

# When San Jose Was Young

A Series of Interesting Articles of An Historical Nature Prepared Especially for The News by a Well Known Author and Journalist.

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HUMOR IN HANGING

In order to put an end to crime in San Jose in the early fifties a Committee of Safety was organized. It was made up of the most important English-speaking citizens. This committee had many different members. A few of them are now alive in San Jose. One recently told me that theirs was the only way of doing away with crime at that time. "In fact," he said, "we had to do it." He deplored the modern "coddling of criminals." He believed that if wrongdoers were publicly hanged there would be far less crime. He told me that the Committee of Safety did very little lynching. They usually shot the man. That was cheaper and kept down taxes.

However, some men were hanged, and one of these so honored was an Indian named Guadalupe. Guadalupe's hanging was a gala event.

In the early days there was a fashionable company of militia called the Eagle Guards. They usually did police duty on extraordinary occasions. The Eagle Guards were made up among others of Mayor Charles White, Josiah Belden, and Isaac Branham. "Uncle Ike" as he was later called. For the hanging of Guadalupe all the country people came to town, brought their lunches and had a picnic. Before the occurrence the Eagle Guards, a handsome spirited group of young men, paraded the streets and were the recipients of much applause and attention. They were to keep in order the crowd while Guadalupe was hanged.

There was no outbreak among the people assembled in the Plaza. After the execution of Guadalupe Mayor Thomas W. White took the company to St James Square, discharged the guns and put them in the armory. Afterward the Eagle Guards went to a place in the New York Exchange building for refreshments. Speeches were made, toasts were drunk. Mayor Charles White gave the crowd champagne. Others were not to be outdone in liberality by the Mayor. There was more champagne and happiness, and happiness and happiness.

The next morning the Mayor was himself again. Gravely he appeared in his office, but first he summoned the members of the Eagle Guard. When they were present he said "Call Charles White."

The clerk called Charles White.

The Mayor said, "Charles White, stand up." The Mayor stood up. "Charles White," said the mayor, "were you drunk and disorderly yesterday. Guilty or no?" Guilty. I am very sorry—" "Too late. You are an officer of the city, the commander of the Eagle Guards. I fine you \$20. I'll double it every time you appear before me again for like offense." The mayor laid his own fine on his desk.

Then he fined each one of the Eagle Guards ten dollars. The mayor never again had occasion to fine himself or the Guards. It was their first and last offense against law and order.