

Names To Remember

By Ernest D. Wichels

Monday, February 10, 1964

Last Sunday the Times-Herald published a picture-story of the forthcoming 40th anniversary observance by Carl H. Kreh Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1123 is closely identified with Vallejo's community life and widely known for its civic interests.

Few, however, know of the fine young veteran whose name is honored by this Post. Carl H. Kreh, born in the Benicia Arsenal, a resident of "Dublin," Mare Island, for about 12 years, was educated in the Vallejo schools. Scores of former classmates remember this lad, who became an Apprentice Electrician in the navy yard- about 1915. One of his instructors, Wm. "Bill" Simons of 1110 Tuolumne Street, who retired as Foreman Electrician in 1951, describes him as a "perfect young gentleman." Then came WWI and Carl joined the Navy. In 1918, while a Chief Yeoman aboard the four-stacker cruiser PITTSBURGH, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Carl was stricken with the flu and passed away. Carl's father was widely known for years as Captain of the Watch on Mare Island. The family lived in Quarters 25 in Dublin—at other times the home of the Lane's and the Brennan's, both pioneer Vallejo families. Next door lived the O'Hara's (Russell, George, Mrs. Creedon, Mrs. Loring.) Quarters 25 at one time was a civilian hospital—some 90 years ago or so. Carl's sister, Helen, is now Mrs. Alfred C. Berg, 525 Alabama St.; Al is the County Veterans' Service Officer at the Memorial Building.

So there, friends, is the story behind the name of a local veterans' post.

ALL-NIGHT DRUGGISTS

Present day Vallejoans do not realize that drugstores, at one time, were available around-the-clock for emergency service. We're talking of Vallejo from 1852 to about 1900. Physicians in those days didn't carry a junior drug counter in their little black bags. Most remedies had to be compounded—today almost anything can be found in capsule or pill form. The drug store procedure was that someone had to sleep in the store all night—the owner and one or two apothecaries (they're called pharmacists now) took turns. In an emergency the doctor, or someone else, would rap loudly on the door and awaken the sleeper. There was an even more important reason for around-the-clock availability of these drug stores—most early doctors performed minor (sometimes major) surgery in the backrooms of these stores. In the 70's this was the procedure in the drug stores of James Topley (grandfather of Pharmacist Wm. F. Topley, 1319 Louisiana St.) ; James Frost and E. N. Boynton. The practice continued in

such places as Alrik Hammar's Naval Pharmacy and Topley's Drugs (Bill's father) about the turn of the century.

The advertisements of these early pharmacies are interesting. They sold everything—just as they do now. Descriptions were lumped together, as “Hair, Nail, Tooth and Shaving Brushes.” In 1875 the red-hot special was Hall's Sicilian Hair Renewer at six-bits.

KLAMATH COUNTY

Most everyone (we hope) who has graduated from a California school can recite the names of the state's 58 counties. Hardly anyone knows that another, Klamath County, was created in 1851 and went out of existence in 1875 after a varied and stormy career. Sectional politics, poor road facilities and economic difficulties were responsible. The original boundaries of Klamath County were the Oregon border on the north, the Pacific on the west, and Mad River on the south and the summit of the Coast Range on the east—separating it from Trinity County. Mining was the chief source in the beginning, and such towns as Bestville, Sawyer's Bar, New Orleans Bar and Happy Camp sprang up along the Trinity, Salmon and Klamath Rivers. The County seat changed frequently—Crescent City, Orleans and Trinidad all taking turns. Siskiyou and Del Norte County were carved out of parts of Klamath County, then the mines faded, and Humboldt County finally took what was left in an annexation election held on May 30, 1874.

CHURCHES

Readers tell us they appreciate the frequent reference to early Solano churches. One of the oldest is Tremont Church, some four miles south of Dixon; the church and cemetery is all that remains of a community located there a half century and more ago. The Vallejo Recorder of Mar. 23, 1867 says: “Putah Creek has been four times out of its banks this winter and has damaged the fences and grain crops to a great extent in Tremont. The lane leading to the Solano House is now impassable.” A month ago the century-old pump organ of Tremont Church was stolen, and it saddens us to think of this historical loss. Incidentally, the Mite Society (now known by this and similar names throughout the United States), originated in this quaint little church in the 70's.

The Editor of the Recorder had a whimsical way of writing news. On May 16, 1867, he wrote: “The Rev. J. D. Beugless, USN, has been appointed Chaplain of the Mare Island Navy Yard. Mr. Beugless is a Baptist clergyman and as that denomination has no minister in this place he will preach in Vallejo every Sunday afternoon if a suitable room can be found.” Evidently room was found, because on May 23, 1867, he wrote: “Mr. Beuglass is an earnest worker and large-hearted and true to his interests. In the

pulpit he is interesting, forcible, solid; out of it, sociable and prepossessing.”

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