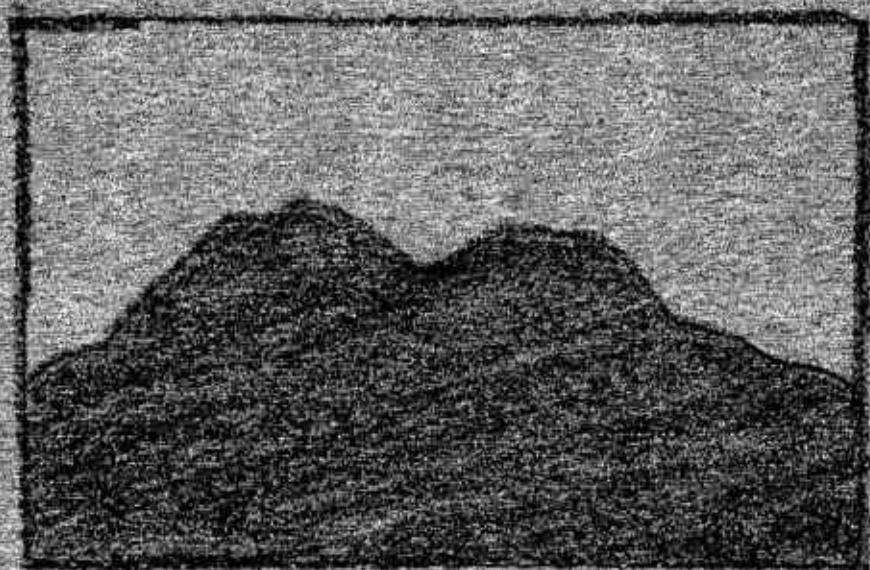


# Terry E. Stephenson

by

Allen W. Goddard



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Orange County Historical Society

OCCGS REFERENCE ONLY

ORANGE COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA

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# Terry E. Stephenson

by

Allen W. Goddard

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*An address delivered on November 12, 1964,  
before the Orange County Historical Society  
at the Charles W. Bowers Memorial Museum,  
Santa Ana, California.*



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IT WAS LATE SPRING IN 1943. People in Southern California, like all Americans, were concerned with the progress of the Allies in World War II. General Dwight Eisenhower was hammering at the forces of Rommel in North Africa. Douglas MacArthur's fliers were striking at Japanese bases in New Guinea. On the afternoon of May eighth, a headline appeared in the *Santa Ana Register*:

#### COUNTY TREASURER STEPHENSON CALLED BY DEATH

To those who knew Terry Stephenson throughout the years, this distressing news came as a great shock. As a widely known personality and as a writer of County history, Stephenson had provided a major link of understanding between the colorful Dons of the Rancho period and the Twentieth-century Americans.

The front page account told of Stephenson suffering a heart attack on a train near Rawlins, Wyoming. He was enroute to visit his son, Terry, Jr. in Omaha. The high elevation and the strain of the trip had proved too much for his heart condition. Rawlins hospital facilities, including an oxygen tent were of no avail. Thus, hundreds of miles from home and family, Terry Stephenson passed away.

Terry E. Stephenson had been known as a newspaper editor, publisher, postmaster, county official, and as an authority on Orange County history. He had spent over half a century in this area beginning in his early boyhood when small towns and agriculture were the order. He lived until the time when war industry and population expansion foretold a future metropolitan center. As a student at Stanford University at the beginning of the century he demonstrated

ability in journalism and as an executive. After graduation he spent three years as a newspaperman on the San Francisco *Examiner* and on the Fresno *Morning Republican* before he returned to Orange County to become managing editor and part-owner of the *Register*. At the age of twenty-five he had proven his ability in the field of journalism. He was yet to prove himself in the highly competitive newspaper business and in the qualities necessary for civic leadership, and in pioneering a new field of accomplishment—the scholarly assembling of County historical data from almost non-existent sources.

In his earlier years on the *Register*, Stephenson and his wife, Cora, lived in rented rooms; he traveled economically—on bicycle around Santa Ana, by horseback in the open country. In the young editor's spare time he studied the topography, vegetation, and wild life of the mountain areas adjacent to Santa Ana. He especially delighted in talking to pioneer settlers, making notes of their experiences in earlier days, and writing of these experiences in his column in the *Register*. The reminiscent style of writing and his neighborly manner endeared him to his readers. Later he compiled these same incidents into published volumes. The order and system of these records was of his own design, one which would be an aid to others who wished to know the background of the area in which they lived.

Even more than his contribution of source material for local history was his personal trait of making friends. The *Register* reporter, who reviewed events of his life at the time of his passing, expressed this sentiment with the comment, "Few persons equalled Terry Stephenson in his ability to make friends."<sup>1</sup> Nearly two decades later former acquaintances still spoke of this characteristic in his personality. These were people with whom Stephenson was associated in newspaper work, in the postoffice, and in the Court House. In his career as a County historian, he was unique—molding the anecdote of the early settler with the critical analysis of a trained reporter and career editor, into one of the first scholarly efforts toward recorded history of Orange County.

### *Early Life*

Terry Elmo Stephenson was born on a farm in Wilson County, Texas, June 7, 1880, the son of Taylor and Mollie (Haw) Stephenson. His father was a cattle rancher whose work required that he be almost continually on the range. When Terry was four years old his mother died. The problem for the young father was a weighty



*TERRY ELMO STEPHENSON*



*Santa Ana High School football team, 1896. Top row from left, Clyde Walker, end; Reed Insley, fullback; Oscar Edinger, guard; Joe Goldsmith, manager; Leo Brook, quarter. Middle row from left, John McFadden, quarter; Bob Northcross, half. Bottom row from left, Terry Stephenson, tackle; Claude Swope, end; Adolph Fossek, half; Ray Vegeley and Dresser, subs; Jay Baker, tackle.*

one. In addition to Terry were Myrtle, aged six, and Burton, two. There appeared a solution when a letter arrived from his sister, Betty Adams, inviting him to bring his motherless children to California. The Martin Adams' home, the letter said, was within a mile of Orange, a thriving town built around a plaza in which there were good schools, many churches, and many southern families. That their welcome was a whole-hearted one was assured by Aunt Betty's poignant remark, "Our hearts are empty because we never had the children we have longed for." \*

Taylor Stephenson gratefully accepted the invitation of his sister and brought the children to the Adams home located near what is now Main Street and Chapman Avenue and not far from the present location of St. Joseph Hospital.

Across the street from the Adams' home was the residence of Marshall Northcross with two children near the age of Terry. It was a natural place for Terry to begin making friends, especially with Robert, a handsome looking boy, a little older than he. At school and in other activities they were closely associated. In the ranch acreage around Orange in the late 80s and early 90s, grape vines were being taken out, and walnut and orange seedlings planted. Between the rows of young orchard stock thrifty ranchers planted seasonal crops, among them peanuts. The first money the boys earned was picking peanuts. The friendly rancher who hired the boys occasionally took them to Los Angeles and as they grew older they attended Shakespearian plays and the opera.

As the boys, Terry and Robert, progressed in school, a third friend was added, Bryant Williams, later to be associated with the First National Bank of Santa Ana and well-known in financial circles of Orange County. The three boys took the nicknames of Ted, Bob, and Bry and the nicknames stayed with them all of their lives. The boys went to Santa Ana High School, which was housed in a two-story frame building on North Sycamore Street near the present Y.M.C.A. building. The grammar school occupied the lower floor, the high school the four upper rooms with a simple chemistry laboratory in the tower on the third floor. On the 1896 football team Terry Stephenson played tackle, Robert Northcross, half, and Williams, guard.

No school annual or paper existed at this time but we are indebted to an interesting printed booklet known as the '98 *Rah* for details of this era. Noon luncheon period was spent by the boys at the adjoining fire station or "engine house" and hence there grew



up what came to be known as "The '97 Engine House Association." "President and Chief Obstacle" was Bob Northcross. Principal among the news items in the '98 *Rah* was the account of the "kidnapping" of the '97 class president on the evening of a class party. He was "taken in a horse and surrey on North Main Street at full speed. . . The merry race went on, around the 'kite' and back to Santa Ana." The news item concluded with the statement that, "As the carriage turned the corner at Sixth and Ross Streets it was overturned in a promiscuous heap. . . The pride of '97 had been humbled."<sup>3</sup>

Principal F. E. Perham of the high school did not take kindly to either the incident of the "kidnapping" or to the distribution of the unauthorized paper. Seven boys were "called on the carpet" among them teen-ager Terry Stephenson. Dismissal was the punishment. The boys took their case to the editor of *The Standard*, a weekly newspaper in the town. The *Standard* editor advised that the boys be allowed to return to school. This was done later and all concerned graduated.<sup>4</sup>

An unfortunate accident handicapped Terry for later participation in athletics. While in high school he injured his knee in football practice. While this would not have been a difficult thing to correct and recover from under modern conditions it became a serious problem for him in the late 1890s. With a bad knee and no transportation except by walking, Terry had to resort to crutches. After some months the knee responded to treatment. Scarcely was he back to normal walking again when he engaged in a friendly scuffle with his younger brother, Burton, in front of the Adams' home and again injured the knee. On crutches and walking four miles every day for nearly a year during this teen-age period gave Terry a slight stoop which he never overcame.

#### *Enters Stanford University*

In September, 1899, Terry went to Stanford University, then a new institution with approximately a thousand students. He lived economically and paid part of his university expenses from his earnings as a correspondent for San Francisco newspapers. From the beginning he reported news for the student newspaper. In his third year as a student he was named associate editor of the *Sequoia*, a student literary publication. This year also he managed the varsity tennis team and was elected vice-president of his class for the half-year term.

In the fall of 1902 he began his senior year. In the month of December an election was held for student editor of the *Daily Palo Alto*. His selection was a gratifying surprise and in his scrapbook are clippings making the announcement from the San Francisco *Examiner*, the Santa Ana *Blade*, the San Francisco *Call* and the *Chronicle*. The latter two announcements included a photo-cut of the young editor.

Proficiency in journalism was matched by that in another field in a brief appearance as a director of a benefit entertainment. The following note was written to Terry by Jane L. Stanford, mother of Leland Stanford, Jr.:

Mr. T. E. Stephenson—  
Dear Sir,

Please find enclosed a check for one-hundred dollars to swell the proceeds of your entertainment of last evening for the benefit of the Guild fund. . . .

I did so enjoy the play last evening. It was well done, and the actors deserve great praise for their efforts.

Your well wisher and sincere friend,

Jane L. Stanford, Palo Alto \*

The University's annual commencement was held in the Assembly Hall on May 25, 1903. Terry Stephenson was listed among those receiving degrees with a major in history. Just before the commencement came a letter to Terry from the city editor of the San Francisco *Examiner*:

**The Examiner**  
San Francisco

May 17, 1903

My dear Stephenson:

I can give you a place on the staff whenever it may suit you. Let me know as soon as possible when you can commence.

Yours truly,  
James R. Nourse  
City Editor \*

#### *Employment on the San Francisco Examiner*

Terry did not neglect the opportunity for a career and went to work as a reporter on the *Examiner*. His "beat" was Chinatown. A young associate was the *Examiner's* staff artist, Leo Carillo. In

leisure moments at the news room of the *Examiner*, Leo, popular as a guitar player, entertained Stephenson and other reporters.

Carillo's fine background and knowledge of events in earlier days and his unique manner in narrating the same, may have provided Stephenson with the spirit and incentive to develop and connect Spanish with American periods in local history.

After a year with the *Examiner*, Stephenson became a reporter on the *Fresno Republican*, which was then published by Chester M. Rowell, one of the great newspaper men of the early Twentieth century. Under Rowell, Stephenson had ample opportunity to acquire the outlook and confidence that a newspaper executive needed to establish his career. His work was confining, but here also at the *Republican* he had time to become acquainted with a capable young woman staff member, Cora Belle Snyder. They were married in August, 1905.

#### *Stephenson Becomes A Publisher*

The next year in January, 1906, Stephenson visited Santa Ana over a weekend and attended the wedding of his sister, Myrtle. Several weeks later the Fresno paper made the following announcement: "T. E. Stephenson who has been on the *Republican* local staff for nearly two years, leaves this evening for Santa Ana to become editor of the *Register*. He will be accompanied by his wife."

The owners of the Santa Ana *Register* knew Stephenson and had offered him the position of managing editor, and as an added inducement to affiliate with the paper, then just a year old, proffered part ownership. He had accepted the proposal and the venture proved to be a profitable undertaking. Under the active direction of J. P. Baumgartner and Stephenson, the *Register* flourished as the town of Santa Ana grew. A dozen years after Stephenson arrived the *Register* absorbed its principal competitor, the Santa Ana *Blade*.

In these first years Terry and Cora Stephenson lived in rooms rented in the residence of Dr. J. P. Boyd at the northeast corner of Eighth and Main streets. To supplement his income, Stephenson contributed stories to *The Youth's Companion*, a popular magazine for the younger readers of this period. Mrs. Elsie Wingood Daly who was then a young school girl living at 10th and Main tells of her avid interest in *The Youth's Companion* and especially of a writer of stories of wild life in mountain areas. When she found that this same writer lived just two blocks away she wanted to have

him pointed out to her. One day her aunt, Mrs. Alice Gould called to her: "Elsie! There goes Mr. Stephenson on his bicycle to see his new son."

She ran to the front door, opened it, looked out and saw Terry peddling north on Main Street, then turning east at Washington on his way to the Santa Ana Valley Hospital (now called the Santa Ana Community Hospital) to visit his wife and see his new son, Terry, Jr.

The stories published in *The Youth's Companion* were based on real experiences that had happened to Terry and to the friends that he rode with and talked to on his excursions on horseback in the Santa Ana Mountains. His younger brother, Burton, had become a forest ranger and had provided another source for material included in these stories.

Stephenson's initial story published by *The Youth's Companion*, "That Small Pedro" appeared August 5, 1909. Pedro Manruel was a young Mexican lad with one leg withered and useless who was "forbidden the freedom of the trails and ridge of his mountain home," by his parents. His horseback experience was limited to riding a quiet horse within the confines of the area next to the family home. The way that "Small Pedro" came to the aid of his seriously injured father by riding the half-broken "Blanco" over miles of mountain trail to a neighboring rancher, Don Miguel Cabrillo, is told in the heart-warming narrative by Stephenson.

A second short story in the *Companion*, "Dan's Messenger", appeared in the March 10, 1910, issue. It related the incident of Dan White "anxious that his second [buck deer of the hunting season] should be a big fellow, full antlered and heavy," meets with a serious accident in an isolated mountain section. The description of clear-headed action on the part of the victim himself and his rescue by an observant acquaintance characterized Stephenson's graphic style in his early years as a writer and built up a following of young readers attracted to adventure in outdoor life in the Far West.

After Terry, Jr. was born in 1909, the Stephensons moved to a home of their own at 926 Lacy Street. About this time Robert Northcross married Eleanor Hammack, a Hollywood High School English teacher and daughter of Judge Daniel M. Hammack of Los Angeles. In 1910 a son was born to the Northcrosses, Robert Hammack Northcross, and the families remained close friends.

In succeeding years both families became prominently identified with civic affairs in Santa Ana, but in the early period Northcross

devoted his time to managing ranch property that he owned in Orange. Both men were especially interested in beautifying their respective towns, particularly in the planting of shade trees along community streets. Mrs. Northcross recalled that many of the trees planted along streets in Orange were planted by her husband. A single incident related in *Shadows of Old Saddleback* describes how Terry Stephenson saw a group of tiny maple seedlings growing beneath a maple in upper Santiago Canyon, none more than four inches high. He dug up a few of them, wrapped them in a handkerchief, and took them home in his hip pocket. Every one of them grew and one of them, in the parkway at 926 Lacy Street, still flourishes.

Santa Ana was then a principal stopping point for travelers between Los Angeles and San Diego. Early motorists can recall the attractive shade-tree lined streets that marked the county seat.

### *Quarter Centennial*

A special *Quarter Centennial* edition of the *Santa Ana Register* was issued in April, 1913. It was a noteworthy journalistic effort with some 130 pages approximately 11" x 16" containing informative articles and photos of life in Orange County. While issued somewhat prior to the actual 25th anniversary of the founding of Orange County the edition contained abundant material for students of County history. Roy K. Bishop, Horticultural Commissioner, wrote on the "Citrus Fruit Industry;" R. P. Mitchell, County Superintendent of Schools, "The Public Schools;" Herman Reuter, "Fine Arts;" and Clarence Gustlin, "Musical Life."

Stephenson enlisted both his wife Cora and his brother, Burton, to aid in completing this special edition. A feature "Mission San Juan Capistrano" by Mrs. Terry E. Stephenson tells of an Easter Sunday spent at the mission. A brief sketch on "The Santa Ana Mountains" carried the name of J. B. Stephenson and describes the view from Santiago Peak as "the finest in Southern California."

According to a *Register* announcement all unsigned articles appearing in the special issue were written by Stephenson. In addition, "Good Roads in Orange County" in the *Quarter Centennial Edition* bears Stephenson's name and photo. Excerpts from this read: "California voted \$18,000,000 for a state road to traverse the state. . . Through Orange County the route lies along the historic El Camino Real . . . established by the Spaniards over a cen-

tury ago. The state is to build a macadamized road . . . from La Habra . . . to San Juan Capistrano."

In 1916 the Santa Ana unit of the California National Guard was scheduled to leave for a period of service along the Mexican border. Members of the company were hopeful that they might not have to depend on basic army rations while on border duty. Terry and his friend of long standing, Bry Williams, hearing of the problem, headed a citizens' committee and raised a "mess fund" of \$500 which provided a nice supplement to army rations while Company L was on active duty. Stephenson and Williams also teamed up in an event of public interest connected with the creation of Department 3 of the local superior court. A political "Jamboree" was held at St. Ann's Inn, then offering the finest dining room for public gatherings in Orange County. (It is now the Court House Annex.) The "Jamboree" was a stag affair and members of both political parties attended.<sup>4</sup>

In 1919 the Orange County Historical Society was formed and in this group Stephenson found the opportunity to further his talent for research and writing. He became an active force in the Society. Another decade would pass before the Society began its series of historical publications, but in the meantime historian Stephenson had begun to expand his horizons. His activities took him to other sections of the County. He became acquainted with other towns. The period of the 20s developed his interests more widely.

The *Register* offices and plant were then situated on the southwest corner of Third and Sycamore streets just across the street from the post office. Flake Smith, veteran post office employee, now retired, recalls, "Terry Stephenson used to drop in the post office every morning to get his mail. I was city distributor and had begun work in 1912 when Charles Overshiner was Postmaster. In 1923 there was a vacancy in this office. Terry made application and was successful in receiving the appointment. Later he appointed me Assistant Postmaster. He was one of the finest fellows to work for and as a historian he thought pictures of past postmasters should be displayed. He collected and framed all their pictures and saw that this was done."<sup>5</sup>

The pictures now numbering fourteen continue to be displayed on the wall of the postmaster's office. Stephenson's was the eleventh.

While postmaster, Stephenson continued his association with the *Register*. His fine capacity for developing loyal assistants gave him a unique position of leadership in the community. The Rotary

Club was organized with Stephenson as a charter member. In the year 1925-26 he served as president of the Rotary Club and his wife was active with the Rotary Anns. His interests extended beyond his public office, and his business associates. L. L. Beeman, retired many years now as professor of history and political science at Santa Ana College, recalls that Stephenson invited the better students from the history, political science, and economic classes to meet at his home and form a club. Books were most frequently the subject for discussion. Some present day leaders in Santa Ana were members of this club. John "Sky" Dunlap, Ralph E. White and Wylie Carlyle were three of many proteges of Terry Stephenson and received much encouragement from him in their student years.

The *Register* in the 20s was a conservative but civic-minded and popular news organ that circulated widely throughout the county as well as in Santa Ana. It was linked to Santa Ana readers particularly with ties of affection and admiration. Then in 1927 a new personality, J. Frank Burke, a former Ohio publisher, came into the community. Burke was a journalist with an observant eye to the future importance of Santa Ana and its daily newspaper and was a political liberal. He made what seemed to be a fabulous offer to the owners of the *Register*. \$750,000 was the suggested purchase price. Previously the owners had no intention of selling, but agreed to consider the matter. Stephenson opposed the sale, but the other shareholders were more receptive to the proposal.

The two-story brick and stucco building and plant, often littered with newsprint, proof sheets, type, and ink smears suddenly acquired a new importance. Townspeople became anxious to know what was going to happen. A deal was pending that was to affect their community and no doubt the business future of Santa Ana. The owners discussed it among themselves and with close associates. Finally they accepted Burke's offer and signed the papers. Long years of patient journalistic effort had resulted in financial independence for them. Terry Stephenson deservedly shared in this for it was he who had provided a sort of "journalistic genius" and impetus to the *Register* in this period of growth.

The story of Burke's financial assistance in making his final offer and of his effort to build a newspaper with a liberal editorial policy in a conservative community will not be dwelt upon here. It should be noted, however, that part of the purchase agreement was that the editors sever all connections with the paper. For a period of ten years Stephenson was not allowed to write for any



paper circulating in the *Register's* area of influence. Terry Stephenson later expressed regret to his friends over this agreement. He was somewhat lost without his newspaper to express his views on community affairs. But he and his family now had a beautiful home at 1522 North Broadway and one of his objectives could be realized — to build up his private library of Californiana.

### *Stephenson Recognized As An Historical Authority*

As one of the founders and a director of the Orange County Historical Society, Stephenson worked in close co-operation with the society's president, Dr. C. D. Ball, for many years. Meanwhile at Santa Ana High School and Junior College, the instructor of printing, Thomas E. Williams, with some years of experience as a color printer, wished to establish the print shop as a fine arts press. There were choice out-of-print books that could be permanently preserved if the community and the school trustees were in agreement. What better outlet for Stephenson's interest in local history, in writing, and in editing could there be than this opportunity provided by Williams for producing in quantity as well as quality the results of his efforts?

Having suddenly been relieved of his newspaper responsibilities, Stephenson acquired a certain amount of leisure time. He considered that much of this could be devoted to research and writing of local history. His wife was also quick to respond and to encourage him in the undertaking. His first task, he decided, was to locate the earliest trails. He began by comparing accounts by Father Zephyrin Engelhardt in his history of San Juan Capistrano with Herbert Bolton's translation of Francisco Palou's *New California*. He read the diary of Miguel Costansó, an engineer with the Portolá expedition of 1769. The records of San Juan Capistrano Mission were available and Alfred Robinson's *Life In California*, the latter described by Stephenson as "a treasure mine of information about early California." Stephenson studied these sources and secured copies of maps from the Orange County Title Company, conferred with William G. McPherson, a fellow county historian, and with Judge John Landell of San Juan Capistrano. He visualized Orange County landmarks in their earlier settings and retraced the trails and route of El Camino Real to the delight of students of local history, and to those whose memories could picture the earlier days. The resulting product, *Caminos Viejos*, had the inimitable writing style of Stephenson matched by an equally unique printer's format with illuminated



letter title pages and chapter beginnings together with photo engravings, woodcuts, and maps. Artists aiding in its production were Jean Goodwin and Arthur Ames.

*Camino Viejo* was published in 1930, the first volume to establish the Fine Arts Press and also the first to identify Stephenson as the principal authority on Orange County history.

The next year from the typewriter of Stephenson came *Shadows of Old Saddleback* dedicated to the memory of his friend from early boyhood, Robert C. Northcross. Northcross, in poor health in his later years, had passed away three years earlier. His widow, Eleanor Northcross, had become an important member of the faculty at Santa Ana College and worked in co-ordination with Stephenson in reviving interest in local history. As far back as the 1925-26 academic year when the college was considering a "name" for the students and athletic teams, it was Eleanor Northcross who suggested that because of the background of Spanish traditions the name "Dons" be used. The name Santa Ana "Dons" immediately became popular.

In *Shadows of Old Saddleback* Stephenson explains the origin of the name "Santiago" and "Modjeska" for the twin peaks that form the historic landmark, going back as early as the 1850s for the former. Then Stephenson adds: "But whatever map-makers might say, to the old-timers who came here in the '70s and '80s, the big mountain, with its two peaks, is always Old Saddleback, and it will be Old Saddleback to them to the end of their days and probably to their children and their children's children."

Phil Townsend Hanna, editor and historian, describes "Shadows" as "history . . . coupled with natural science . . . a felicitous series of sketches about virtually all the elements responsible for the productive development of this land and the civilization that grew upon it."<sup>10</sup>

Terry, in this best known of his works, expressed the enthusiasm for the open country and the spirit of the early settlers. "For them, each day's tasks and trials and joys were marked by the rising of the sun over Old Saddleback. To it in the quietness of early morning they looked and received inspiration, and in the twilight . . . they found the sun's rays suffusing the old mountain in a soft glow of light."

*Shadows of Old Saddleback* was written from notes he had gathered in earlier years on horseback rides exploring the back country of Orange County accompanied by friends such as Bob Northcross, Nat

Neff, his brother Burt, then a United States forest ranger, and his son, Terry, Jr. These notes had first appeared in his *Register* column, "Off The Beaten Path," but a perspective of many years intervened between the series of column sketches and the preparation of "Shadows." Historian Frank Garver states: "The historian deals not with the event, but with the record of it. . . He cannot observe it, but must deal with the record of the observation of others."<sup>11</sup>

Terry Stephenson's value as a local historian lies in the fact that he was a most competent observer and journalist before he became known as a historian. To read *Shadows* one needs a county map with the canyons and landmarks indicated. Then Peters, Limestone, Santiago, and Black Star canyons come to light in their proper location. Los Bueyes (the oxen) Canyon, now known as Weir Canyon, is properly identified. Stephenson explains that La Horca, Sierra and Fremont are names of the same canyon situated just northeast of the northern point of Santiago Reservoir.

Stephenson's knowledge of geology enabled him to recognize the value of numerous fossils in the canyons and hills. His chapter on Peters' Canyon is one that gives a brief outline of pre-historic Orange County.

A year after *Shadows* was published the first volume of the *Orange County History Series* was produced by the Historical Society's Publication Committee composed of Dr. C. D. Ball, William McPherson, and T. E. Stephenson. Stephenson's specific contribution was a study entitled "Names of Places In Orange County" with excellent information for the student of local history. The names of a dozen communities were analyzed for their origin. Volume II of the *Series* continued the study.

Such local history as had appeared in these publications developed Stephenson as an authority on County history both in Southern California and even nationally. The Historical Society of Southern California recognized his position as historian in Orange County by publishing his report of a famous court case which took place in 1873 when the title of the great Rancho *Santa Margarita y Las Flores* was at stake. The article was entitled "Forster vs. Pico" and appeared in three installments of the Society's *Quarterly* from December, 1935, to June, 1936.

Stephenson's "Forster vs. Pico" articles were re-published in book form by the Fine Arts Press. In addition to the historical material in the court case itself, this book includes a translation of

Pio Pico's account of his flight from California at the time of the Conquest.

The writer of this biographical sketch was engaged in the preparation of a study of the Mission Indians of Orange County and adjacent area during the summer of 1933 at Harvard University. There he found a complete set of Fine Arts Press publications including *Chinigchinich* and Terry Stephenson's *Caminos Viejos* and *Shadows of Old Saddleback*. Suffice to say, Stephenson's volumes had become known nationally to authorities on western history.

Of all the published works of Terry Stephenson, the one that in the writer's opinion provides the best analysis of Stephenson as a research student and local historian is his *Don Bernardo Yorba*. This is a one hundred and fifteen page book involving extensive research and personal interviews with family descendants. It was published by Glen Dawson of Dawson's Book Shop, Los Angeles, in 1941.

In *Don Bernardo Yorba* Stephenson furnishes an interpretation of a geographical spot that is an item of history in itself: "For years it had been a tradition that an early survey in the Yorba section gave as a corner 'the hill on which Bernardo Yorba sits on horseback.' This bit of picturesque description has often been quoted as indicative of the loose descriptions found in Mexican archives. . . . As a matter of fact, the hill was one well-known locally as the one to the top of which Bernardo rode almost daily, that he might look out over his fields. It was thus a fixed point."

The site in Cristianitos Canyon where the first Christian baptisms took place in 1769 was determined by Stephenson in 1930 following a suggestion by William P. Magee of San Juan Capistrano and confirmed by later checking in the period of the Indian artifacts excavation in the 1930s—a Works Progress Administration project. Stephenson, representing the Orange County Historical Society, checked the research workers' files and the findings in the field survey and approved the site as authentic.<sup>12</sup> A bronze plaque now commemorates this site. The nearby town of San Clemente holds an annual fiesta presenting the memorable pageant, *La Cristianita* in its Bonita Canyon Bowl during the month of July.

Stephenson had held the office of postmaster for twelve years before the *Register* was sold to J. Frank Burke. In 1935 Burke relinquished his ownership of the *Register* to R. C. Hoiles and in December of the same year a vacancy occurred in the office of County Treasurer by reason of the death of Eli B. Trago. Terry

Stephenson was appointed by the Orange County Board of Supervisors to fill the vacancy. In this public office Stephenson's friendly manner and engaging personality did much to popularize that section of the court house. He installed new and modern equipment making the County Treasurer's office not only more attractive but also adequately burglar-proof.

The late Ernest Wooster, a career employee of the Orange County Auditor's Office, had known Terry Stephenson for many years, both having been newspaper men in Fresno in earlier days. He spoke warmly of him in an interview in January, 1962: "As Treasurer, Terry Stephenson helped me quite a bit with problems when I worked with the County Auditor's Office. As a public official he was always accessible and friendly. He exerted a great deal of influence in the County."

Three months prior to this, Wooster wrote of Stephenson in an article on senior citizens for the *Santa Ana Independent* as one "like several other county officials [who] died on the job," and that he was one of the "senior citizens of the past . . . as hardy a breed as any that today can furnish."<sup>12</sup>

Others who had served in the Court House spoke of Stephenson's "many likeable qualities" and his wide recognition as "an authority on early County history." These tributes to Terry were made almost two decades after he had passed away.

In 1942 Stephenson wrote for the Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce a 2500 word sketch, entitled, "An Epitome of the History of Santa Ana", a factual account of events from the days of Portolá to the period when the Valencia orange industry was at its height. This same year Cora Stephenson passed away.

In his sixties now and with heart and blood pressure giving him difficulty, Stephenson felt acutely the strain of the accelerated pace of Santa Ana with its concentration of World War II industry. He felt also, no doubt, the lonesomeness in his large, though beautiful, Broadway home with his beloved wife gone. His son was halfway across the continent employed as public relations director for the Glenn L. Martin Nebraska Company in Omaha. His niece, Louise, who had completed her schooling while a member of his household, had married and was in her own home. These factors now impelled Stephenson to seek out and be with his son—if only for a brief visit. But like the vigorous, restless characters that he had known and that he had written so much about, he was destined to join them as another page in an eventful local history.

The announcement of Stephenson's death was made on Saturday, May 8, 1943. Two days later the *Register* published an editorial in which it commented: "It is not often that a man can be in public life for twenty years and not make enemies. But Terry Stephenson did just that. Making friends seemed to be another of his special talents. . . . A useful servant to his community, his state, and his nation, Stephenson, by his life in this community has left a deep imprint upon the minds and hearts of those who knew him."

Funeral services were held on May 12 at Smith and Tuthill's chapel in Santa Ana with the Reverend Wesley A. Havermale officiating.

In a western portion of Fairhaven Cemetery, beneath the shade of a hollyoak, a marker now reads:

Terry E. Stephenson 1880 - 1943  
Cora Belle Stephenson 1881 - 1942

Several months after the funeral a movement developed to commemorate Terry Stephenson and this movement became part of the war effort of Orange County citizens. Leslie W. Hypes, businessman and county salvage chairman, learned that if a sufficient tonnage of metal were collected to match that needed in ship construction that the community making such a contribution could select the name for a particular "Liberty ship". The announcement came from the Permanente Metals Corporation, a branch of Kaiser Steel Mills, and a corporation engaged in constructing freighters which were vital to the success of the Allies in World War II.

Enlisting the aid of service club members and boy scouts, Hypes secured some forty volunteers and eight army trucks. They became known as the "Forty and Eight", reminiscent of the transport railway cars in France during World War I. Abundant sources of discarded metal were discovered, principally at the Chiksan Company of Brea. Five railroad gondola cars were filled and sent to the Permanente shipyard.

Construction of the S. S. *Terry E. Stephenson* began at Richmond, California and by June, 1944, preparations were made for its launching. Traveling from Santa Ana for the ceremony were Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Hypes, Mr. and Mrs. Terry E. Stephenson, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Edmund West, and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Rowland.

Early on the morning of June 13, the Santa Ana group ascended the steps to the platform next to the bow of the ship ready to be launched. Just as the point of high tide was signalled, Louise West

broke the traditional bottle of champagne against the hull and the ship's stays were loosened. The *Terry E. Stephenson* was launched into the waters of San Francisco Bay.

The ship was fitted for service during the latter part of World War II and served the war effort until retired to the "moth-ball fleet."

The memory of Terry E. Stephenson will be perpetuated by the books that he wrote and by the remembrance of the community service he rendered. Let this be his epitaph, "He loved Orange County."

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Santa Ana Register, May 8, 1943.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Betty Adams to her brother, Taylor Stephenson, quoted by Eleanor Northcross, who said Stephenson preserved the letter for many years.

<sup>3</sup> A copy of the '98 *Rah* appears in Stephenson's Scrapbook.

<sup>4</sup> The letter to the editor of *The Standard* was taken from a clipping in the Stephenson scrapbook.

<sup>5</sup> The original note from Jane L. Stanford is in Stephenson's scrapbook.

<sup>6</sup> Original in scrapbook.

<sup>7</sup> Fresno Morning Republican, March 17, 1906.

<sup>8</sup> Recalled by Charles Swanner, interview, January, 1962.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Flake Smith, February 1, 1962.

<sup>10</sup> Foreword by Hanna to 1948 edition of *Shadows of Old Saddleback*.

<sup>11</sup> Garver, Frank H., *Syllabus for Historical Criticism*, pg. 2.

<sup>12</sup> This incident of Stephenson checking the project's finding was told to the writer by one of its members—Barton O. Withall in the latter part of 1962.

<sup>13</sup> Santa Ana Independent, October 6, 1961.



*First board of trustees of Charles W. Bowers Memorial Museum, 1934. From left, S. H. Finley, Terry E. Stephenson, Miss Lulu M. Minter, Robert Brown, Dr. C. D. Ball.*





*Santa Ana representatives at christening of S. S. TERRY E. STEPHENSON, June 13, 1944. From left, Mrs. Leslie Hypes, Mr. and Mrs. Edmund West, Leslie Hypes, Mrs. Fred Rowland, Mr. and Mrs. Terry Stephenson, Jr., Mayor Fred Rowland,*



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Allen W. Goddard first knew Terry Stephenson when he was a student at Santa Ana Junior College 1925-27. He studied journalism, contributed articles to the weekly *El Don* and was athletic editor of the college annual.

Mr. Goddard was born in Baraboo, Wisconsin, April 11, 1907 and moved with his family to California in 1915. He was educated in Escondido and graduated from Anaheim high school in 1925. After completing Santa Ana Junior College he entered U.C.L.A. and received his B.A. degree with a history major in 1929. The next twelve years were spent in public school teaching and in completing graduate study courses at U.C.L.A., U.S.C., and Harvard. He became a member of the Orange County Historical Society in 1935 and contributed a paper on the work of recovering Indian artifacts from the various sites where work was in progress during the summer of 1936.

During World War II, Goddard left teaching and entered business and enlisted in Company L, California State Guard. In 1947 he became an agent for the Occidental Life Insurance Company of California and has continued representing it to the present time.

When the Orange County Historical Society was reactivated in 1961 Goddard renewed his membership and became a director in 1963. Upon the death of Warren Hillyard, January 3, 1965, he was appointed to the position of treasurer of the society.

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*The cover illustration of Old Saddleback was drawn by Merton E. Hinshaw.*

HISTORICAL WRITINGS OF TERRY ELMO STEPHENSON  
Compiled by Beatrice E. Cooke

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