

REDLANDS AT 75

(Continued from Cover)



Jasper Newton Field



Karl C. Wells

That the American Baptists, stunned by the damage of their enterprise in the north, frustrated by financial problems with their school in Los Angeles, were looking for a new site is understandable. After urging his parishioners at the First Baptist Church of Redlands to lobby for their town, Jasper Newton Field spoke on a hot July day to the Redlands Board of Trade urging the city of Redlands to seek "this prize."

Weeks of intense work, lobbying and personal visits by many people and a persuasive offer of a gift of land from Karl C. Wells and as much as 50,000 or more dollars from a city subscription captured the site committee's attention. Speaking before the American Baptist site committee in Los Angeles, Field extolled the advantages of Redlands, a city known for its culture, beauty and commitment to secure a university. The Los Angeles Times noted "his address was scholarly, logical, fulfilling, and elegant beyond compare. It was applauded at almost every sentence."

"I came, I saw, and I was conquered," allowed one of the site committee members during the June 1907 visit to Redlands. And so Redlands was chosen and Field assured the new board of trustees and the citizens of Redlands that it would "simply be a high grade, first class, broad-gauged college" fostered by the founding denomination.

FROM BIRTH PAINS THROUGH THE FIRST WORLD WAR

It was far from easy starting a college in 1907 during one of America's worst financial panics. Planning moved ahead in spite of it all, and Dr. Field was selected the first president of the University. In 1909 as the first classes began, the Administration Building was being completed, a Los Angeles architect was planning a formal campus design, and prosperity had returned to the land. When surveying the present campus, it is hard to realise that in the summer of 1909 a man and his wife stepped off the train in Redlands, hired a cab to take them to a hotel, and:

"Tourists?" asked the cab driver.

"No," the man replied.

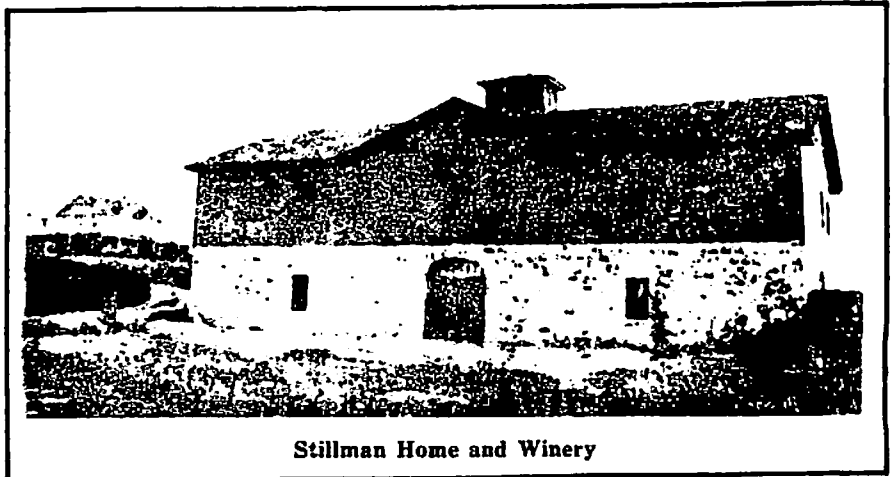
"From Los Angeles?" as he clucked to the horse.

"No. I'm a professor and I came here to teach in the University of Redlands," stated S. Guy Jones.

The driver threw back his head and laughed. "Man," he said, "there ain't no such thing. There's a lot of sand and an old vineyard out there, but there ain't no university."

An old winery and the decadent remains of a brick yard marked the place where the university was to be. In the dust of the summer day it was a discouraging scene to the nine professors and 52 students of the new university.

(See Page 52)



Stillman Home and Winery