, except by written permit of one of the Executive Committee." "All unnecessary cooking, or other secular work, to be avoided on Sunday." "All clothing to be prepared on Saturday."

The Ladies were without prejudice in their selection. Representatives of nearly every nationality in the cosmopolitan city were included in the family which by 1867 numbered two hundred and thirty nine women and children, with seventeen other youngsters placed in good homes outside the city. The Sunday *Alta* for May 24, 1868 described in several columns a visit to the Home where "bright-eyed children to the number of over a hundred, neatly and warmly clad, sported in the large open yard in all the simple confidence of childhood at home."

As the number of children increased the Board still received destitute women or those suffering from sudden misfortune, but only for temporary shelter. As soon as they were able they were expected to leave. One instance however,

was cited, to show how adaptable their rules became. A dis-traught mother with two small children arrived in San Francisco from Michigan to find that her husband had died during the time that they were making the long journey using tickets he had provided before leaving home to establish himself in this faraway city. She learned that he had been robbed before his death and here she was penniless. When they were brought to the Home she made herself so useful in the nursery that she was employed as permanent nurse, thus remaining with her own and cheering the twenty other motherless tots.

In spite of the generosity of its Board and their friends the budget of the Home was hard to maintain. In 1869 the new secretary, Mrs. George Barstow, reported that there was only \$40 in the treasury, with the bills of the last month still unpaid. Four years later she wrote of the continued prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," which seemed to be miraculously answered although "except for the gift from the State and a very small ground-rent we have nothing of assured income to depend on." Her appeal in the twentieth annual report was to the farmers of the state "for wheat and garden vegetables for the children's table and hay for our cow"!

Her words did not fall on deaf ears. The report for 1875 is filled with thanks for gifts, including an unexpected legacy from the James Lick Estate "to pay to the Ladies Protection and Relief Society of San Francisco for the use of the Society the sum of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) in like gold."

Further financial help came from an unusual source in 1879 when the Society was asked to participate with several other charities in an Authors' Carnival held in the Mechanics Pavilion. \$3,000 was added to their funds from this event. And in March 1880 the State Legislature passed an Act appropriating money to support orphans. This assured a steady income for living expenses but still they had no money for the completion of the building, now too small for their increasing needs. The State law specified that none of the

State funds could be used for improvements or erection of new buildings.

There was a building fund accumulating from bequests, but difficulties in the past had often forced borrowing from this for current expenses. Nevertheless, the value of the Hawes gift property was increasing as the city moved out around their sand hill. Houses had been built on the Van Ness side of the property on ground leased by the Society. In 1885 those leases expired and there was talk of accepting \$160,000 for the entire block. A committee was appointed to investigate other sites for the Home; but a letter from Mr. H. L. Dodge urged them not to sell, predicting that the land value would surely increase in the future. In March of 1887 the Board finally agreed to use some of its capital to purchase the houses, thus adding rents to the annual income.

That year brought great sorrow to the Board with the death of Mrs. Nathaniel Gray after thirty years as its President. Her \$1,500 bequest made possible the refurnishing of the Manager's room as a permanent memorial and her son, Mr. Giles Gray, replaced the children's beds with new cots and comfortable mattresses.

The following year Mrs. James Robinson, daughter of Mr. Hawes who had died in 1871, came on the Board. Miss Kate Hutchinson, whose mother was one of the pioneer Board members, became treasurer. Her father had been a Director and Secretary of that Board for a generation and her elder sister, Lizzie, Secretary-Treasurer of the Board of Managers for a decade. Miss Kate's brother Joseph was attorney for the Society for twenty-five years, followed after his death in 1910 by the younger brother James who served until his death in 1959, thus rounding out more than a century of devotion from the Hutchinson family.

Mrs. Robinson's unique idea of installing collection boxes for the work of the Home on all steamers making port in San Francisco added substantially to the income. One box was found floating on a piece of wood near Alcatraz Island after the wreck of *S.S. Rio de Janeiro* outside the Golden Gate on February 22, 1901. That souvenir is now fastened to the

wall between the two doors of the present Home at 3400 Laguna Street. In the old days coins from all over the world used to fill such boxes and the sale to collectors of some of the rare coins added to the revenue.

During the nineties substantial gifts increased the building fund. Mrs. Phoebe Hearst sent a check for \$5,000. The gift of fifty shares of Valley R.R. from the Hibernia Bank sold for \$3,000 three years later. After a legal battle that went to the Supreme Court, the Society was awarded \$11,487, as its share in a contested estate in 1896. The annual report for that year listed many other smaller gifts. After all expenses were paid, there was a balance of \$1,671.42. The Society felt so prosperous that new hair mattresses were ordered for the children's beds!

With all this encouragement the Board of Directors agreed with the Managers that the time had finally come to complete the new wing. In September of 1898 work began. On November 25, 1899 friends responded to invitations to view the new structure at a reception. They found the family settled in a modern up-to-date home, complete with kindergarten, assembly room, dormitories and an infirmary. Potted palms and greens provided by John McLaren from Golden Gate Park, and dishes loaned by Mr. Charles Wheeler added to the attractiveness of the party.

In her annual report for 1900, Miss Hutchinson quoted from George Eliot the story of a poor man caring for an outcast child: "Eh there's trouble i' this world and there's things as we can niver make the rights on. And all as we've got to do is to trusten, Master Marner, to do the right thing as fur as we know and to trusten. For if us as knows so little can see a bit of good and rights, we may be sure, as there's a good and a rights, bigger nor what we know." This, she said, represented "the feeling and faith of those who through the long years since first the Home was established, planned and labored and prayed for. . . ."

By 1904 they had sold property bequeathed to them earlier (a block bounded by McAllister, Fulton, Stanton and Willard) for \$50,000, the proceeds of the sale being invested

in thirty 5% bonds of the San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose R.R. at \$105. They debated the question of using the uninvested portion to purchase a block in the sand dunes south of Golden Gate Park to be used for a Home in the future when the present site might become too valuable or too crowded. No action was taken.

CHAPTER II

"It was time to Get"—1906-1907

A crumbling chimney fell on a small boy's bed on the morning of April 18, 1906; but he was not in it. When the Matron found him in the yard, she asked how he happened to escape.

"When the first brick fell, I thought it was time to get," he answered with childish directness.

Actually, according to the report of Mrs. Deering, the President, the entire family in the Franklin Street Home escaped except "one whose hurt was slight, disabling him but for a few minutes."

But the calamity that struck San Francisco on the gray dawn of that unforgettable morning taxed the courage and ingenuity of staff and Managers. The Matron, Miss McGladery, put the experience into vivid words in her report to the Board. It is history that must not be paraphrased.

"Nearly all were quietly sleeping when they were awakened by the falling of plaster and the swaying of the building. I went out into the hall, fearing a panic amongst the children. The night nurse was the only one in hysterics. But people with strong nerves have been known to give way under such terrifying circumstances. The swaying of the building was so awful it seemed as if at any moment we might be entombed.

"Strange to say, all the older children were calm and remained in bed, covering their heads with their blankets.

"The babies, however, didn't fare so well; the tanks had broken loose and the water had drenched them. There they stood with their little bundles of clothes in their arms, calling loudly for Miss Arlett. She was there in an instant and their fears were soon allayed.

"Earthquakes and fires do not prevent children from being hungry. Something to eat had to be furnished. Fortunately plenty of bread was on hand and the morning milk had been delivered. Those children ate just as heartily as if the even tenor of their lives had not been rippled. I noticed, though, they didn't stay in the dining room any longer than was absolutely necessary.

"Mr. Hutchinson was the first to reach the Home. Very soon parents and friends began to come to see if their little ones were safe. Many begged me to let them take their children, so that if all must perish, they might go together. Only those who have gone through such ordeals can realize the quivering of nerves in striving to appear calm and attempting to allay the fears of those so badly frightened as to have lost all self control. Believing the Home was unsafe, I acceded to their request, appreciating that every one removed was one less to care for.

"The day was spent in the lower part of the yard. By evening the fires had spread so rapidly it looked as if we would have to move before morning. Nevertheless mattresses were thrown out and the children were put to bed. The grown folks were up and down all night, watching the progress of the fire. The children were awakened and hastily but warmly dressed and given their breakfasts. Each was given a blanket to carry. We still lingered, however, though keeping a close watch on the fire, hoping some of the Managers might be able to reach us. At half-past ten we were ordered out by the authorities, as dynamiting was to be done on Van Ness Avenue. Where should we go with one hundred forty-five children for shelter? Just here the providence of God was shown. I was making for the Park when a soldier, assigned to duty in that neighborhood, said, 'Take your children to the Presidio; you will be better cared for there.' So to the Presidio we started.

"On our way out a gentleman gave us a large box of crackers. The children sat down by the wayside to eat this lunch and some ladies supplied them with good, pure water. Another gentleman offered me the use of four flats for the children. He was rather staggered when I asked him if he could feed them. Wishing to do something he asked whether I would like a cup of coffee and something to eat. 'Yes, if you will supply the ladies with me,—'I shall be glad to be of service,' was his reply. He made a fire on the road and we did enjoy the lunch.

"We reached the Presidio in the afternoon, footsore and

weary. Many of the little ones had to be carried. We had intended to camp inside the gate, but an officer suggested that we would be nearer supplies and the children would be better cared for in the grove in front of the General Hospital. Our Heavenly Father was still looking out for us. Never at any time through the confusion of those first days was our family unprovided for. I left Misses Jansen, Pillar and Jenkins to look after the old ladies. Mrs. Flint and Mrs. Dean would not leave the building. Misses Pillar and Jansen took Mrs. Coburn and Mrs. Cox, turn about, in a clothes basket, making for the Presidio. Someone took pity on Mrs. Cox and sent her to Mt. Zion Hospital for the night. It was after ten o'clock before the Misses Pillar and Jansen reached the Presidio with Mrs. Coburn. A few days later Mrs. Cox and Mrs. Coburn went to Dr. Brown's Hospital.

"Mrs. McCann was left at the Home to look after Mrs. Flint and Mrs. Dean. Mrs. Flint went to one of her friends. Mrs. Dean, consenting, was brought out by Mrs. McCann, joining us at the Presidio.

"Here I must speak of the thoughtfulness of Mr. Garriges, father of three of the children. He brought his team to the Home to see what he could do to help us. Mrs. McCann suggested carrying a load of blankets and Mrs. Dean. This was done and we were made comfortable.

"The babies were housed the first night in tents and by the second night all the small children were under cover. By the third night all were housed, fortunately, for the rain commenced on Sunday evening. Being on the slope, the ground soon became damp and also the blankets. The tents had to be moved, but the children were kept under cover. Notwithstanding all these trials, not one became sick.

"How glad we all were when our Managers were able to reach us, to stand at the helm to direct our future, relieving us of the responsibilities which we had assumed!"

Thirteen days after the earthquake the regular meeting of the Board was held at The Century Club, a block away on Franklin Street. The treasurer had not been able to make up her books; but she reported that there was \$2,494.95 in the

San Francisco Savings Union. Kind friends had come to the rescue in many ways. The Bank of California had received \$368.35 from relatives of the children. The Matron had turned in \$3.00 from the sale of bread enroute to the Presidio. Mr. Hutchinson told the Managers that the Home was in bad condition, but that the laundry was uninjured except for the chimney.

By this time the family was scattered. All the babies had been sent to Dixon in response to an invitation from some kind ladies who had come in the rain to offer this hospice. The nurse and the mother of two of the babies had gone with them. Dr. Dennis, son of a Board member, had secured the use of a government boat to take the rest of the children to a temporary home in Alameda. Quarters there were cramped and sickness began to appear. Sixteen children and one adult came down with typhoid. Sanitariums were expensive and doctors agreed to take the sick to the County Hospital. The best of care was given, but one small girl died.

Two staff members took twenty-five girls to Los Gatos, where a friend of the Home physician, Dr. Emma Willits, had found places for them. Eighteen boys went to the Belmont School down the Peninsula.

Before the end of May the Trustees received a letter from the Merritt Estate offering free use of an old building at 411 34th Street in Oakland for six months to a year. An estimate of \$2,500 to \$3,000 for repairs and additions to the Franklin Street building was accepted. In the meantime many offers to rent portions of that large lot for business purposes were considered and the Trustees arranged to rent the Van Ness Avenue frontage for two years to Friedland, Goldstein & Co. Only \$11,000 in insurance had been paid, owing to the fact that the Home was surrounded by inflammable structures. Nevertheless, work went forward on the repairs.



Where residents look out on bright flowers and trees
Photo by Dickey & Harleen

CHAPTER III

Return to Normalcy—1908-1921

By 1908, with the family she had nurtured so long safely re-installed in the Franklin Street Home, Miss McGaldery retired as Matron. She had given forty-three years to this service, beginning as Assistant Matron in 1865, and carrying full responsibility after 1871. She moved to Berkeley with her adopted family, a boy and a girl, making just one request. "If any of the ladies can help me to get Leo (he is your child as well as mine) into the Union Iron Works, or the Geneva Barn Works to learn his trade, it would be a great help to the boy and me," she said.

Two short-term successors took over the duties of Matron until Miss Ida V. Graham arrived in 1912 to begin her long years in charge of the Home. In that same year the devoted and beloved President of the Board, Mrs. Mary E. Dennis, died, and Miss Anna Beaver, who had been a Board member since 1885, assumed that office. Miss Beaver, a graduate of the first class at Vassar College, was a native San Franciscan whose parents had arrived in 1851 on their honeymoon. Wisdom, combined with a lively sense of humor, endeared her to people everywhere. New volunteers were soon adding to the developing program of the Home because of their friendship for its President.

Mrs. Oscar Cushing came to teach singing once a week, the results ringing in the joy of Christmas carols sung as never before. The holidays brought money, gifts and numerous invitations to share in celebrations, both public and in private homes. \$250 came from the estate of Daniel Myer. Mr. Henry Miller sent a hundred dollar check, with the hope that it could bring comfort to the elderly ladies. Attractive furniture for their rooms and a wheel chair, which enabled one of them to enjoy the upper porch with its flower boxes, were thus made possible.

The Sunday Schools of the city opened their doors to these children. Older girls were allowed to go unattended to Calvary Presbyterian, the big graystone church on the hilltop at Fillmore and Jackson, which had been moved,

stone by stone from its former site on Union Square just before the catastrophe of 1906 had devastated that part of the city. Older boys participated in the affairs of Trinity Episcopal Sunday School and a group of younger children were welcomed at the neighboring Unitarian Church.

Patriotism was encouraged when a dozen children from the Home were given seats at the church service President Taft attended at the First Unitarian Church. The rest of the household stood on the steps of the Home, vigorously waving flags as the Nation's Executive drove by, smilingly acknowledging the greeting. The Home was festive for the event, their old silk flag waving at the entrance, and a new one, the gift of Mr. Hutchinson, unfurled to the breeze above.

Saturdays were busy in the Home, with volunteer teachers Miss Davenport and Mrs. Avenali instructing the girls in sewing at their club meetings and the Misses Eloesser and Hopkins keeping the Library open, advising the youngsters in the selection and care of books.

Cooking lessons were pleasurable in the model kitchen where on alternate weeks the mid-day meal was prepared and served by two different groups. The report said hopefully that "the neat little maids in white caps and aprons may grow up to feel that housekeeping may be made beautiful and that home-making is one of woman's highest privileges."

Gardening and manual training were planned for the boys, but lack of space for the latter made it difficult.

There were no long vacation outings for the children during the summer, but they were taken often to the parks, beach, Presidio, and other points of interest.

A small sum of money was left from the vacation fund. This, with another amount that belonged to the boys as a whole, was put by unanimous vote into a good magic lantern. The silent piano in the old school room, through an inspiration of Miss Beaver, was transformed into a Victor talking-machine, which made its appearance on the Fourth of July.

There were songs, band selections, and a gay little tune

drew children and attendants into a waltz, and they wound up with a Virginia reel. These two modern entertainers were great helps at the little parties given for the older children. Supper and some little surprise always wound up these evenings giving a real family flavor.

When the school year began in August, 1912, about half the children were transferred to the Adams Cosmopolitan School. It was thought wise that at least some of the children should have the advantages of a good building.

Gymnasium classes on Monday afternoons were made more attractive when neat suits of blue serge were substituted for the miscellaneous assortment of gingham dresses previously worn. Because Miss Graham would not neglect the boys they, too, were provided with equally suitable uniforms. General alertness, ready response to orders and more freedom and breadth of work brought satisfactory improvement in all groups.

The Managers were especially gratified as they began to meet their boys and girls in all sorts of useful occupations about the city. In large department stores, grocery stores, hairdressing, millinery and other establishments they were often greeted by those who had grown up in the Home. In offices efficient secretaries and typists attested to the value of the businesslike training these young people had had in their formative years.

In February, 1913 school work in the Home was abandoned and all the children were sent to the Adams Cosmopolitan School. One Board member, Mrs. C. G. Cambron, felt strongly that these orphans should not be marked by their uniforms. She had difficulty convincing fellow Board members of this necessity, but finally she went downtown and bought some bright ginghams and made up school dresses of various styles for the little girls.

During that summer, the youngsters from the Home had their first experience of vacation away from the city fog. One of the Directors discovered a ranch in Sonoma County which could be rented for the purpose and Mr. George Newhall, a trustee, footed the bill.

It was a thrilling experience to most of the children. They rode on the ferry boat and train. One little boy, after the three-hour ride asked, "Are we still in the United States?"!

Miss Graham and her assistants had a busy time unpacking and arranging everything for the family of one hundred twelve children. But they were well rewarded in the happiness of the children as they fed the chickens, played with the kittens and the dogs, gathered flowers and waded in the creek. The older ones went swimming and all reveled in the freedom and the sunshine. "Are we going to go back next summer?" begged a chorus as they boarded the train headed back to the city. "I need to go back to the country," insisted one of the little fellows with expectant emphasis.

It was a problem to instill the joy of doing for others into these children for whom so much was done. Mrs. Vandenberg, a wise Life Member, proposed that they make gifts for the Indians. Little fingers worked eagerly under Miss Graham's guidance. When the work bags were finished the Matron took her girls to the YWCA where they could deliver their gifts personally and see the variety brought by other groups. The youngsters listened with responsive hearts as the speaker of the evening told about the young descendants of the First Americans on the big reservations. When it was announced that the singer expected for the program had not arrived it was the turn of the girls from the Home to express their public appreciation of Mrs. Cushing's training. Quite willingly they stepped onto the platform, delighting the audience with their spontaneous music.

Early in December death took the one who had done so much to instill the spirit of family life into the Home. Mary McGladery's last days had been spent in the home of her adopted daughter, Miss Laura Frank in Piedmont. As Dr. Palmer of the Plymouth Foundation spoke of the long years when Miss McGladery had been a tower of strength to her associates and a source of inspiration to all who had looked to her for counsel and friendship the room was filled with young people and Board members. Even in retirement she had listened to and guided the many who had come for

visits of gratitude. The home which had been haven to her in the evening of life seemed to overflow with kindness given and received.

More and more the children were allowed to feel themselves a part of the community life. When San Francisco was host to the world during the Exposition of 1915, friends and Board members made it possible for many of the children to take advantage of the opportunities of those months. In April, thirty of them were guests of Mrs. Thurston of the Board of Managers at a concert by Mme. Schumann-Heink; in May the whole group had a gala day at the Exposition. Miss Graham took their picnic supper to the grounds, but allowed the youngsters in groups to have liberty until the lights went out. Her confidence was rewarded, for each one was true to the trust and all returned at the appointed time. In June, Mr. Anagastia of Argentine entertained them lavishly. Then the entire Family departed for a summer camp rented by the Society at Sunol.

The following summer, that of 1916, the Society at last owned its permanent summer place—the gift of Mr. Arthur Smith who with his sister, Miss Louise Smith, had given generously to the children in many other ways. At “Happy Land”—thirteen acres of ideal country at Los Gatos—the children had many a summer pleasure, marred only by the scourge of poison oak. Even here there was a kind friend ready with his service. Dr. Gober of Los Gatos cared for the little patients, his only remuneration their grateful thanks.

As their country became embroiled in World War I, the youngsters were made to realize that there were children less fortunate. Their unit—the Franklin Street Red Cross Auxiliary—started work in 1917. A 1918 Report gives the children of the Home credit for contributing from their savings toward French baby kits. Kindliness showered on these wards of San Francisco philanthropists now overflowed in new channels. Like all Americans, they found themselves a participating force in the world beyond their own shores.

CHAPTER IV

Another Phase of Work . . ." — 1921-1953

In October of 1921 the Board of Managers was faced with a trying decision. State authorities on child care were stressing a new program of foster homes for dependent children. State aid was now diverted to paying for their care in private homes. This meant a steadily decreasing demand for the type of work that had by now almost completely superseded the original purpose of protection of women.

As the city had increased in population, the pressing need now seemed to be that of providing for elderly ladies. An offer came to consolidate the work of the Society with the University Mound Old Ladies Home. Miss Beaver, still more interested in child care, proposed the possibility of uniting with the Protestant Orphanage, an institution that claimed the prestige of the city's first organized charity.

At the Annual Meeting of January 3, 1922, Mr. H. M. A. Miller, Secretary of the Board of Trustees, presented the arguments on both propositions, saying that the men favored amalgamation with the University Mound. The majority of the Managers seemed to agree.

For some time it had seemed inevitable that a change of location for the Home must come, as the Hawes property had now become far too valuable and too close to business for its original use. At this meeting in 1922, there was talk of acquiring property bounded by Francisco, Bay, Laguna and Octavia Streets, but until the future course was settled nothing could be done. In March the generous owner of that property, a widow, Mrs. Kate F. Austin, offered it as a gift. The deed records that the Society paid a token fee of \$10.00 for this valuable land—the former site of the "Gay Way" at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition!

Matters progressed so far that summer that in August a new name—the San Francisco Home for Women and Children—was selected for the proposed consolidated organization. But a month later the Board of Managers came to the conclusion that Mr. Miller had swept them off their feet in his enthusiasm for the amalgamation of the two societies.

Feeling that, after all, the work of their own organization had always been unique, the secretary was instructed to write their attorney, Mr. Hutchinson, explaining that it was the consensus of opinion that it would be wiser to continue along their own particular lines than to combine with any other organization. At the same time, a letter of appreciation was sent to Mr. Miller in recognition of the time and effort he had given to the proposal.

By November the Society had arrived definitely at the most important conclusion that a new building should be erected for "the care of elderly women and convalescent women and children."

That this decision had been made with prayerful and conscientious thought was revealed in the excerpt from the Secretary's report to be incorporated in the minutes of the annual meeting of January 1923:

"That the period of transition, investigation, and discussion has closed with a unanimous decision as to the change of work and a Board closely united on all fundamental questions, we feel, is largely due to our President, Miss Beaver, subordinating her personal love for work among children to the broader consideration of the needs of the community. With breadth of vision and wide study in all charitable work, she has stood aside to let the Board come to its own conclusions, helping always, giving of her time, strength and knowledge for every need. Thus, we, the Board, go forward into the new year with the utmost confidence in our beloved President and the work yet to be done."

By February the Building Committee was far enough along for its chairman, Miss Foster, to give an account of the work accomplished and present two rough sketches of the proposed new building submitted by the architect, Miss Julia Morgan. Also, at this meeting a motion was made and carried that the annual membership fee be abolished this year and that at the next printing of the constitution and by-laws, the change be made.

Owing to the difficulty with the children in getting a proper caretaker for the boys (as they were so few in num-

ber), and with the contemplated change of the work of the Home, it was decided at the March meeting to pass the following resolution: ". . . that as a fitting opportunity occurs the boys are to be gradually placed in new homes and institutions."

In April, there were thirty children still enrolled at the Home. All of the parents and agencies were notified that the children would have to be placed elsewhere at the end of the school term. The Juvenile Court was looking after its own, while Mrs. Ollcull of the State Board of Control helped to find homes for many of the children.

In February of 1924, another change of policy was expressed in a motion which declared: "It is the sense of this meeting that in our future work we do not limit ourselves in selecting the people for the new Home from this city only."

By March the Building Committee reported that the Trustees had approved the plans for the new building, to cost \$150,000. As work on this edifice went forward the public was informed through the press, and the *Chronicle* published a history of the Society with a plan of its future work.

As the Society would no longer be using Camp Smith at Los Gatos, the YWCA was given permission to spend the month of July there.

Work progressed smoothly. On March 3, 1925, the Board of Managers met for the first time in the large living room of the red brick building at 3400 Laguna Street. Miss Beaver spoke appreciatively of the spirit of cooperation which had made the undertaking possible and the treasurer revealed that all this had been accomplished with a balance of over \$28,000 left in the bank.

After much thought and study, the Board had concluded that the greatest need of the community could be best met by providing a home for gentlewomen of reduced circumstances resident in the Bay Area. In pursuance of its original intentions there would be no requirement of a lump sum for admission, because that often acts as prohibitive to those most worthy of aid. Since those admitted to this "Family Group" would come presumably for the rest of their lives,

the committee on admissions was admonished to exercise the greatest care in selecting women of similar tastes, education and interest in the intent of welding them into a congenial unit.

For its other phase, that of a convalescent home for women and children, the Home was planned with a wing capable of housing twenty-three temporary "guests" at a time. Since the finances of the Society would not warrant a completely free sojourn, a nominal fee of \$1.00 per day (soon increased to \$1.50) was stipulated. Convalescents were admitted only through the recommendation of physicians—a service used and appreciated by many of the city's leading doctors. Year after year, for a quarter of a century, letters of heartfelt appreciation came from women who returned to health in this cheerful home.

During World War II, many of those who were able participated in Red Cross work of many kinds. There was a First Aid Training Course given at the Home. In the upstairs sunporch, groups daily wound bandages or wrapped hundreds of food packages to be sent to prisoners of war overseas. Miss Georgina Helen Ash, for twenty years Superintendent of the Home, took charge of this work for the Society and in addition, took under her wing many a lonely soldier who enjoyed a cheerful meal in the large dining room and found in her someone who could write an understanding letter to an anxious family in a faraway state.

Peace returned. Miss Ash and the members of the Board began to realize that the future use of this splendid building and the increasing income from the valuable property inherited from Mr. Hawes needed careful study. The little village where Mrs. Eaton had met the appeal of the stranded girl had grown into a metropolis. San Francisco as a port of embarkation had fascinated hundreds of service men now swarming back to re-commence their lives and they wanted to live by the Golden Gate. California was on its way to becoming the nation's most populous state. Long Board meetings were given over to discussion of the next step in meeting the demands of a new era.

But in April of 1953 they laid all questioning aside and held a 100th birthday party at 3400 Laguna Street. Community leaders and friends from far and near streamed up the stone steps to congratulate current leaders on their keeping of the trust.

Some members of the Board were carrying on for family pioneers. Mrs. Philip Landis' great-grandfather, Thomas Selby, tenth mayor of San Francisco, had married the widowed daughter-in-law of Mrs. A. B. Reese, whose trip to the State Legislature in the late 1850's had helped the Society to purchase its first home. Mrs. James Towne remembered stories of her husband's grandmother, Mrs. A. C. Nichols, another of the indefatigable twelve who had raised funds for the purchase of the first house on Tehama Street. Mrs. William Hilbert's childhood had been filled with sympathy for the orphans in the Franklin Street Home when her father, Mr. Sheldon Kellogg, had been the Attorney for the Board.

As the Society entered its second century these new Board members and their associates found 20th century friends ready with the same sympathy that had motivated San Franciscans of the early days. A delightful Garden House provided by the May T. Morrison Fund was filled daily with grateful women enjoying its potted plants and ferns. A free bed at the Children's Hospital was always ready for a seriously ill member of the household. This was the gift of two civic-minded sisters, Edith and Lucy Allyne, who had also given the money to purchase flats on adjoining Francisco Street in which to house the staff of the Home.

In the words of a current brochure, the Society was continuing to "keep faith with its founders of 1853, though in a different form, by giving PROTECTION to women, who after the burden and strain of life need a sense of security and the rest of a permanent home, and by RELIEF to the minds and bodies of the women and children who come to us to be built up in health and strength in order to face the world anew."

The current President of the Board of Managers, Mrs.

Edwin Krick and her husband, Treasurer of the Board of Trustees, were another faithful couple who had lent talent, time and energy to the keeping of this trust. As Executive Vice President of what was then The American Trust Company (now merged with Wells-Fargo Bank), Mr. Krick's expertise in finance had enabled him to help manage the funds so as to increase the income and usefulness of the Home in many ways. And it was Mrs. Krick's knowledge of the past and interest in history that led to the publication in abbreviated form the long account prepared by the late Rowena Bean as the volume honoring the 100th birthday under the title "Inasmuch. . . ."

Even so no one of those enjoying that anniversary could dream that in another five years they would be gathering again to celebrate a merger with a pioneer institution just then pondering as they were how to meet the needs of this rapidly changing community. The history of that group must now be told before the story of *THE HERITAGE* can be brought up to date.

PART TWO

History of the Crocker Old People's Home

CHAPTER V

A Haven For Elderly Men and Women—1874-1958

Twenty years after Mrs. Eaton had called her church friends together to organize the Ladies Protection and Relief Society two sisters, wives of transplanted Danish sea Captains whose home port was San Francisco, became concerned with the plight of elderly Scandinavians. In 1875 Mrs. Charles Nelson and Mrs. Seabury Baltzer Peterson organized The Scandinavian Benevolent and Relief Society and set about finding a home where couples or single persons without families could spend their sunset years.

The first such home was in the house originally owned by Cutler McAllister on First Street. Applicants brought their own furniture and paid a lump sum (the first seven paid \$200-\$300) for their life care. The women who called themselves the "Board of Lady Managers" had a difficult time raising money to keep the project alive, but Minnie Nelson was indomitable. Having only one child, a daughter (her sister had eleven children), she had time to devote to her project. She organized a successful "Ball of All Nations" and herself prepared businessmen's lunches served on Montgomery Street to earn needed funds.

In 1879 financial troubles were harassing San Francisco; there was political upheaval in the city; and Captain Nelson lost a fleet of vessels. Mrs. Nelson's Board was ready to abandon ship, but she was insistent. She prevailed on the City Fathers to lease the old corporation yards—an entire city block on Francisco Street between Powell and Stockton. Then she found enough other interested citizens to raise money for a building.

For ten years elderly people found a comfortable home on this site. The name was changed to The Old People's Home and its occupants were not all of Scandinavian origin. By 1884 the building was too small. Minnie Nelson took her troubles to her friend Mrs. Charles Crocker, who saw an opportunity to provide a permanent memorial to her late husband. New property was acquired at the corner of Pine and Pierce Streets in the rapidly growing Western Addition. Mrs.

Crocker not only gave the property, but also partially endowed the Home which was soon built and renamed the Crocker Old People's Home.

As was the case with the Ladies Protection and Relief Society, through the years, some member of the founding families served either or both Boards. The minutes of the 1901 Annual Meeting record the presence of Captain S. B. Peterson, President of the Trustees (Joseph Knowland was Vice-President). Mrs. D. E. Freile, President of the Board of Lady Managers, said in her report: "There is full need of support from the charitably inclined." She mentioned among business firms who assisted the institution the Red Stack Tug Boat Company and the Red Salmon Canning Company, of which Captain Peterson's son, Ferdinand, was President. He later became President of the Trustees following his father's death. His daughter, Kate Peterson Mailliard (Mrs. John Ward, Jr.) later assumed her mother's place among the Lady Managers. Her cousin, Mrs. Eugene Breese, daughter of Captain and Mrs. Nelson, served many years. Sometime later when Mrs. Mailliard visited Denmark she reported to the Board on her return that she had visited relatives who told her that there had been six Claussen sisters in her family. Three had stayed in the homeland. The other three came to San Francisco. One was her grandmother, Mrs. Peterson, and a second her great aunt, Mrs. Nelson; but no one knew about the third. After the meeting a long-time member of the Board, Mrs. Melanie Matignon, came to Mrs. Mailliard, saying "I believe I am the granddaughter of the third sister. My grandmother died when my mother was born, but I have often heard 'Aunt Minnie Nelson' and 'Aunt Marie Peterson' mentioned at home." This mutual interest in this Home brought the family lines together!

In her report to the 1901 meeting, Mrs. Freile thanked other early San Francisco business firms for their support, mentioning Sperry Flour Company, Hammond and Brother Lumber, Tindal and Company Grocery Firm. The Needle-work Guild also received thanks for its contribution to the comfort of the people in the Home.



The Crocker Old People's Home, Pine and Pierce Streets about 1889
Society of California Pioneers



The Founders look down on the pleasant sitting room of the old Crocker Home
Ralph Young photo



Where the Crocker Home Family enjoyed their garden
Morton & Co., Photographers

The Superintendent of the Home, The Reverend McKelvey, whose wife was Matron for many years, gave a significant report concluding: "We emphasize the religious side as vital to the highest and best conditions, to the spirit of peace and harmony . . . men and women who bow together at the same altar in prayer are much more patient of each other's faults and failures, more ready to forgive real or fancied injuries, much more sympathetic in the time of sickness and death. . . . The ideal Home is Christian in the largest sense. This was primary with founders and donors."

At this time there were one hundred and twenty-seven people in the Home. It was said that many wills bequeathed one to eight thousand dollars to "friends who have no one responsible for them." Mr. McKelvey stated current needs as "electric lights in the halls, offices, parlor, library and dining room." His report ended with a Biblical quotation: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto me," —a verse used later that year in the memorial service for Minnie Nelson. (Fifty-two years after that the same verse became the inspiration for the title of the first history of the Ladies Protection and Relief Society!).

As was the case with that earlier Society it took devoted attention on the part of competent businessmen to run its affairs. The Trustee's report for May 1902 reveals some of the problems. This was the 28th year of the institution, which now had housing capacity for one hundred and thirty-eight people. There were then only one hundred and twenty in residence. Of these twenty were "guests," that is to say, free of any expense; thirty-six had paid from \$300 to \$1,000 for life care; and the rest from \$1,000 upward. Although it had been earlier estimated that living costs would be \$74.00 per person per year, actual figures now showed \$216.51. Nine of the people who had come over from the Francisco Street Home had been in their care for twelve to sixteen years. Provision of adequate care of all these elderly men and women placed a heavy burden on the men responsible for the financial stability of the Home. They found that

they needed to be aggressive in seeking outside support and they often succeeded in securing gifts from their business associates. At this time The Emporium and I. Magnin were added to the roll of donors.

Because of the community interest thus engendered the Home was often the recipient of legacies in the form of real estate, from the sale of which their income grew gradually. Trustees' minutes show many a transaction reflecting the changing values of San Francisco property. In July of 1903, for instance, there was a motion to sell a lot at Lombard and Stockton Streets for "not less than \$7,000." \$8,000 "in gold" was received from Luigi Nunziata in January 1904.

As funds accumulated the Trustees were able to allow the "Lady Managers" increased allotments for running expenses and upkeep. This was reflected in the purchase of new porcelain bath tubs to replace the old tin ones in April 1906. At the same annual meeting when this was reported there was a reference to a legacy from the estate of one of the city's early benefactors, Bartlett Doe, who with his brother had provided funds for the great Doe Library at the University of California. Eventually the title to such real estate was relinquished by the acceptance of stock in the Doe Estates Company, from which continued income came to the Home through subsequent years.

In this period the Home lost its founders. Mrs. Nelson had died in 1901, Captain Peterson in April 1906, and in 1909 the doughty Captain Nelson was gone. A beautiful window in the chapel memorialized the Nelsons and a tribute was entered in the books of the Trustees lauding the Captain as "an Argonaut. . . . The Institution has felt the loss of his mentality, his activity, his help and his cheery nature and constant courage." Three years later the Nelsons' only daughter, Margaret Breese, became the President of the Board of Lady Managers, extending her family's influence through long years of selfless service.

By the time Mrs. Breese assumed this responsibility, in 1912, residents were paying \$1,500 to \$2,000 for life care, the average age was sixty-three and many spent twenty

years in the Home. The Annual report for 1912 gives the cost of meat per month as \$569.90 (about ten cents a day for residents and staff). Added to this was twenty-five cents per day for fruit, vegetables and groceries! The Trustees figured that the original investment of each resident paid at most for six years, leaving fourteen of their twenty years "free." F. C. Peterson, now President of that Board, proposed that such people should be urged to leave something to the Home in their wills.

The death of another early Trustee, Joseph Knowland, in 1912 called for a resolution honoring "a foremost citizen who was a moving spirit in the workshops of the world and at the same time a champion of the poor, weak and aged."

As these stalwarts passed on successors in each decade guided the institution through the agonizing years of World War I, the spendthrift jazz age of the 'twenties and the discouragement of the depression. In spite of these upsets in the outside world life moved serenely behind the white walls of the house on Pine Street. Flower lovers tended their individual plots in the garden fenced off from the busy street, and cozy fires burned brightly in the well-stocked library. The billiard and music rooms attracted devotees while services in the exquisite chapel gave uplift to those who listened to the pipe organ or sang around the old spinet. A new superintendent, the Reverend Joseph Denham, brought inspiration to their worship.

In the early 'twenties a young widow named Anna B. Pogson joined the staff as assistant to Mr. Denham. Aged twenty-five, she not only brought a youthful viewpoint, but also livened the atmosphere of the Home through her little daughter, who was—until her marriage in the gracious parlors of 2507 Pine Street—the pet of the elderly household. Thirteen years after Mrs. Pogson arrived the sudden death of Mr. Denham projected her into the position of Resident Director. Her respect for age and understanding of its many facets endeared her to residents and Board while her capable management assured the smooth functioning of the enterprise.

Important business leaders such as bankers William H. Crocker and his brother, George, Charles S. Green, and George E. Kennedy; Allan Pollock, Manager of the Palace Hotel; Attorney Charles F. Hanlon who served as legal advisor for many years with no compensation beyond an annual token Christmas gift intended to cover expenses. Minutes of passing years show them debating the economy of buying bread from bakeries or having it made on the premises. In the same meeting they were discussing a lease to an oil company of their lot at Pine and Larkin stipulating that they should be paid "one cent per gallon sold, not to be less than \$150 per month nor more than \$450."

Then suddenly in the early 'thirties the Trustees were faced with a major problem. Fire inspectors condemned the Old Peoples' Home. What should they do now? A committee was appointed to consider all the angles. Should they modernize and fireproof 2507 Pine Street? Purchase the rest of the block and erect a new and larger building? Reduce the number housed to 100? Look for a new location?

The Fire Department was placated with temporary changes, and discussion of future plans lingered on for twenty years. During this interval a former President of the Ladies Protection and Relief Society, Mrs. Donald Craig, became friendly with Mrs. Pogson. They talked about the suggestion of a Trustee, Mr. C. J. Bradley, that the Crocker Home purchase an apartment house on the shores of Lake Merritt in Oakland and rebuild it into a modern retirement home. This would involve an expenditure of over a million dollars, as well as a complete revision of the Articles of Incorporation. Mrs. Charles Porter, then President of the Board of Lady Managers, was anxious to keep the Home in San Francisco. When Mrs. Craig suggested a possible merger with the Ladies Protection and Relief, who were then discussing a change in the use of their beautiful home, she listened attentively.

"We have the money," said Mrs. Craig, "you, a history of good works. Why not combine our resources and enlarge 3400 Laguna to accommodate both families?"

Mrs. Craig was asked to serve on Boards of both Homes as a liaison in 1954. The President of the Board of Trustees of the Crocker Home, Mr. Daniel J. Murphy, was also a Vice President of the Crocker Bank. He agreed that this merger would work to the best interests of the two institutions and of the community. But there were members of the Crocker Home Board who disagreed vehemently. These men pointed out that they still had contracts with many people, some of whom had now paid \$15,000 for life care (although in 1952 there had been a change in policy which allowed "boarders" to pay monthly installments of two to three hundred dollars). They also reminded the rest of the Trustees of property bequeathed for specific use of the Crocker Home. Long briefs were prepared by distinguished lawyers for adherents of both sides of the argument. Permission must be obtained from the State Department of Welfare for such a radical change. The opinion of the Attorney-General of California was sought.

Both official sanctions were given for the merger; three members of the Crocker Home Trustees resigned; and the property was sold to the Catholic Church which already owned the rest of the block between Pine and Bush Streets. A new interim corporation was formed to conduct the complicated business of combining the two old institutions under one Board; and a letter came from Mrs. Kathryn Switzer of the State Department of Social Welfare predicting that the merger would "create a stronger agency, one which will be able to offer services greater than the sum total currently offered by the two separate agencies."

Warren Perry, distinguished Emeritus Head of the Department of Architecture of the University of California, and husband of the then President of the Board of Managers of the Ladies Protection and Relief Society, began plans for the enlargement of the building on Laguna Street.

During the time that this transition was taking place the Directors of the Ladies Protection and Relief Society had been negotiating a long-term lease on the old Hawes property on Franklin Street. In 1954, President of the Board of

Directors, Mr. Bruce Cornwall, whose mother had been another of the courageous early members of the Board of Managers, and his associate, Mr. David L. White, had been approached by a Texas oil man, Mr. C. Sammons, owner of a chain of Jack Tar hotels, with respect to the future use of this valuable full city block. After uncounted hours of volunteer service on the part of these two loyal Directors the deal was consummated. Soon a 400-bed hotel and a twelve-story office building were rising on the former sand lot, representing a ten-million dollar investment. Returns from that lease would mean continued and substantial revenue to the new institution which now would combine these two pioneer San Francisco charities.

The combined assets of the two Boards would not quite cover the million dollars needed to build a fourth floor to make room for the anticipated occupancy of one hundred, but there was enough to make a beginning. Additional financing was made possible through the wise management of men like Bruce Cornwall, Edwin Krick and Daniel Murphy. By November 1957 the place was ready. Sixty-seven former residents of 2507 Pine Street moved to 3400 Laguna. Mrs. Pogson came with them as the new Administrator, taking over from Miss Ash, who was just retiring after thirty years service which had brought comfort and encouragement to innumerable women. Miss Ash's files were full of appreciation from those whom she had helped in their dark hours, especially during the period when convalescent care was an important project of the Society. She had also seen the organization through the war years when her concern for men and women in the service had been transmitted to the residents leading them to do their bit for those who had been called to their nation's defense. Letters from all over the world also testified to this extracurricular contribution.

P A R T T H R E E

The Heritage

CHAPTER VI

A New Family and a New Name

At age 105 there was another dedication at 3400 Laguna Street. On Friday afternoon, April 18, 1958 the new million-dollar Home was festive as guests called to greet the enlarged family, both men and women, who were now enjoying the facility made possible by the combined resources and management of these two historic institutions.

Captain Barrett Hindes, now President of the Board of Directors with his Vice-President, Charles J. Bradley, Mrs. Warren Perry and Mrs. Charles Porter, President and Vice-President of the Managers, were proud hosts. Members of both Boards escorted visitors through spacious living rooms, filled with congratulatory flowers and plants. They were taken down the long corridor with its vista of the enclosed garden on one side and the cheerful dining room opposite, and welcomed in some of the comfortable private living quarters. Here each of the hundred residents had expressed individual tastes in furnishings brought from their own homes or loaned from the supply kept by the Home and adapted to personal arrangements. Each hall had attractive communal sitting rooms. Two recreation and hobby centers, and an inviting library brought people together in congenial surroundings. All this was brought together with exquisite taste under the guiding hand of Miss Helen Sutherland, a long-time friend of The Heritage.

Some of the treasured early San Francisco furniture inherited from the Cowells added interest to the downstairs rooms and the Chapel was familiar to those who remembered 2507 Pine Street for it held accoutrements long used in the earlier place. Large portraits of Minnie Nelson, the Crockers and of Horace Hawes looked down from high walls lining the broad staircase in silent testimony to the miracle wrought from their pioneer efforts.

Captain Hindes was proud to invite his guests to visit the Administrator's cottage, gift of his father, Stetson Hindes, in memory of his mother, Sarita, who had served many years on the Board of Managers. Now their daughter, Ellen, wife

of the distinguished San Francisco surgeon, Dr. Edwin Bruck, was carrying on the family tradition on the new Board, thus rounding out the service of the Hindes, who like the Nelsons and the Petersons, the Hutchinsons and many others had bequeathed concern for the elderly from generation to generation.

Interest in Mrs. Pogson's little home stemmed not only from its nostalgic significance but also from the way an inventive architect, Hewitt C. Wells, had converted the old gardener's tool shed. The picturesque stone exterior was virtually unchanged; and the roof timbered with redwood beams preserved the character visioned by Julia Morgan when she hid this utility shed in a corner of the garden. Inside it had been touched with magic, giving the occupant deserved respite from her daytime institutional atmosphere. The gabled ceiling of the living room was light because fibre glass insulation was installed between exposed beams, producing the effect of a high skylight. A fireplace, easy chairs and well-stocked bookshelves invited relaxation. A miniature kitchen equipped with every modern convenience promised quiet meals away from the chattering groups in the dining room across the garden. The little cottage stands on the Bay Street side of the grounds, but a high fence and trees protect it from the roaring traffic. No wonder Mrs. Pogson called it "Tigh-na-she" (House of Peace) from her ancestral home in Scotland.

San Francisco received this first generously-provided home for its elder citizens with acclaim. Members of the press had enjoyed the preview luncheon to which the Board had invited them. Their columns paid tribute to the men and women who had planned so wisely for this completed project. Mrs. Jane McKaskie, the Area Deputy of the California State Department of Social Welfare, was quoted as saying, "The establishment of 3400 Laguna Street is one more step toward meeting a critical demand for such institutions in San Francisco for persons who can no longer live in their homes."

The *San Francisco News* carried an editorial congratulating the Boards on their achievement in providing this cheerful home. . . . "The past," it said, "could be worn as a shroud or a crown . . . here hope crowns all, polished and shining." Even the *Chronicle's* famed columnist Herb Caen had his story to add to the public notice. "That's our Army," his quip began, as he related the plea of one of the residents, Mrs. Reba Mack, to the Commandant at Fort Mason complaining that a large tree obstructed her view of Mt. Tamalpais where she and her late husband used to be among the climbers. Immediately the tree was topped and Caen concluded "she can now contemplate her beloved mountain with its friendly ghosts—two smiling 'teen-agers of long ago.'"

By December of that year, 1958, the Board decided that income from investments, real estate and other assets, would justify an increase of subsidized residents—men and women whose finances were minimal but whose contributions in service to their communities had made them desired members of such a family. They would take from thirty-six to forty people on a life-care basis.] Beyond that others would be taken as temporary boarders. Like the old place on Pine Street, this home, too, was being called merely "3400 Laguna," only Mrs. Pogson's cottage having an appropriate cognomen. Suggestions began to swamp the new President, Mrs. William Nigh. Finally, from over one hundred names the Board chose one that appealed to everyone. At the annual meeting in May 1959 Captain Hindes announced that the home would henceforth be known as THE HERITAGE.

"Heritage," he said in his report, "is something you cannot buy. You just come by it through a lifelong worthiness. . . . Years of service by the members of this Society will give them the good judgment to select their members and guests for shelter under its roof. Let me close on the note of service. That is the whole purpose of this Society and its care and gift of security to its guests. It is the factor that motivates each one of us in all of our efforts to assist these people, and

to give them comfort and happiness during their later years. It is the one thing that in so giving brings each of us a happiness and satisfaction without equal."

At that same meeting the secretary's report contained a tribute to the new Administrator, Mrs. Pogson "whose competence and serenity are reflected in the smooth operation and atmosphere of the Home."

As the new decade of the 'sixties began the men and women who had been transplanted from the old Pine Street home were welded into the new family because of the tact and understanding of this experienced Administrator who knew them all so well and who welcomed each newcomer with friend-making solicitude.

The unusual position of one applicant was a challenge to Board and Administrator. Mrs. Ebba Burrows was obviously an acceptable candidate, but she suddenly became heir to a modest fortune when her sister left her estate to her. According to the standards set by the Board this new wealth made her ineligible. Mrs. Pogson was at once sympathetic and practical. Why not, she suggested, give this money to the Heritage so that they could build a proper Infirmary in memory of this sister? This dream became reality and in January 1963 Mrs. Burrows read an original poem at the ground-breaking for the addition which has brought comfort and health to many people in the following years.

Building of this new wing released a portion of the second floor for more residents, but it also altered the garden. The original sun room was replaced by a smaller kiosk in the enclosed area opposite the dining room. Here, when the sky is blue, residents can wander through the paths and sit awhile sheltered from the winds which blow in from the Bay, dreaming about the fun they had in their youth when this was the site of the "Gay Way."

Among the people who share this haven is the former first Principal of Channing School in Palo Alto, Roberta Thompson La Farge. On her ninety-first birthday in April, 1967, her twin brother, Robert A. Thompson, came from his home across the Bay to share in a celebration participated in by

the whole Heritage family. Twins who reach that age are rare, but nonagenarians are not exceptional among the people who gather monthly at birthday parties for all born under the same star.

On the day of the April birthday party in 1970 Millie Robbins, feature writer for the *San Francisco Chronicle* was among the guests. Her column the next day spoke of the sparkling eyes of little Miss Elizabeth Shearer, 103 years old, who responded to a toast with well chosen and distinct words.

Another celebrant was Miss Agnes Thompson, described as "chipper, cheerful and active as a cricket at 101."

Each fall and spring the whole family welcomes guests to "Open House." Holidays, like Christmas, find residents busy in the hobby rooms making ornaments. This creative occupation is directed by Board members and volunteers.

Recognition of the accomplishments of The Heritage became official with membership in two important organizations, the California Association of Homes for the Aging and The American Association of Homes for the Aging. In both of these groups the invaluable experience of those who have so long served this community in such institutions has been appreciated. Since Mrs. Pogson's retirement in 1967 the new Administrator, Mrs. Bell, has accompanied the President of the Board of Managers regularly to such meetings.

A letter from Mrs. Joan L. Vaughan, Licensing Representative, Department of Social Welfare, State of California, to Mr. Jack S. Logan, President of the Board of Trustees, and Mrs. Lawrence V. Metcalf, President of the Board of Directors, commends Mrs. Bell thus: The letter states that the renewal of the license to operate has been approved, and adds, "The Heritage is in full conformity with all mandatory regulations and the program reflects your dedication to providing superior services, Mrs. Bell, your administrator, has shown initiative and skill in introducing new procedures and activities which have enriched the lives of your residents. It delights us to see The Heritage take a leading role in establishing innovations in care which are an example to

other facilities in this field. On behalf of the Department, we offer best wishes for your continued success in providing a program which changes and adapts to individual needs of people."

A new affiliation was initiated in 1969 when The Altrusa Club, a professional women's service organization, adopted The Heritage as a special project. The introductory meeting at the Laguna Street home on February 27 was the occasion of a gala dinner. Chairman of the evening was Mrs. Alice Marsh, former Dean of Women at the University of Nevada, now a loved member of the Heritage family. In the words of welcome from Mrs. Bell, the new friends in Altrusa were made to feel the many contributions to the happiness of others in this family as a real example of how to grow older gracefully and helpfully.

And now as the new decade of the 'seventies has begun, competent members of The Heritage have assumed a needed role in the community by joining the San Francisco Education Auxiliary and offering their help to the younger generation in a tutoring service. Thus the present Board, which incidentally now has a fourth generation member, Mrs. Robert Sherman, daughter of Mrs. James Towne, in its membership, is meeting the needs of this day as did their great-grandmothers in the eighteen-fifties.

S.F. Earthquake + Fire - 1906 - pp. 17 to 20
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Mrs. Donald Craig - pp. 40
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The Hawes Property - long term lease - Jack Tar Hotel
The Merger - Plans approved for new Bldg - Julia
Morgan the architect -
December 1952 - Board of the Heritage voted to
page 47 - subsidize men + women for "life
Care" - people who had contributed
service to their communities which
entitled them to this service -
36 to 40 people on life Care basis
"The Heritage" - 3400 Laguna Street -

