

## REDDING—THE HUB CITY

Redding, the terminal city of the north, lying at the very end of the Sacramento Valley, where the central basin of California narrows into the majesty of the towering Klamaths and Cascades, is a city built upon a city. As the "Big Four" and their Southern Pacific titan moved relentlessly toward Portland in 1872, their hammers upon the rails struck the death knell of the "boom town" turned county seat—Shasta City. A *Shasta Courier* statement of February 24, 1872, evidenced the laying of the cornerstone of the new city, as well as the first nail in the coffin of the old when it declared:

The leading managers of the railroad company informed Judge Bush a few days ago that although it was impossible to raise the road to an elevation sufficient to run it into Shasta, a fact which they regretted, that they were willing to do the best they could for the town under the circumstances.

By June, 1872, Redding was becoming reality. The *Courier* of June 15, 1872, stated: "The railroad company has located a depot and station on the flat below the Diestlehorse ranch and named the place Redding. It is said that the company has decided to lay out a town at that point and offer lots for sale." The paper added that the town had probably been named in honor of Major Reading and specified its exact location in regard to Shasta City. An editorial later added a warning to "go slow in locating in the new town until one might be assured of its permanence." The new city was located in a vicinity described as "an excellent one for a town site, affording a fine view of the surrounding country." The naming of the new hamlet was also clarified. B. B. Redding, a railroad land agent, and not Major P. B. Reading had been the recipient of that honor.

Merchants, eager to cash in on the business sure to come to Redding city, were among the first to buy lots and bring their wares from Shasta to the banks of the Sacramento. C. C. Bush, prominent Shasta merchant, was the first to furnish a new store. His mercantile establishment was opened for business on August 12, 1872. In August of the same year public bidding on town lots commenced, with the initial sale of seventeen, the most expensive going at \$160. By the time the town was a month old, twenty-three buildings were under construction and one hundred lots had been sold.

Celebration with "many hip, hip, hurrahs and bonfires" marked the reception of the first train at the new Redding terminal on September 1, 1872. To mark the occasion Mark Hopkins came up from Sacramento on this initial iron horse. At about the same time a correspondent of the *Chico Enterprise* described his impression of the budding metropolis. He declared:

I arrived safely and am now a citizen of the new town of Redding. It is situated one-half mile west of the Sacramento River on a pretty, rolling spot. The soil is composed of gravel and loam and can never be muddy. The town is laid out half a mile square with streets running parallel with the railroad. Oregon Street fronts the railroad on the west and California on the east... There is not a building completed in town... Lumber is scarce and poor. We live after the type of puritans. Our tables are covered with canvas and our sleeping apartments are beneath the shade of a friendly oak.

By 1873 Redding was doing a robust business as the northern terminal point of the Central Pacific Railroad. One visitor in May of that year asserted that he found "one business to be quite lively, to wit, teaming. Teams were pouring in from every quarter." Warehouses were crowded with goods to be transported north by teamsters who charged one and three-fourths cents per pound for their trouble. The town had become sizeable enough to sponsor a gala 4th of July celebration that featured Dr. C. S. Haswell of Sacramento in an hour long eulogy to the American past delivered in "stentorian voice and exquisite delineation." The day's activities appeared even more remarkable in the light of a comment by one correspondent that the current thermometer reading stood at 118°.

The scourge of nearly every western village, fire, struck the infant city in September, 1873. Klotz's buildings on California Street were devoured before anything could be done, and it was only through the "superhuman exertion of Redding's citizens that the fire was prevented from crossing Butte Street and destroying the upper portion of town." The total loss amounted to \$50,000 to \$60,000. Despite the setback, the town quickly rebuilt, this time out of brick, and resumed its former alacrity. Much of this business activity came after the outbreak of the Modoc

War in the spring of the year. Redding profited immensely as the terminal point of a lively trade with the federal troops "Captain Jack," the Indian renegade, was vexing at the lava beds. The issue of how to spell the town's name came to the fore in 1874. At that time Assemblyman Rudolph Klotz introduced a bill in the state legislature to change the name from Redding to Reading. This change was made to honor Pierson B. Reading, the "Father of Shasta County." On January 24, 1874, this bill was signed into law by Governor Newton Booth.

Reading had an elementary school located on Pine Street with 183 pupils, as well as a weekly newspaper by 1880. The town's first newspaper, the *Reading Independent*, began to promulgate Republican dogma in 1877. This weekly, edited by Ben Frank, formerly of Colfax, reported an advertising list of seventy-eight Reading business establishments, a noteworthy growth for a five-year-old town. Mr. Frank, four years later, collaborated with a man named Chappell to write *The History and Business Directory of Shasta County*, the first comprehensive historical survey of this area.

The town continued to grow during the 70's and 80's. By 1880 Reading's population was estimated at 600, only 100 short of its western neighbor—Shasta. Crime was rather common at this time with stage robbing, a favorite among the dubious arts. A newspaper account of September 2, 1880, will serve as an example of such incidents:

The down stage from Weaverville, Charles Cramer, driver, was robbed at about 4:00 P.M. yesterday at a place called the Last Chance eleven miles from the Tower House . . . The robber was covered by an old flour sack and was disguised by an abundance of superfluous clothing. He was as polite a man as ever cut a throat or scuttled a ship; and his politeness was exceeded only by his fastidiousness, for during the robbery, he entertained the only passenger, Mrs. Ellison of Douglas City, with his witticisms . . . He got onto the coach and proceeded to cut the iron box from its fastenings with an axe, after taking both boxes and going through the mail, he departed, requesting the driver to go as fast as he could and "hurry the hounds up," as he was quite lonesome in the mountains. Bob Kennedy, undersheriff, is in pursuit.

During the same year, incumbent President Rutherford B. Hayes, accompanied by an entourage including General William T. Sherman, visited Reading. Feted with a grand reception at the Conroy Hotel featuring the musical renditions of the Reading Cornet Band, Hayes and Sherman cordially responded by shaking 600 Shasta County hands and kissing one baby. On the following day, the President and his party continued on to Jacksonville, Oregon. The Chief Executive undoubtedly wished himself back in Reading when he was charged \$100 for a Jacksonville hotel room ordinarily offered at \$2. The Democratic housekeeper asserted that this price was no more than fair for a Republican President.

Readingites again had to change their signs and letterheads as the state legislature converted an "a" to a "d" in the city's name in 1880. This alteration came about through the efforts of the railroad company to honor B. B. Redding, its California land agent, for whom the town was originally named. Fire again struck, this time in August of 1881, reducing a half block on California Street between Tehama and Butte Street in less than two hours, despite the efforts of a newly organized Hook and Ladder Company. The \$80,000 loss was laid at the feet of two Red Bluff incendiaries, but nothing came of the accusation. Rebuilding immediately followed the conflagration as in the fire of 1873, and soon the city was booming again. Prosperity was also evidenced in the erection of a \$10,000 brick school house, the addition of the *Redding Democrat* to the list of weekly journals, the use of gas illumination by the city, and the completion of the first local sanctuary by the Presbyterians all during this period. The primary business house in Redding was that of McCormick and Saeltzer, a general merchandise establishment destined to serve Redding for nearly six decades.

In 1883 the Central Pacific Company had resumed its building program north of Redding on the route to Portland, a job which would be completed four years later. In 1885 the company completed a spacious Redding depot made of California redwood. Rail transportation during this period was described as the factor that "makes Reddingites feel that they are not so far out of the world after all." A train leaving San Francisco at 9:30 A.M. wended its way through Sacramento at 2:20 P.M. and reached Redding at 9:10 P.M. One informant declared that "faster time is made between Sacramento and Redding than on any other line in the state—the speed being about thirty miles per hour, including stoppages."

In the same year the termination of a criminal career characterized by romance and mystery took place in San Francisco, undoubtedly bring some sighs of relief from Redding residents. This event was the apprehension of the noted stage robber of northern California, "Black Bart." A remarkably successful thief over a period dating back to 1871, Bart achieved almost legendary notoriety from his poetical remembrances left with those whose purses he had lightened. One which pointedly expressed his business philosophy confided:

Let come what may, I'll try it on,  
My condition can't be worse.  
And if there's money in that box  
It's munny (Bart's mistake) in my purse.

A laundry mark on a handkerchief did prove to Charles E. Bolton, alias "Black Bart," that conditions could grow worse. On November 17, 1883, he was apprehended in San Francisco and was identified by a friend as an amiable mining man frequently called away from the bay area by "the nature of his work." He was subsequently identified as the mystery bandit of the north and was sentenced to six years in San Quentin.

The county seat issue came to a head during the decade of the 80's with Redding winning the ultimate victory over Shasta in 1888. The dispute was hotly contested with Shasta defendants asserting that "the effort to move the county seat is one of the most absurd and premature ever imagined." Redding supporters retaliated with a three point accusation. They maintained the change necessary because of: the poor condition of the courthouse at Shasta, the dominant condition of Redding as a commercial center, and the fact that Shasta was a "dying town." The affair was appealed from court to court until the State Supreme Court decided in February, 1888, in favor of Redding, to be followed by a Board of Supervisors declaration that "the town of Redding is hereby declared to be the county seat of the said County of Shasta the 19th day of May A.D., 1888." Reddingites responded exuberantly by "painting the town red, followed by a large amount of powder being exploded, and gallons of liquid jubilee ingredients were disposed of."

At the midway point in the 1880's Redding was described as the principal town in a county of 9,082. A distributing point for the far north, Redding with a 1,200 population, possessed two churches, a new 400 pupil school, a Bank of Shasta County headed by C. C. Bush, and a large number of fraternal and social orders. Redding's prospects were bright with the creation of a stable population which in 1884 was willing to pay a tax sponsoring the efforts of an Immigration Association to seek further settlement of the area. One correspondent described the town's prosperity in this way:

"This looks like business," said a Shingletown man to our local last Wednesday morning as they stood at McCormick-Saeltzer and Company's store, and so it did. A huge wagon, drawn by eight heavy animals, had just been loaded with three ton of merchandise for the Round Mountain Mill and Flume Company, and four other wagons of smaller size were waiting their turn. Inside was a scene of busy activity; the counters were lined and bookkeepers were scratching away for dear life, with their morning cigars lying half-used at their elbows.

Social activities included theatrical treats such as the "Loan of a Lover" in one act, circuses, football and baseball encounters, spelling bees and minstrel shows. In the first category, a general admission price of twenty-five cents would permit one to enjoy a variety of "hit" tunes, including: "A Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight," "As the Ship Went Down," "Dear Louise," and "Take Back the Engagement Ring." The newspapers of the time were not as careful as they might have been in advertising avowals. Two examples of such encroachment on the public candor:

Brown Iron Bitters will cure: headache, indigestion, biliousness, dyspepsia, nervous prostration, malaria, chills, tired feeling, general debility, kidney and liver trouble, pain in back and sides, impure blood, female infirmities, constipation, rheumatism and neuralgia.

Another stated:

There are thousands of sickly school girls all over the broad land that are dragging their way through school life who might enjoy that abundant life which belongs to youth

by simple attention to hygienic laws and with a proper course of treatment with Scott's Emulsion. This would make the blood rich, the heart beat strong, check the tendency to exhaustion, and quicken the appetite. Our book tells more about it.

A local grocery price list of the period included the following items:

Five cans table fruit - \$1.00; eight cans tomatoes - \$1.00; a can of chocolate - 25¢; seven cans of corn - \$1.00.

Segregation problems confronted the young metropolis in the 1880's culminating in the expulsion of the Chinese from Redding in 1886. After a rousing anti-oriental meeting on January 23, 1886, a determined citizens' committee declared that "John must go" by the next day, proposing the following four-fold program for the Chinese: "No trouble, no violence, no resistance, no gore." Their exodus was effected without a hassle and thus the white element had once again proved itself dominant, but certainly not democratic.

By 1887 Redding was ready to become a city in deed as well as word. Agitation for incorporation had been going on since the early 1880's. Undoubtedly the need for such action had been magnified by Redding's unsuccessful attempt to gain the state normal school for northern California. Despite its diligent efforts, even to the point of comparing its nineteen deaths over a twenty-one month period with one hundred and twenty-nine mortalities at its rival Chico, Redding lost the teachers' college. There were other factors which prompted incorporation: streets needed paving, businessmen desired the support of municipal ordinances, and garbage disposal and public health was a disturbing problem. One newspaper writer asserted that:

Right in the heart of town the carcass of a dead cat has been polluting the air with a stench that is almost unbearable, and yet our young people laugh and scorn at the idea of making up a purse to repay the health officer for his trouble . . . Who will act the good Samaritan and rid the alley between Tehama and Yuba Streets of the rubbish, dead cats, dogs, etc., deposited therein?

These and other local perplexities prompted an incorporation election in September, 1887, which passed by a 205-103 margin. C. C. Bush was elected the first Mayor. If one man could properly be described as the "Father of Redding," Mr. Bush was that man. As businessman, banker and tireless civic worker, C. C. Bush played a major role in the development of Redding. In fact, one newspaper editor of the early 1900's, in looking in retrospect upon the growth of that city, declared that: "Bush and push laid the foundation of the City of Redding."

By 1890 a \$60,000 courthouse and jail had been completed in Redding and electricity was inaugurated to bring an appropriate end to a busy decade.

The "Bay Nineties" evidenced the growth of the now well established city. Mining was the backbone of the area's economy during this period, as a crescent-shaped mineral region reaching five to twenty miles north, east and west of the city became the scene of expanded activity. In 1892 a Shasta County Mining Association was formed to serve as a bureau of information for prospective mining interests. Keswick, in the center of the mining region north of Redding, had grown to a size second only to the county seat by the turn of the century. Three large blast furnaces processed the iron and copper at Keswick and yearly profits for the Mountain Copper Company, the area's leading operator, amounted to nearly \$1,000,000.

Several events of consequence during the 90's should not go unmentioned. The area was still infested with a lawless element and public feeling against these evildoers was vindicated in the hanging of the Ruggles brothers in July, 1892. On May 14, 1892, Buck Montgomery, veteran stage messenger, was shot and killed in a hold-up between Redding and Shasta. His slayers were identified as Charles and John Ruggles. The former, desperately wounded, was captured immediately, while his brother John was apprehended six weeks later in Woodland. On the night of July 30, as they lay in the Redding jail awaiting trial for murder, a mob of about seventy-five masked citizens entered the courthouse and asked for the keys to the cells of the two men. Despite the vociferous pleading of John Ruggles, the mob went about its grim task in a determined way. After escorting the Ruggles brothers to a derrick near the railroad tracks used ordinarily to hoist wagon beds off their gearing, the crowd tightened the hangman's nooses around the necks of the two young men and they were quickly dispatched into the great hereafter. On the following morning travelers by rail were greeted with the discomfiting sight of two bodies sus-

pended only a few feet from their car windows as they passed through Redding. The tenor of community sentiment regarding the incident was expressed by an almost jovial report of the lynching in the local paper:

Jailor Albro thinks the lynchers all looked ten feet tall and carried revolvers a yard long. He estimates that he has been knocked out of five years growth and been reduced three feet in height by his experience with the mob. His hair has not turned white, however . . . The mob showed that they were under good leadership and conducted operations in a most orderly manner.

The Sacramento *Union* asserted that the motive behind the hanging was jealousy. This paper stated that the fairer sex had been flocking to the Ruggles brothers' cell with "bouquets, angel cakes, luscious fruits and chicken fixings," and even offers of marriage, thus prompting speedy retaliation by the local males. However, the conjecture that Buck Montgomery's popularity and the leisureliness of the local wheels of justice were the motivating factors seems more feasible.

The "Boy Orator of the Platte," William Jennings Bryan, visited the city in the 90's. Described as a "fine specimen of physical development," this flamboyant voice of the people concluded a forty-five minute talk on bi-metalism with a pungent comment on his unsuccessful presidential candidacy of the previous year: "I must hurry to my train," he said, "I was left last fall and I do not want to be left again."

The arrival of secondary education was a final stepping stone in Redding before the turn of the century. Local citizens, long desirous of a county high school, determined in 1898 that Redding would be the site of the new educational center. Consequently the county purchased the west half of the block at West and Placer Streets, which contained the nine room home of Judge Aaron Bell. This building housed Redding's initial secondary school in September, 1899. The original curriculum contained three courses of study: Latin, scientific and elective. W. G. Durfee served as the first principal of this school of some sixty scholars, who came not only from the county seat, but from Shasta, Anderson, Cottonwood and Millville. In 1902 a larger building was erected on Placer Street, to be followed in 1927 by the construction of the present educational facility on Eureka Way.

The first fifteen years of the 20th Century evidenced the continued leadership of the mineral industry in the Redding area. In 1903 the Mountain Copper Company employed between 800 and 1,200 men. Other mining interests, including the Bully Hill, Balaklala, Mammoth, and Midas groups supplemented Shasta County's mining output in copper as well as iron and gold. Wages in the mines during this period reflected generally the earnings across the nation. Timbermen received \$2.75 - \$3.00 per day; machine men, \$2.75 - \$2.85; miners, \$2.60 - \$2.75; muckers, \$2.10 - \$2.50; and laborers, \$1.90 - \$2.00. Protests by farmers and fishermen against the polluting tendencies of the smelter fumes were frequently voiced during this era. However, the economic dependence of the area upon the mineral industry precluded any strongly determined attacks on the mining companies, despite the fact that smelter fumes in Keswick at times became so dense that "several men walked over a steep bank and fell into the creek and others ran into buildings and fences." Strike problems were very real to Redding merchants in 1903 as the Keswick miners walked off the job. 1903 also marked the reception of a Carnegie donation to the city for a Redding public library. This new facility, erected on Yuba Street, was built from a \$10,000 grant by the steel philanthropist. President Theodore Roosevelt came through Redding in the same year, addressing a crowd assembled in the city from a fifty mile radius. The dynamic "Rough-Rider" convinced Reddingites of his greatness, as the local gazette declared: "Every man felt in touch with him . . . he is the right man in the right place." Another famous American to visit Redding during this era was Col. William F. Cody, better known as "Buffalo Bill" and dubbed the "original and only 'Buffalo Bill,' who positively appears at every performance." This type of entertainment was characteristic of the traveling troupes which came to the city in the early 1900's.

Entering Redding at about the turn of the century was not "an inspiring or pleasant sight" according to W. D. Tillotson. The present site of the post office was then a mosquito infested swamp where "frogs were singing all night." Tillotson further characterized the city in this way:

The majority of the business buildings in Redding at that time were on California Street; the only business buildings on Market Street were McCormick-Saeltzer Company

on the corner of Yuba and Market, which occupied about one-half of that block . . . There were no paved streets (1896) and all were very muddy in the winter and dusty in the summer, and there were no sidewalks at all except in the business district. The Redding streets were in such bad condition that when the first autos appeared, they sometimes got stuck in mud, particularly on Yuba between California and Market.

Mining reached its peak in the Redding area about 1910. During that year there were fourteen mines operating with five major smelters. The mineralized horseshoe around Redding yielded over \$7,000,000 annually, with the plants at Coram, Kennett, Bully Hill, Ingot and Keswick leading the way. This wealth accelerated the city's growth. In addition to its new high school, Redding possessed four elementary schools, seven hotels, two daily and three weekly newspapers and a population of about 5,000. The "Hub City" contained four banks with over \$2,000,000 in deposits, as well as the largest department store above Sacramento, that of McCormick and Saeltzer. Nevertheless, one old-timer lamented that "There were often cows wandering the streets during this era and the summer sun brought dust on the street two to six inches deep."

By 1920 Redding had witnessed the coming of a new thoroughfare—Highway 99—through her premises, had observed apprehensively the rain of fire and brimstone from the nation's only active volcano, Mt. Lassen in 1914, and had applauded the building of a bridge across the Sacramento to bring an added trade to her merchants. In addition, the town had placed her shoulder to the task of helping defeat the Central Powers during World War I. During this period Redding ladies made ambulance pillows, handkerchiefs, hospital shirts and head bandages for the Red Cross. The local postmaster saw to the registration of all German aliens, as a local newspaper editor described young men who attempted to evade the service as "national tightwads, slackers, and Let-George-do-it-Americans." Three hundred and one, or approximately eight per cent of Redding's citizens, were in the military, while on the home front local folks subscribed \$125,000 for the Third Liberty Loan Bonds.

During the 20's and into the 30's Redding slowed down appreciably from its pace of the preceding decades. For the most part the mines around Redding were abandoned, while the city maintained a static population of about 4,000. However, in 1922 the city did become the first in northern California to acquire its own public electric utility. This noteworthy step culminated a struggle of some seven years duration between the city and the Northern California Power Company and Pacific Gas & Electric Company. During the 20's costs in a local department store included: blankets - 89¢; men's pants - \$2.50; men's hats - 75¢; dress shirts - \$1.15; socks - 39¢. In 1930 a new Ford coupe with "flowing grace of line giving style and distinction" cost \$500 in Redding. The depression struck the city severely in the early 30's. Local Red Cross representatives distributed food to the needy, ten delegates from Redding were part of a "hunger march" on the state capitol at Sacramento, and one newspaper writer declared he was going to buy new clothes, cars and books and be through "Being Depressed." In 1932 Franklin D. Roosevelt came through Redding and stopped long enough to promise the populace from the rear of his train: "Friends, we will have beer."

Several factors caused the termination of the mining boom during this era. The excessive cost of sending much of the ore east for refining, the increased mining competition in other parts of the nation, the presence of zinc mingled with Shasta County copper, the low prices paid for copper and gold as compared with the rising cost of labor, and the coming of the depression were all contributing factors.

However, not all was lost during this period. Redding, with the coming of motor vehicles, stood at the transportation focal point of northern California. From the city, agricultural products, increased by the creation of the A-CID in 1915, were dispersed. In addition, the recreational opportunities available in the forests and streams adjacent to Redding, particularly after the creation of Lassen National Park in 1916, made the town the "jumping off" point for many outdoor enthusiasts. Connected with recreation and related activities was the Shasta-Cascade Wonderland Association, organized in 1927 to encourage development and proper use of the natural resources of the six northern California counties.

1935 marked the year of Redding's revival. In that year the Central Valley Project, long a dream in the minds of progressive Californians, became reality with a \$12,000,000 grant from the

federal government. Later this amount would be increased to over \$173,000,000. Gigantic Shasta Dam, located on the Sacramento River twelve miles north of Redding, was to be the key to the entire project.

The story of the building of this dam between 1938 and 1944 is a fascinating one. Completed, it stood 602 feet high, was 3,500 feet wide at the crest, and contained 6,256,000 cubic yards of cement. Its builders included sixteen construction companies using the common title—The Pacific Construction Company. The dam was built under the general direction of Frank T. Crowe, builder of Boulder, Bonneyville, and Parker Dams. To the city of Redding, however, Shasta Dam was not simply an aggregation of statistics. It was life; life in the form of people, investment, industry and growth. It was new capital invested in Redding area businesses from the money paid for 19,000,000 man hours of work.

Despite shortages in the subsequent war years, work on the dam continued unmitigated until 1944. Summit City, Project City, Central Valley, and Toyon were created overnight from the manzanita to assist Redding in housing the increased population, which had reached 8,109 in the city by 1940.

Nevertheless, problems accompanied the dam. The decline of California Street into a minor "skid-row," the need for expanded facilities for city and county agencies, as well as the general necessity for better housing, streets and water were among these. However, the next fifteen years saw the relief and often outright solution of many of these enigmas.

Business in Redding at the end of 1940 was at an all time high as concrete pouring began at Shasta Dam. Early in 1940 a major fire struck the city, destroying the McCormick-Saeltzer store. The war brought an air raid warning system, Scrap Round-ups, war bond drives, and higher prices to Redding. Coffee in 1942 sold at two pounds for 49¢; cheese at 33¢ per pound; a beef roast at 29¢ a pound; and pork chops at 35¢ per pound. In 1942 a captured Japanese sub came to town and Reddingites paid \$15,625 in war bonds and stamps to look it over. Wartime scarcities were apparent when a local night spot advertised "a watchman to protect gas and tires" as an added attraction to their patrons.

At the conclusion of the war and with the completion of Shasta Dam, Redding did not decline as it had with the regression of the mining industry in the 1920's. This continuation of the city's prosperity was activated by several factors. A major item was the legacy left by the building of the dam. Many of the people who had worked on the structure remained in this area, buying property and assuming positions in various industries. In addition, Shasta Dam left behind it numerous important economic activities. Salient among these was the vast recreational empire created by Shasta Lake. In addition, the wealth of electric power made available from the dam's hydro-electric plant occasioned new jobs locally, while other vocations based upon maintenance of the dam itself were also created. Furthermore, the coming of the lumber industry with the erection of the Ralph Smith, Shasta Plywood, and other smaller mills, plus the prodigious post war building boom brought about by the renewed availability of building materials, further fortified Redding's economy. Together with the factors cited above were the service occupations which accompanied the area's growth. Toward the end of the 40's Redding possessed a population of about 10,000, had ninety-three social organizations, thirty churches, two newspapers, and a radio station. Shasta Union High School now contained 1,146 students instructed by forty-six teachers.

During the decade of the 50's Redding continued to grow steadily. The California Centennial Celebration initiated the decade with a flurry of events commemorating California and Shasta County's colorful past. The culmination of the festivities locally was a large cavalcade presented at newly built Thompson Field in June, 1950. The curtains of time were drawn back during these presentations as the stories of Pierson Reading, Black Bart, the massacred Mrs. Dersch and other county pioneers were depicted before a vast, picturesque panorama. In the same year the *Centennial History of Shasta County*, written by Rosena Giles, was published under the auspices of the Shasta County Historical Society and the County Board of Supervisors.

The City Council system of government, under the direction of Mayor George Fleharty and City Manager Robert Cowden, proved highly successful. Building permits during the 50's totaled almost \$24,000,000 as subdivisions began dotting the Redding hinterland. To accompany this development, a city planning department was initiated in 1956 to direct orderly land use in the

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During the 20's and into the 30's Redding slowed down appreciably from its pace of the preceding decades. For the most part the mines around Redding were abandoned, while the city maintained a static population of about 4,000. However, in 1922 the city did become the first in northern California to acquire its own public electric utility. This noteworthy step culminated a struggle of some seven years duration between the city and the Northern California Power Company and Pacific Gas & Electric Company. During the 20's costs in a local department store included: blankets - 89¢; men's pants - \$2.50; men's hats - 75¢; dress shirts - \$1.15; socks - 39¢. In 1930 a new Ford coupe with "flowing grace of line giving style and distinction" cost \$500 in Redding. The depression struck the city severely in the early 30's. Local Red Cross representatives distributed food to the needy, ten delegates from Redding were part of a "hunger march" on the state capitol at Sacramento, and one newspaper writer declared he was going to buy new clothes, cars and books and be through "Being Depressed." In 1932 Franklin D. Roosevelt came through Redding and stopped long enough to promise the populace from the rear of his train: "Friends, we will have beer."

Several factors caused the termination of the mining boom during this era. The excessive cost of sending much of the ore east for refining, the increased mining competition in other parts of the nation, the presence of zinc mingled with Shasta County copper, the low prices paid for copper and gold as compared with the rising cost of labor, and the coming of the depression were all contributing factors.

However, not all was lost during this period. Redding, with the coming of motor vehicles, stood at the transportation focal point of northern California. From the city, agricultural products, increased by the creation of the A-CID in 1915, were dispersed. In addition, the recreational opportunities available in the forests and streams adjacent to Redding, particularly after the creation of Lassen National Park in 1916, made the town the "jumping off" point for many outdoor enthusiasts. Connected with recreation and related activities was the Shasta-Cascade Wonderland Association, organized in 1927 to encourage development and proper use of the natural resources of the six northern California counties.

1935 marked the year of Redding's revival. In that year the Central Valley Project, long a dream in the minds of progressive Californians, became reality with a \$12,000,000 grant from the



federal government. Later this amount would be increased to over \$173,000,000. Gigantic Shasta Dam, located on the Sacramento River twelve miles north of Redding, was to be the key to the entire project.

The story of the building of this dam between 1938 and 1944 is a fascinating one. Completed, it stood 602 feet high, was 3,500 feet wide at the crest, and contained 6,256,000 cubic yards of cement. Its builders included sixteen construction companies using the common title—The Pacific Construction Company. The dam was built under the general direction of Frank T. Crowe, builder of Boulder, Bonneyville, and Parker Dams. To the city of Redding, however, Shasta Dam was not simply an aggregation of statistics. It was life; life in the form of people, investment, industry and growth. It was new capital invested in Redding area businesses from the money paid for 19,000,000 man hours of work.

Despite shortages in the subsequent war years, work on the dam continued unmitigated until 1944. Summit City, Project City, Central Valley, and Toyon were created overnight from the manzanita to assist Redding in housing the increased population, which had reached 8,109 in the city by 1940.

Nevertheless, problems accompanied the dam. The decline of California Street into a minor "skid-row," the need for expanded facilities for city and county agencies, as well as the general necessity for better housing, streets and water were among these. However, the next fifteen years saw the relief and often outright solution of many of these enigmas.

Business in Redding at the end of 1940 was at an all time high as concrete pouring began at Shasta Dam. Early in 1940 a major fire struck the city, destroying the McCormick-Saeltzer store. The war brought an air raid warning system, Scrap Round-ups, war bond drives, and higher prices to Redding. Coffee in 1942 sold at two pounds for 49¢; cheese at 33¢ per pound; a beef roast at 29¢ a pound; and pork chops at 35¢ per pound. In 1942 a captured Japanese sub came to town and Reddingites paid \$15,625 in war bonds and stamps to look it over. Wartime scarcities were apparent when a local night spot advertised "a watchman to protect gas and tires" as an added attraction to their patrons.

At the conclusion of the war and with the completion of Shasta Dam, Redding did not decline as it had with the regression of the mining industry in the 1920's. This continuation of the city's prosperity was activated by several factors. A major item was the legacy left by the building of the dam. Many of the people who had worked on the structure remained in this area, buying property and assuming positions in various industries. In addition, Shasta Dam left behind it numerous important economic activities. Salient among these was the vast recreational empire created by Shasta Lake. In addition, the wealth of electric power made available from the dam's hydro-electric plant occasioned new jobs locally, while other vocations based upon maintenance of the dam itself were also created. Furthermore, the coming of the lumber industry with the erection of the Ralph Smith, Shasta Plywood, and other smaller mills, plus the prodigious post war building boom brought about by the renewed availability of building materials, further fortified Redding's economy. Together with the factors cited above were the service occupations which accompanied the area's growth. Toward the end of the 40's Redding possessed a population of about 10,000, had ninety-three social organizations, thirty churches, two newspapers, and a radio station. Shasta Union High School now contained 1,146 students instructed by forty-six teachers.

During the decade of the 50's Redding continued to grow steadily. The California Centennial Celebration initiated the decade with a flurry of events commemorating California and Shasta County's colorful past. The culmination of the festivities locally was a large cavalcade presented at newly built Thompson Field in June, 1950. The curtains of time were drawn back during these presentations as the stories of Pierson Reading, Black Bart, the massacred Mrs. Dersch and other county pioneers were depicted before a vast, picturesque panorama. In the same year the *Centennial History of Shasta County*, written by Rosena Giles, was published under the auspices of the Shasta County Historical Society and the County Board of Supervisors.

The City Council system of government, under the direction of Mayor George Fleharty and City Manager Robert Cowden, proved highly successful. Building permits during the 50's totaled almost \$24,000,000 as subdivisions began dotting the Redding hinterland. To accompany this development, a city planning department was initiated in 1956 to direct orderly land use in the

Redding area. Both the county and municipal governments acquired new quarters: a new courthouse superseded the old in 1956, and a new city hall was erected in 1960. To facilitate the city's progress an arm of the local Chamber of Commerce called the Forward Redding Executive Committee was made a regular city council agency in 1954. This large group of Redding citizens worked systematically to assure proper solution to municipal problems and provide foresight for future growth. To alleviate financial problems a penny tax on every sales dollar was passed by the city fathers in 1955. Hospitals were also very much a part of Redding's expansion. In 1953 the ninety-three room Mercy Hospital was completed at a cost of \$1,700,000. In addition, new wings were added to both the Memorial and County hospitals, as well as the completion of a Shasta County Health Center in 1958 to house the county health offices. Cascade Sanatorium, a medical plant dealing with chest diseases, was also built during the 50's.

The industrial and recreational accommodations mentioned previously acquired new stability during the fateful fifties. Approximately 5,000 men with a payroll of \$12,000,000 were employed in the lumber industry within a ten mile radius of the city. Of additional assurance to the lumber industry was the merger of the Kimberly-Clark Company, manufacturer of Kleenex and other paper products, with the Ralph L. Smith Company of Anderson early in 1961. This juncture was intended to develop a pulp and paper plant which would eventually provide some 1,200 more jobs in the lumber industry within the Redding trade area. Mining, Shasta County's old standby, was resurrected during and after the war. The area's leading minerals—copper, gold, iron ore, pyrite and crushed stone—were accounting for approximately \$1,000,000 per year at the end of the 50's. The Calaveras Cement Company built a new plant north of Redding in 1960 which promised to employ one hundred men. In addition, the advent of natural gas in Redding was realized in the early 60's.

Housing in Redding in the 50's developed at the rate of approximately three hundred homes per year with a total in 1956 of 4,547 dwelling units in the city. About one-half of these were owner occupied. Retail sales in the Redding area by 1958 had reached the \$55,000,000 mark, a \$6,895 yearly average per household. The majority of Redding incomes by 1960 lay in the \$4,000-\$6,999 bracket. The city's population in 1960 was estimated at 14,000.

Agriculture was also a leading factor in the local economic picture with livestock, dairy products, grain and fruit production the major commodities.

Recreation, both for townspeople and travelers, was available in the Redding area. Within the city, an active City Recreation and Parks Commission, under the leadership of Merritt Nelson, provided wholesome activities ranging from singing to shooting. Above the city, the Shasta Lake Recreational area, supervised by the U. S. Forest Service, afforded delightful opportunities for a variety of outdoor diversions. In this thirty-five mile long lake, king-sized Kamloop trout waited the flash of the lure, skiers and swimmers enjoyed the coolness of the water, while along the bank campers and hunters experienced a recreational reprieve. And finally, north of the city on the slopes of magnificent Mt. Shasta was the Mt. Shasta Ski Bowl, a winter ski center opened in 1958, complete with an ultramodern \$300,000 lodge.

For the first few years of the fifties, Redding sport fans had their own professional baseball team. The Browns, a charter member of the Class D Far West League, occupied Tiger Field until the end of the 1951 season. At that time the league collapsed and with its downfall came the disappointment of an enthusiastic sports clientele in the community.

Educationally, the 50's was a fruitful epoch for Redding. Before the decade was scarcely begun, the town had acquired its first institution of higher learning. The fourth Shasta, Shasta College, opened its doors in September, 1950, to 250 students. The cultural contribution of the college to the community was felt increasingly, as the retinue of "Knights," under the presidency of Dr. Gilbert Collyer, increased to over 1,000 in the initial ten year period. The number of secondary schools in the Shasta Union High School and Junior College district tripled during the decade with the addition of Enterprise and Central Valley High Schools. The former began relieving the exploding Shasta Union High School population in 1954, and the latter stepped in to fill the gap a year later. Together the two new schools cost \$3,489,000. In addition, the Redding elementary district expanded from five to eight schools, with a total of 3,164 pupils by 1960.

As the 1960's got under way, Redding was continuing to grow. Despite a recession in the lumber industry early in the fall of 1960, increased construction in the area, plus employment on

the nearby Trinity River Project, sustained the local economy. Both 1961 and 1962 set building permit records in Redding with the latter year witnessing total construction worth \$4,278,933. In addition, 1962 saw Shasta College become an entity separate from the Shasta Union High School District, as well as the completion of a new Shasta County Library building. Probably the biggest news item of the early 60's was the destruction of the Golden Eagle Hotel by fire on September 22, 1962. Three persons died in the blaze of this old Redding landmark.

In addition, Redding's cultural attractiveness was enhanced by the opening of the Redding Museum and Art Center in February, 1963.

Excitement reigned in the county during the month of September, 1963, as the county prepared for the visit of the late President John F. Kennedy to dedicate Whiskeytown Dam. This memorable occasion took place on September 28, 1963, less than two months before the President met death at the hand of an assassin in Dallas, Texas.

Despite a recession in the building boom of the early 60's, Redding continued to grow throughout the decade. By 1968, the greater Redding area encompassed some 40,000 people, with the actual city limits containing 16,400. In 1968, students from Shasta College began studies at the new Stillwater Campus, while by 1970 Redding witnessed the completion of a \$2.3 million Civic Auditorium as well as the beginning of a downtown shopping mall. With progressive leadership and steady growth, the some ninety-year-old community on the banks of the Sacramento River appeared to be ordained for a long and prosperous future.