

Do You Remember?



By Anne Homan

The McLeod Family

The early maps of Livermore show three tracts. William M. Mendenhall laid out the original one below the railroad tracks in October 1869. In 1875 Alexander Esdon filed a map for the Northern Addition, a 49-block plan north of the railroad and north of Mendenhall's tract. These two tracts were rectangular shaped. In May 1875 Andrew J. McLeod (pronounced "Mc-Cloud") received a government patent for his land and filed his 18-block plan for expansion of the new town.

The McLeod tract was an odd-shaped quadrangle like an arrow pointing at what would become the flagpole corner at Mill Square—First and Lizzie Streets. McLeod's Tract continued Mendenhall's numbered streets to the east. McLeod Street runs through the middle of this development; with borders formed by South Livermore Avenue, Church Street, First Street, and Sixth Street. Lots around McLeod Street in 1890 sold for \$25 down and \$10 a month with 8% interest. McLeod's venture into real estate lasted for 20 years.

Born in Ohio, McLeod lost his parents at a young age. He crossed the Midwestern plains to California by ox teams with his uncle in 1854 when he was 17. For a number of years, he worked in today's Fremont area operat-

ing hotels. In November 1859 he married Delia Foley, a native of Ireland. They had five children—Norman, Mary "Mamie," Colin, Annie, and Leah; the family moved to Livermore in 1868. McLeod operated a general store here in the old Bank Exchange Building, in partnership with Henry Meyers.

Advertisements in 1874 and 1875 show a broad range of items available: hardware, clothing, boots and shoes; dry goods, groceries, crockery, wines and liquors, patent medicines, stationery, paints. Yearly sales reached \$75,000. Meyers sold his interest to McLeod, and in June 1874 McLeod entered a partnership for the store with George C. Stanley; two years later the firm of McLeod and Stanley went out of business. Fred Mally bought the boot and shoe department, and G.W. Comegys purchased the crockery and hardware.

McLeod rented out most of the store space, but kept the post office in the front of the store for himself. He was the postmaster of Livermore from 1869 until

1882. The post office had 175 private boxes; mail came by train once a week. Perhaps McLeod was too busy with his booming real estate business for the McLeod Tract to worry about the general store.

When the wooden one-story Bank Exchange Building burned down in 1882, McLeod immediately replaced it with a substantial three-story wooden building on the same site, the northeast corner of Mill Square.

Many businesses operated out of this handsome Victorian structure with its prominent tower—McLeod's Saloon, the Bank of Livermore, Dr. Silas L. Savage's dental office, the *Livermore Herald*, McLeod's Saloon (run by son Norman McLeod), among others. Part of the top floor was the Masonic Hall. McLeod served on the town council for six years, including a term as the first mayor (then called the president) of Livermore in 1876. He also was elected to the office of assessor for Murray Township for a number of years. In 1876 Andrew McLeod hired an

oil painter to create portraits of him and Delia. McLeod is shown with gray hair brushed straight back and with a neatly trimmed mustache and beard; Delia has black hair parted in the middle with gold pierced earrings and a lacy scarf held crosswise with an oval-shaped gold pin. Her black silk dress has bugle beads decorating the sleeves and shoulders. Andrew J. McLeod died in 1905, and his wife died the next year. Most of the McLeod Building was torn down in 1920 to make way for the new Bank of Italy, now the Independent Building.

Their oldest son, Norman McLeod, worked as a postal clerk for his father, and in 1889 he began a ten-year term as the town clerk. On 5 May 1892 Norman McLeod and Fred Sangmaster celebrated the opening of their new saloon, the Hub. Torn down in the 1970s, the Hub was at the site of today's Lizzie's Fountain on Mill Square, across the street from the McLeod Building site. Norman McLeod died in 1935. He never married.

Mary "Mamie" McLeod

married Daniel J. Murphy on 18 July 1888 at St. Michael's. D.J. and Mamie lived at 291 McLeod Street; their home was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. The house was built of redwood; brackets under the eaves reveal its Italianate style. D.J. Murphy served as an Alameda County Supervisor from 1911 until his death in 1921 of pneumonia. Mamie outlived him by 35 years.

Colin McLeod bought a saloon in Pleasanton with a partner in June 1896, and on 23 August he and Nellie Miller were married in San Francisco at St. Dominic's Catholic Church. Their only child, Irene, died at age 16 in Livermore.

The other two McLeod children, Annie and Leah, married men who became bankers associated with the Bank of Italy. Annie married Manuel L. Silva and Leah McLeod married Lloyd M. MacDonald. The Silvas had one son, Andrew, and the MacDonalds one son, Norman.

Except for Colin, who is buried with his family at Holy Cross Cemetery in Colma, all the McLeod children are buried in the same plot as their parents in St. Michael's Cemetery here in Livermore.

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