

GEORGE BUTLER

By John C. Funk



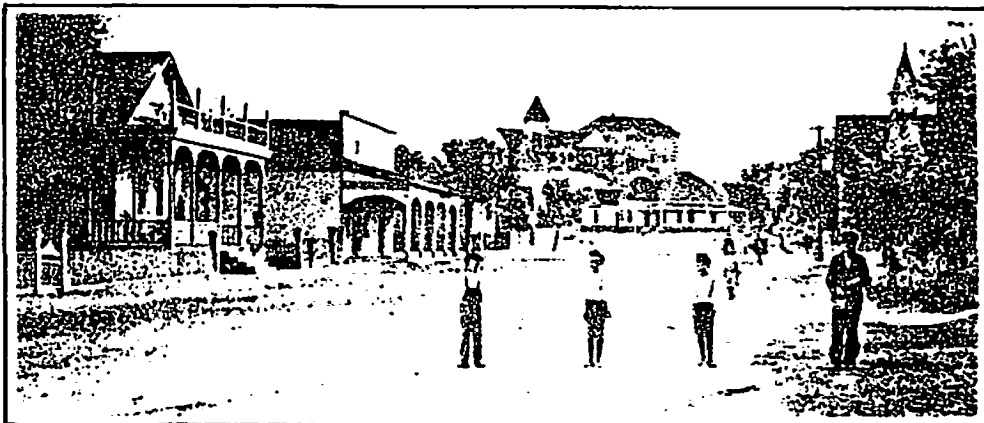
GEORGE Eugene Butler was born on November 9, 1876, in Downey, California. He was the son of George Emery and Julia (Moore) Butler. The senior George Butler was a minister and, with a family of six children, was usually hard pressed to keep the family in comfortable circumstances. Tiring of constant deprivations, young George saved up a paltry sum of money and, at the tender age of eleven, struck out on his own. His small hoard was sufficient to buy him a train ticket to Needles, California, which became his home for many years and in which this enterprising and self-made man made his fortune.

In 1888, and for quite some time thereafter, Needles was a rough-and-tumble mining and railroad town. Undaunted, George almost immediately found employment as a helper and stock boy at the Monaghan and Murphy Mercantile Company. By dint of great perseverance he acquired an education and, in a few years was promoted to Bookkeeper, a position which he retained for the remainder of his stay with that company.

Around the turn of the century, George Butler again struck out on his own and established his own store; the Needles Mercantile Company. This, along with nearly every other enterprise he associated himself with, proved eminently successful and, on July 31, 1907, he incorporated the Bank of Needles. He was the President and Manager of both establishments for many years. He bought and sold a large number of properties around Needles and invested in several profitable enterprises including land and mining. Having learned the language of the Mojave Indians, he earned their trust and made many successful dealings with them.

Following the resignation from the Board of Supervisors of Judge James West on December 9, 1910, for reasons of health, George Butler was almost immediately appointed his successor by Acting Governor Porter to represent the large First Supervisorial District. This was not Mr. Butler's first experience with County Government, as he had served with distinction on the 1908 County Grand Jury. He was elected in 1912 to succeed his appointment, and served on the Board of Supervisors until January 8, 1917, when he was succeeded by Austin B. Mulvane of Amboy. During his six years as a Supervisor, Mr. Butler made at least monthly train trips from Needles to attend Board meetings.

George Butler and Worth Hervey, of Santa Ana, California, were married in 1904. Worth Hervey, born in 1882, was the daughter of William Blount and Joanna (Rhodes) Hervey of Santa Ana and was one of 8 (See Page 39)



Downtown Needles as it looked when Butler moved there in the 1890's.