

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Old Fashioned Wedding

In 1884, the social editors treated wedding completely different than they do today, according to an old scrap book which was kept by one of the brides of that year, Miss Henrietta Van Glahn who married John R. Hitchcock in the home of the bride's parents in Atlanta, a community in the northern San Joaquin Valley. There is no description of the bridal costume or of the attendant's gowns, but the date, being Thanksgiving Day, tells and describes the wedding gifts and he names of those who gave them.

The ceremony was performed by Rev. E.E. Dodge, after which all repaired to the dining room where a wedding feast was in readiness. The happy pair took the afternoon train at Lathrop for San Francisco (no automobiles in those days) where they remained for a week, after which they returned to their future home, a cozy cottage, built by the father of Mr. Hitchcock, situated on the French camp road twelve miles from Stockton.

Mr. and Mrs. Hitchcock were the recipients of a number of beautiful and costly presents, among which were a set of silver table knives and forks by Mr. and Mrs. C. Von Glahn; set of silver teaspoons by Mr. and Mrs. H. Boeschen; table linen, Harry and Crawford Hitchcock; silver butter knife by Miss Addie Boeschen; silver mustard spoon by Georgie Farrow; white spread by Misses Maggie and Virginia Hitchcock; one dozen salt cellars, George Hitchcock; walnut bracket by Mrs. D. Jack; set of silver teaspoons by Willie Von Glahn; hand-painted plaque by Mrs. E.E. Dodge; parlor lamp, B. H. Von Glahn; handsome eight-day clock, H.E. Boeschen; hand painted plaque, C. H. Von Glahn; oil painting, Miss Katie Von Glahn

Another report of a wedding held near French Camp and pasted in the same scrapbook along with the wedding above, lists the wedding present also. The popular present in those days seem to have been silver napkin rings, handsome cake baskets. handsome rugs, elegant silver castor, a bible stand, hanging lamps, a plush album, and a glass pitcher and rolling pin, a moustache cup, a basket of clothes pins, a handsome tidy, and last but not least a valuable cow, which was not exhibited according to the list of presents.

In the same scrap book was this interesting historical article: with heading: "The Base of a Giant of the Tulare Forest for the World's Fair in Chicago."

The height of the monster specimen was 312 feet to the first limb which limb measured three feet in diameter. The tree is supposed to be nearly 3,000 years old, taking each one year's growth. It was taken from an altitude of concentric ring to be of 6,325 feet above sea level, and 33 miles from a railroad.

Part of the tree was cut out and placed on hinges, so as to swing open and shut like a door. The interior was hollowed out to accommodate visitors, of whom over 100 were enabled to enter and remain inside of the tree trunk at the same time. The exhibit had 250 incandescent electric lights.

Ten expert woodsmen spent many weeks cutting down the tree. As this tree was taken from the midst of a dense forest, it was found necessary to build a road for four miles as nothing but a trail existed, leading from the tree into the county road. In clearing away, nearly 400 ordinary sized trees had to be cut down, huge rocks had to be blasted, a number of bridges built in order to land this giant of the forest at the railroad point.