



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO: CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: ANDREW PEREZ, ASSOCIATE PLANNER**

**SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION  
AGENDA ITEM 9.a. – NOVEMBER 9, 2021 CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CONTINUED APPEAL TO CITY COUNCIL CASE 21-003; APPEAL OF  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 21-005 FOR AN ADDITION TO AN  
EXISTING COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE AND ESTABLISHMENT OF AN  
ART GALLERY AND WINE TASTING COLLECTIVE; LOCATION – 211  
E BRANCH ST; APPEALLANT – SHIRLEY GIBSON**

**DATE: NOVEMBER 8, 2021**

Attached are additional documents received for the above referenced item.

cc: City Manager  
Assistant City Manager/Public Works Director  
Community Development Director  
City Attorney  
City Clerk  
City Website (or public review binder)



# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY AT 211 E BRANCH STREET

## FOREWORD

Since the early 20th century, the property at 211 E Branch Street has changed hands more than a dozen times, with each owner adding their own unique character and modifications to the building and its surrounding land. This brief history of the property was researched by the team proposing to build an Art Gallery in the private parking spaces behind the current building. The research enabled us to identify the key historical elements of the property and ensure they are preserved for future generations.

## A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande

### Development of the Home Tract in 1907

Through the late 1800s, the property that is now 211 East Branch Street consisted of fields with a barn, outbuildings, two small dwellings and an outhouse. The property was well positioned between the rail depot to the east and Arroyo Grande's commercial hub at Branch and Bridge Street to the west, where the Ryan Hotel annexes provided a bustling hotel, stables, theater, retail, and offices spaces.

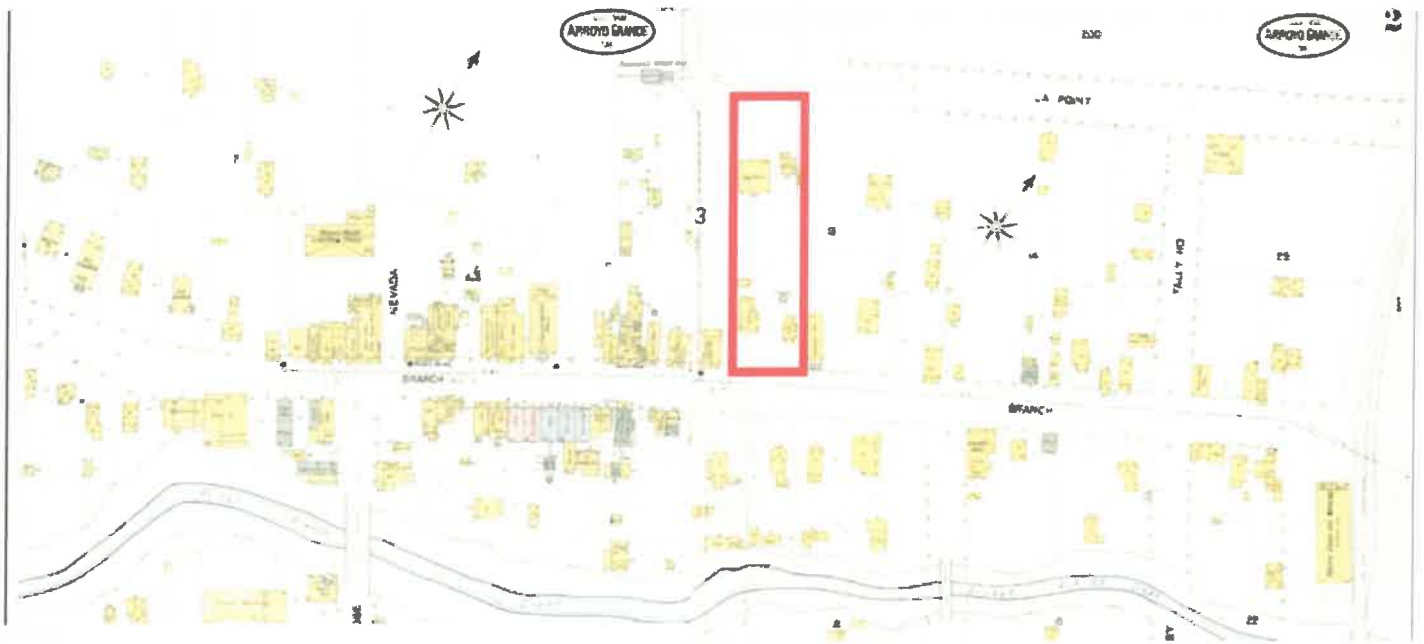


Figure 1: July 1903 Sanborn Map Branch Street

The property at 211 East Branch Street was owned by Adolph Phillips and his brother Louis Adolph Phillips, who operated their produce merchant business, Phillips Brothers & Co.

In 1907 they divided the property into home tracts, establishing seven new lots as seen on the Home Tract Map<sup>1</sup> on the next page. The Phillips' brothers sold the lots and moved on to find fortune in the oil industry.

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<sup>1</sup> Map of the Home tract in the town (now city) of Arroyo Grande. County of SLO, map recorded page 102 of Record of Surveys. December 21, 1907.

# A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande

## Chain of Title

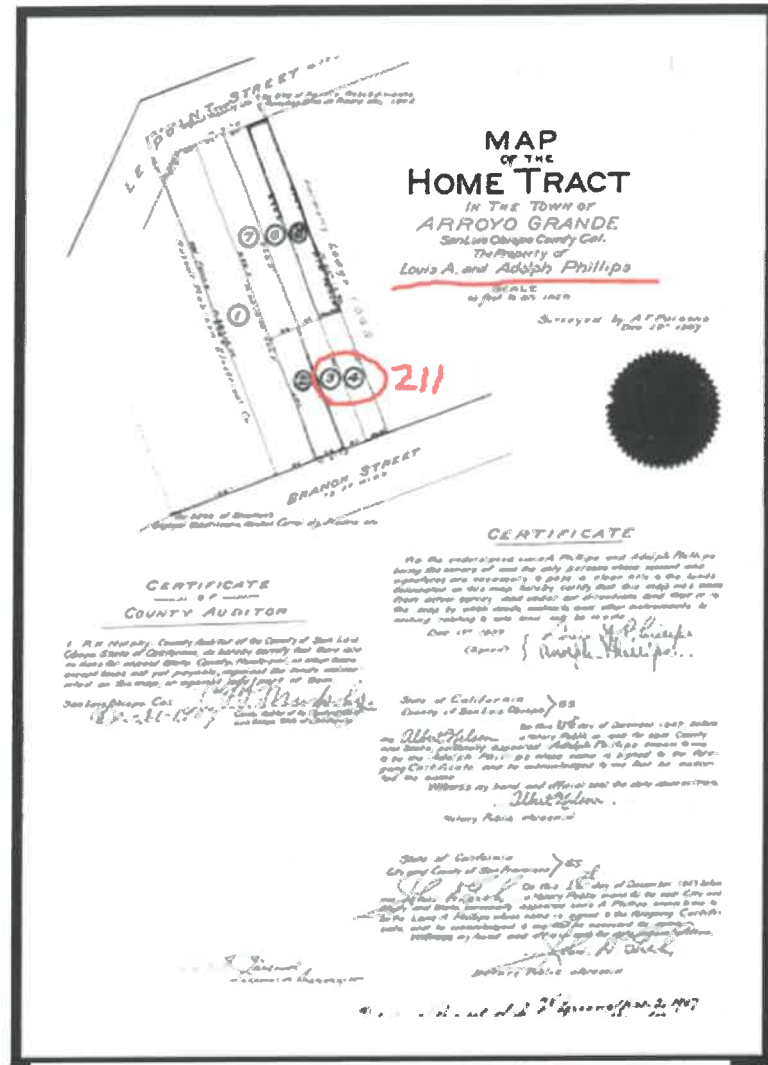


Figure 2: Phillips Brothers Map of the Home Tract December 21, 1907.

In 1908 the Phillips' brothers sold lots 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7 to Mr. J M Jones and his wife<sup>2</sup>. Two years later Mr. and Mrs. Jones sold the lots to Mrs. S. V. Pitcher<sup>3</sup>.

On lots 3 & 4 there was a 20x20 ft wood frame structure with a wood shingle roof and open porch. The structure was partitioned into two spaces, with a stove pipe at the back.

On the north side of the lot towards La Point there was a water tank and a large hay barn.

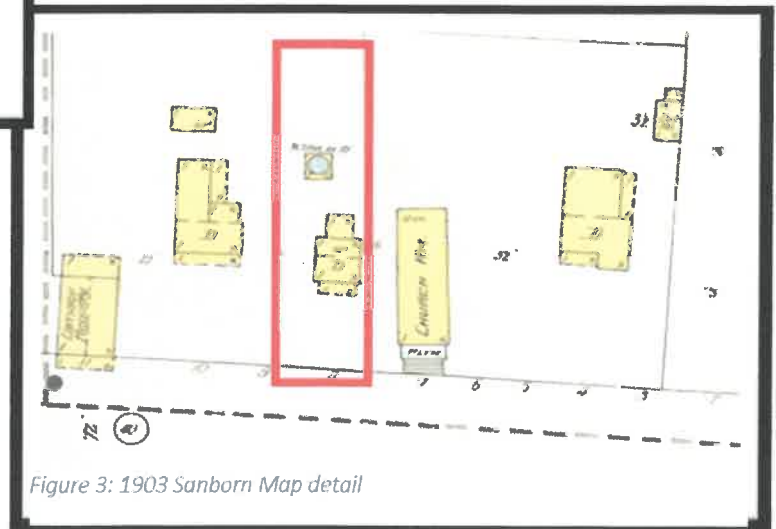


Figure 3: 1903 Sanborn Map detail

The building at 211 E. Branch Street was built in approximately the same location as this 20x20 ft dwelling seen on the **1903 Sanborn map**.

<sup>2</sup> Report of Deed and Mortgage published in SLO Daily Telegram, October 1, 1908

<sup>3</sup> Jones to Pitcher - Report of deed, September 20, 1910

## A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande

### Cervenka Family Home - 1911 to 1922

In 1908 **Joseph Cervenka** left the place he had rented on Huasna and moved to Arroyo Grande, renting the dwelling on lots 3 & 4, while working on the section gang of the P.C. Railway<sup>4</sup>.

According to Mr. Cervenka, by April 1911, he had raised enough money to purchase the home he was living in together with lots 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7, from Mrs. S. V. Pitcher<sup>5</sup>. Mr. Cervenka additionally took a \$1000 mortgage from the Bank of Arroyo Grande for the five lots<sup>6</sup>.



Joe's property escaped the flooding in 1911 that washed away part of Branch Street east of the property.

Home Tract lots 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7 are a short block west of the building seen sliding into Branch Street

Figure 4: Branch Street Flood 1911, looking west. California State Library

Mr. Cervenka and his wife lived in their new home on Branch Street until moving to Richmond, California in 1918<sup>7</sup>. It is likely that Joe added the extension at the front of the house that appeared in the **1909 Sanborn map**. There remained what may have been an outhouse, and the open stove pipe at the back.

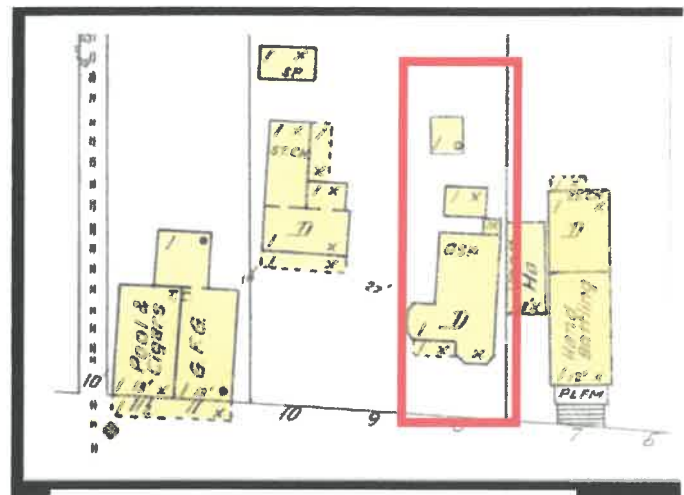


Figure 5: Sanborn Map 1909

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Joe Cervenka, The Arroyo Grande Valley Herald Recorder. May 1st, 1936

<sup>5</sup> Recorded Deed at San Luis Obispo County Recorder. April 11, 1911

<sup>6</sup> The Arroyo Grande Valley Herald Recorder. April 11, 1911

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Cervenka Obituary, The Arroyo Grande Valley Herald Recorder. February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1952

## A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande

### Quaresma Family Home - 1922 to 1956

In December of 1922 Manuel Quaresma purchased the land and buildings from Joe Cervenka<sup>8</sup>.

According to an article in the AG Valley Herald Recorder, Mr. Quaresma hired Short and Lewis to build an addition and overhaul the dwelling. Their work likely included improvements to the plumbing and removal of the open stove pipe at the back.

Manuel's son Edward, a young lawyer at that time, made his office in the home for a short period, before becoming a local assistant DA and then moving north as a judge. Manuel's first wife, Maria died in 1930. Manuel signed the deed of his property to his daughter Evelene Quaresma in 1935, about the time of her twenty first birthday. In the transfer of deed, Manuel wrote a touching note about the love and affection he felt for his daughter, and that he was giving her the property to assure her future support and protection<sup>9</sup>.

**Ms. Evelene Quaresma lived in the property from 1935 to 1956**, during which period she married Mr. Lovasz. In October 1956, she sold the house, together with lots 3 & 4 only of the original Home Tract, to Mrs. Jennie E. Edmands<sup>10</sup>, whose husband Walter had recently passed away.

Mrs. Lovasz (nee Quaresma) moved with her husband John Lovasz and brother Paul Quaresma, from their home at 211 East Branch Street, to a new ranch on the north of Arroyo Grande<sup>11</sup>.

The footprint of the house Mrs. Lovasz sold seemed to have not changed since the modifications made by her father Mr. Quaresma. Aerial images from 1958 show the house at 211 E Branch Street having a very similar footprint to the outline on the 1909 Sanborn map. (see also 1970 image later).

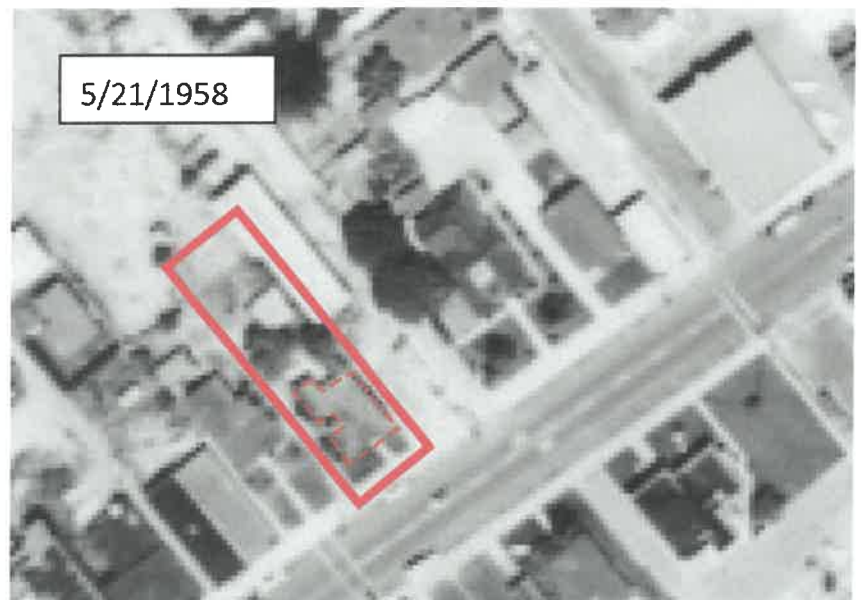


Figure 6: USCB Library Geospatial Collection. May 21, 1958

<sup>8</sup> Recorded Deed at San Luis Obispo County Recorder, 1922

<sup>9</sup> Recorded Deed at San Luis Obispo County Recorder, 1935

<sup>10</sup> Recorded Deed at San Luis Obispo County Recorder, 1956

<sup>11</sup> Arroyo Grande Herald Recorder. 27 May 1955



## A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande

### Home of Mrs Edmands and transition to Commercial Use - 1956 to 2021

Mrs. Jennie E. Edmands lived at 211 East Branch Street from 1956 until she died in August 1971, leaving her home to her daughters Lenora Nelson, Bernice C. Holmes, and granddaughter Barbara Blumhorst.<sup>12</sup>

**From 1972 to 1975**, Mrs. Edmands' heirs held title to the property.

**In 1974** according to AG City records repairs were made and the building was converted from residential to commercial.<sup>13</sup>

**In 1975** the Edmands family sold the property to to Jon and Carol Hoffman.<sup>14</sup>

#### MRS. EDMANDS MOVES

Mrs. Walter Edmands moved last week-end to the former Quaresma home at 211 East Branch Street.

Mrs. Edmands moved from her former home at the intersection of East Branch Street and Stanley Avenue, where she and her late husband had lived for the last 37 years.

Figure 7: The Arroyo Grande Valley Herald Recorder October 26, 1956



Figure 8: Advertisement in Five Cities Times-Press Recorder 1991

**From 1975 through the mid-eighties** the property exchanged hands several more times.

**In 1986** it became the office of the **Branch Street Realty**.

**In 1988** George and Patricia Haugen, with Gregory and Susan Tye took ownership of the property.



Figure 9: Five Cities Times-Press Recorder January 31, 1986

<sup>12</sup> Estate of J. Edmands, recorded Deed at San Luis Obispo County Recorder, 1971

<sup>13</sup> AG City staff report: Property converted from residential to commercial 1974 Building Inspector letter

<sup>14</sup> Recorded Deed at San Luis Obispo County Recorder, 1975

## A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande

In January 2005 Mr. James Murphy Jr and his wife Garin, took ownership of the property.



The new owners renovated the building and painted the exterior blue with white columns and lime-green trim accent.

From 2009 through 2019, it was the wine tasting rooms for Phantom River Wines.

Aerial imagery between 1970 and 2007 show changes to the footprint of the building, including an extension of the northeast wing with a new gable roof, and driveway and parking updates.



Figure 10 Google Earth.



## A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande



In **2011**, the property was assessed as part of the Arroyo Grande Historic Context Statement and was found to be of interest for its Victorian Folk architecture



In **September 2011**, the roof at the front of the house was replaced and a new area was roofed at the back (north side) of the house. The area under this new roof is a conference room with a modern window.

Figure 11 Google Earth

## A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande

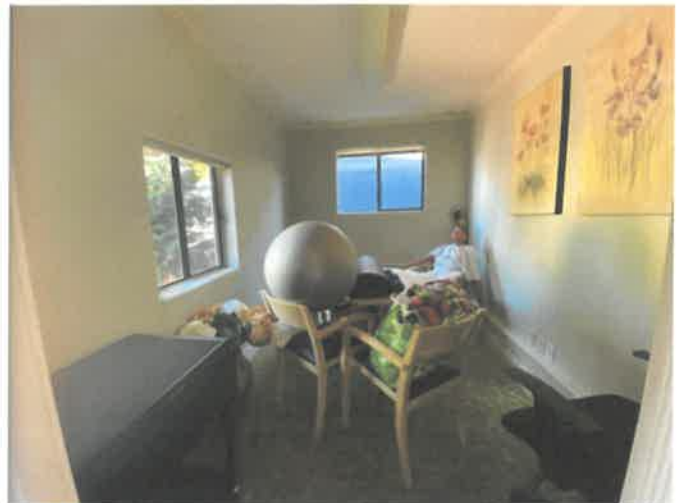
### Current Condition

The interior of the house has been modified many times, and there is little left inside that can be considered Victorian. Rooms that may have once been connected by the typical narrow Victorian passages and small doors, are now inter-connected open commercial spaces.

The room that spans the north side of the main building, under the new 2011 gable roof, houses a conference room with a large modern window.



The northeast wing that was extended in the seventies, is accessed through a narrow corridor that may once have been Mrs. Lovasz's kitchen.



## A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande

The northwest wing of the building, which was possibly once a semi-detached outhouse, has been extended and converted into an office/meeting room. The extended section (indicated by the red line in the photo) has a higher ceiling and newly framed opening. The room has been separated from the main house and accessible only through a new exterior door.



The exterior of the house has been nicely maintained. It has been painted blue with white trim, and red brick facing was added in the 2000's. The structure of the building needs attention, the wood structure under the front part of the house is rotting, and dry rot needs to be removed.

A pest inspection was completed in August 2021 and found that the house needs to be fumigated to remove active termites.

A Home Inspection made in 2021 reported extensive repair work is required to the roof, foundation, walls, and floors to maintain the structure and integrity of the building. The roof on the north side has passed its lifespan and needs to be replaced.

While the exterior of the building is very attractive, it is not the way the building looked 100 years ago. Based on Sanborn maps, aerial imagery, and inspection of the interior it is likely that the footprint of the front 2/3 of the building and porch were as built by Mr. Cervenka and modified by Mr. Quaresma in the 1920s. The remainder of the building has been added-on and/or modified through the decades since then.

## **A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande**

### **Association with Doctor Noble**

Several documents refer to the building at 211 E. Branch Street as the home of Doctor Noble in the 1920's and 1930's however, this research found no association between Doctor Noble and the property at 211 East Branch Street.

This research found the home Doctor Noble's owned and lived in during the 1910's and 1920's was on Bridge Street. His dental office was in the adjacent building. Doctor Noble died in 1930.

Throughout that same period, 211 East Branch Street was owned and lived in by the Cervenka and Quaresma families respectively.

#### **1900-1910**

Doctor Clare S. Noble came to Arroyo Grande from Wyandotte, MO in 1900 aged thirty. His first dental office in Arroyo Grande was in the former Leedham home to the east of the Union Hotel and burned to the ground with the hotel and other buildings in December 1903. Doctor Noble proceeded to build up his dental practice in an office in the Ryan Hotel Annex<sup>15</sup>.

#### **1910-1920**

In 1909 Dr. Noble married Mary (Mamie) Branch and soon after they made their home at 145 Bridge Street. In 1916 they purchased their home on Bridge Street from James Cavanagh<sup>16</sup>. Mrs. Noble's father, Ramon Branch, lived with the couple at their home for some years before his death in 1919. Dr Noble ran his dental office at 137 Bridge Street next to their home.

#### **1920-1930**

During the thirty years that Dr. Noble lived in Arroyo Grande, he not only served as dentist to the community, but he was also one of the first City Council Members and was City Mayor for eight years. He successfully lobbied on behalf of the city to change the new State highway plans, which would have bypassed and isolated Arroyo Grande. His proposal was adopted in the building of the highway, including the wide turning radius for the road at Traffic Way. Dr. Noble died with pneumonia in 1930.

#### **1930 - present day**

After Doctor Noble's death in October 1930, his Bridge Street dental practice was taken over by Doctor Baird, then in 1933 by Doctor Woolley. The Woolley family lived in what had been the Noble's home next to the dental practice. Doctor Kimbrough took over the practice at 137 Bridge Street in 1954.

Doctor Noble's estate, including the property on Bridge Street was distributed to his wife Mary L. Noble in October 1931<sup>17</sup>. In 1935 Mrs. Noble sold the home to Doctor and Mrs. Wooley.

The building that was Doctor Noble's dental practice is an Insurance office today. The home of Dr. Clare Noble, his wife Mamie, and their son Jack at 145 Bridge Street is now a dental office.

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<sup>15</sup> Herald Recorder. Dr. Noble obituary 1930

<sup>16</sup> Transfer of Deed. Deeds Book County of Alameda 21<sup>st</sup> November 1916

<sup>17</sup> Superior Court of the State of California. Estate Settlement Book 16 Page 290 6th October 1931



## A Brief History of 211 E Branch Street, Arroyo Grande

### Had Been Prominent In Civic Affairs for the Past Thirty Years

### Served as Mayor for Eight Years and as Councilman for Seventeen Years

The sudden death of Dr. Clare Shipman Noble at the San Luis sanatorium yesterday afternoon at 4:30 o'clock came as a great shock to his family and the entire community, where he has been one of its most highly honored citizens for the past thirty years.

Mr. Noble was taken to San Luis Obispo Monday, and it was reported he was suffering with pneumonia, but the seriousness of his condition was not realized until word of his death had been received.

Dr. Noble, who was born May 25, 1870, in Wyandotte, Missouri, and was 60 years of age at the time of his death, is survived by his widow, Mrs. Mamie Branch Noble, to whom he was married in January, 1909, and one son, Jack, aged 8. He also leaves a brother, Lloyd Noble, a sister, Miss Linnie Noble, both of San Diego, and a half brother, Thomas Hughes of Downing.

The family has the sympathy of the entire community in their bereavement.

Dr. Noble first came to Arroyo Grande 30 years ago and opened a dentist office in the old Eyan hotel annex. He built up a large practice with the splendid quality of his work, and several years ago purchased the property where his home and office now are, on Bridge street.

He was very active in all civic affairs and worked for the best interests of the community in which he made his home, and was a strong booster for this city before and after its incorporation in July, 1911. For 17 years he was a member of the board of city trustees and served as mayor for eight years, giving up his office in April of the present year. He was a member of the Mason and Odd Fellow lodges.

Funeral arrangements have not

Figure 12 Herald recorder October 1930

### New Dentist For Arroyo Grande

In this issue of The Herald-Recorder appears the announcement of Dr. G. P. Woolley, dentist, who has taken over the dental office of the late Dr. C. S. Noble, located on Bridge street, and which, up until that week had been operated by Dr. H. E. Baird, who has moved to Los Angeles.

Dr. Woolley, a graduate of the University of California dental college, comes to this city from Salinas, where he has been practicing for the past two years, and feels that Arroyo Grande will be a fruitful field for his future endeavors. The doctor has been highly recommended to Mrs. C. S. Noble by a mutual friends and his work ranks high. He has already moved his home furnishings here and he and his wife will occupy Mrs. Noble's cottage adjoining the dental office.

The residents of Arroyo Grande join with The Herald-Recorder in extending greetings to these newcomers and trust they will find our city so much to their liking that they will spend the balance of their days in our fertile and pleasant valley.

Figure 13 Herald Recorder 3rd March 1933

Mrs. Ramon Branch, nee Robbins. Mrs. C. Noble, nee Mamie Branch, was a daughter of the Ramon Branch family. Both Mr. and Mrs. Ramon Branch, nee Robbins, died many years ago, but Ramon Branch, whom many old timers remember for his witty stories of rancho days, lived for some years with his daughter, Mrs. Noble and Dr. Noble, in their home on Bridge street.

Figure 14 Herald Recorder 24 November 1933