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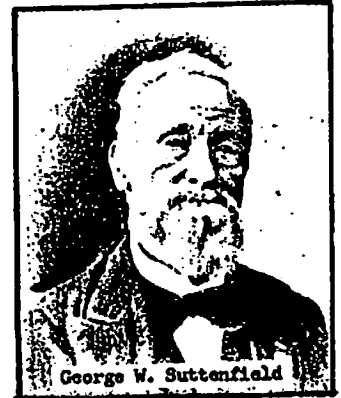
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THE PIONEER SOCIETY

By FRED HOLLADAY

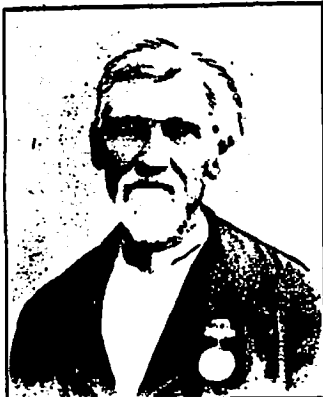


George W. Suttentfield

SAN BERNARDINO has been a colorful town since the Mormons colonised it in the 1850's. Others had tread across its broad, sweeping valley before: the Indians, who discovered it many unknown years ago, and wandering furtrappers and miners, who praised its balmy weather, fertile soil and abundant spring water.

When the Mormons were recalled to Utah in 1857, they sacrificed land and possessions to homesteaders from the East for but a fraction of its worth. Already a central trading post for wagon trains bound from Los Angeles to Arizona, Nevada and Utah, San Bernardino rapidly became a veritable "melting pot," embracing persons from every walk of life in the years that followed.

It was in this atmosphere that the San Bernardino Society of California Pioneers was founded on January 21, 1888. Most of the local citizens were pioneers of one type or another; only 38 years had passed since the gold rush of '49. Three of these men decided the time was ripe to found a society with a common bond; one to bring together this proud group of hardy residents in peace and harmony, joining to recount their past adventures to fellow pioneers, while enjoying the brotherhood and social activities such an organization afforded.



W. F. HOLCOMB

The men were George W. Suttentfield, age 63, a native of Indiana, who came to California in 1849; Major B. B. Harris, age 61, a Confederate war veteran who left Virginia to reach Mariposa in 1849; and Sydney P. White, age 49, who arrived at San Gabriel the same year. They inserted a notice in the San Bernardino Chronicle, asking all those interested in forming a Pioneer Society to gather at the Court House on Saturday, January 21, 1888,

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