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THE MEXICAN CANNON

By Arda M. Haenszel



The cannon in its original resting place
before Pioneer Memorial Hall on F Street.

HOW many remember the little cannon that stood until recently in front of Pioneer Hall on F Street? Thirty years ago the windows of my classroom at Harding School looked out toward the Log Cabin, and I could see it pointing at me as I taught my fourth graders about the Battle of Chino and the decisive Battle of Cahuenga in the relatively bloodless conquest of California by the Americans. At that time I didn't realize that that cannon had actually fought in the Battle of Cahuenga. As I began taking my classes on walking tours of historic sites in downtown San Bernardino, I began collecting every piece of information I could find about the history of the cannon. In history books, articles by Buie and Belden, issues of the little Pioneer Cabin News, and reminiscences of old timers, and more recently in microfilm reels of the contemporary press, I found parts of its story, and began putting the bits and pieces together.

So much of the tangible evidence of San Bernardino's history has disappeared. I finally realized that the old Mexican cannon, with its long and colorful history, must be one of the city's oldest and most valuable surviving relics.

Back in 1818, California residents, most of whom lived along the coast, were plagued

(See Page 35)