

# The Historian

A Quarterly Publication of the Fallbrook Historical Society

Summer 2020

## THE TRACY FAMILY

The Tracy family story parallels the events leading to formation of the town of Fallbrook in the early 1880s. Reminders of the Tracys can be found in today's Fallbrook.

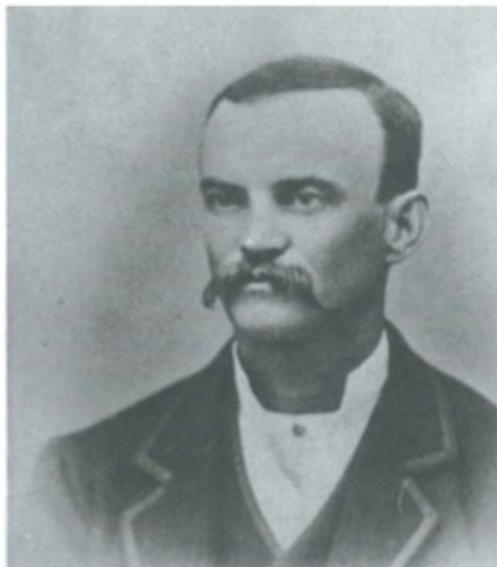
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James Enos Tracy 1827 – 1905



Hanna Jane Tracy 1828 -1900



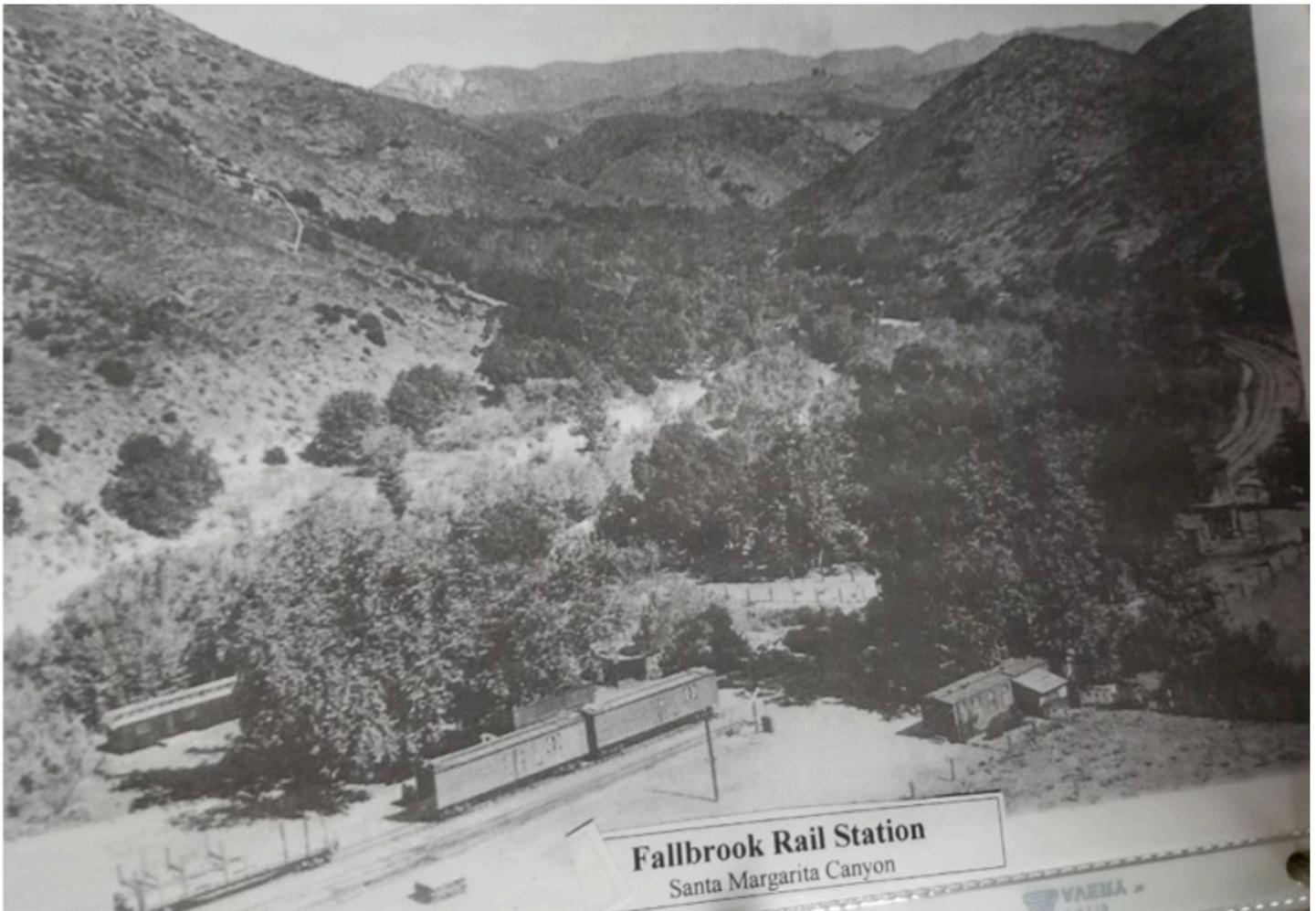
Emerson Tracy 1853-1934



Louella Tracy 1862-1940

Emerson Tracy was a young merchant in Iowa with two baby daughters and a wife suffering from tuberculosis. Emerson moves his young family to Fallbrook, California in 1881 hoping the mild weather will help his wife's Eveline's health. Unfortunately, Eveline succumbs to the disease in 1883 and she becomes the second person to be buried in the new Fallbrook cemetery (today's Odd Fellows Cemetery). Eveline's death leaves Emerson in a new community with two small children. Emerson's parents, James and Hannah Tracy come west from Iowa to help care for their granddaughters.

James Enos Tracy was a Civil War veteran, a sergeant in Co. D of the 189<sup>th</sup> NY Volunteers. James homesteads available land next to the new train station along the Santa Margarita River. Recently established in 1882, the Fallbrook station is only a year old. It is the lunch stop on the train route from San Diego to Colton and the dinner stop on the daily return trip. The Fallbrook station master is also the agent for the Wells Fargo Express office, and serves as the postmaster for the Howe post office. A small community began to spring up here at the intersection of today's De Luz and Sandia Creek Roads. Tracy's homestead is along both sides of the road leading up the hill to the farming community of West Fallbrook.



Undated photo. This may have been taken after the 1890 flood when the Tracy store moved up the hill into West Fallbrook. The boxcars on the left were semi-permanent and possibly used as living quarters for railroad workers.

James invests with his son Emerson in a new store for general merchandise. The Pioneer store is built on James Tracy's property adjacent to the new railroad station. The store is only a year old when the railroad and the Tracy store are damaged in an 1884 flood. Newspaper accounts in San Diego erroneously report that the town of Fallbrook has been washed away. However, the railroad and Tracy's store are soon rebuilt.

While his son Emerson ran the store, James Tracy engaged in building some of the first houses in Fallbrook. A Tracy house on today's Orange Ave. is still standing, one of the oldest homes in Fallbrook. Tracy built 3 houses on Orange Ave. even before the West Fallbrook townsite was surveyed in 1885. James Tracy built one house for themselves first, then rented out the 1<sup>st</sup> house after building a 2<sup>nd</sup> house for he and his wife Hannah. James and Hannah's granddaughters, Lulu and Violet, lived with them while the children were attending the 1<sup>st</sup> West Fallbrook grammar school, where Maie Ellis School is today. James builds a 3<sup>rd</sup> and larger home on Orange Ave. which he gives to his son Emerson who has remarried to a widow, Louella Light Davis Tracy, and is starting a new family. Louella will have four more children with Emerson.



Located at the southeast corner of Orange Ave and Mission Rd. James Tracy built these houses in 1883-84, finishing the one on the corner first. James and his family lived in the 1<sup>st</sup> while he built the 2<sup>nd</sup> one. Living in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, he rented the 1<sup>st</sup> and started the 3<sup>rd</sup> and larger house for his son Emerson. The middle home added a wing in 1892 and today is still one of the oldest existing homes in Fallbrook.

When the Fallbrook townsite on the hill is established in 1885, Ben Neff begins publishing Fallbrook's first newspaper. The Tracy store has regular advertisements in the Fallbrook Review. James and Emerson Tracy become part of the life of the developing town. Emerson Tracy becomes a long-time member of the Odd Fellows Lodge, while his father James, who was a Master Mason, helped to charter the Masonic Lodge in Fallbrook. As a veteran, James Tracy regularly took part in Memorial Day exercises put on by the Ross Veteran Club held under a big oak tree next to the train depot.

Flooding became a chronic problem in Santa Margarita Canyon. After another big flood in 1890, merchants abandon their interests around the train depot. The West Fallbrook townsite on the hill has been surveyed and commercial lots are being sold by the Fallbrook Land and Town Company. Emerson Tracy builds a new store up in West Fallbrook with a new partner. The new Tracy and Cheatham store was on the northwest corner of Fig St. and Main Ave., where a coffee shop is located today.

Together, Emerson and his father purchase a farm in the Olive Hill area where they raise fresh produce. Emerson personally helped to improve the Olive Hill road south of town to become a wagon road. This location made them neighbors to the Ellis ranch that was located at today's Stagecoach Lane and Mission Rd. Three of the Tracy children would later marry three of the Ellis kids.

**THE  
PIONEER STORE,  
WEST FALLBROOK.**

**J. E. TRACY & SON,**  
—o Dealers in o—  
**General Merchandise.**

We Keep Constantly on Hand a Full Line of  
**Dry Goods, Groceries,**  
**BOOTS AND SHOES,**  
**HARDWARE**

**Queen's Ware, Tobacco,**  
**Cigars, Canned Goods, Paints & Oils**  
Which we offer as low as any House  
Outside of San Diego.

Call and Examine Our Goods, and be convinced that We Do What We Advertise. We thank our Patrons for their Past Patronage, and we believe that our business has been so conducted as to merit a portion of your confidence still.

**BEEWAX and EGGS Taken in EXCHANGE**  
for Goods.

On all Bills Unpaid at the end of Three Months, 1 per cent per month Interest will be charged.

**J. E. TRACY & SON.**

Advertisement in Fallbrook Review Aug 20, 1885  
Store was next to the railroad in Santa Margarita canyon



Fall Brook School, 1884

Emerson Tracy is involved in organizing a high school for West Fallbrook. The high school opens in 1893 with 20 students on the second floor of the school, above the grammar school. Fallbrook High School is the second oldest high school in San Diego County. Emerson later serves on the school board. Viola Tracy graduated with the fourth Fallbrook High School class. After graduation, both Viola and her sister Lulu attend the teacher's college in San Diego. In the year 1900, Viola is appointed as a teacher at the same West Fallbrook grammar school she formerly attended.

Also in 1900, grandmother Hannah Tracy and a group of women in West Fallbrook create the 120-year-old signature quilt hanging today in the Historical Society museum. There are several sections on the quilt for Hannah, her husband, and her granddaughters. All of the Tracys were eventually laid to rest together in the historic Oddfellows cemetery.

Acknowledgements: Much of the foregoing is taken from the undated & unpublished notes titled *The Tracy Family – From Fallbrook by the River to Fallbrook on the Hill* prepared by Elizabeth Yamaguchi, late Historian of the Fallbrook Historical Society

Edited by Tom Frew Historian, Fallbrook Historical Society. Editor's note: additional research and photos added.



Viola Tracy

**FALLBROOK HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**  
**CALL FOR DOCENTS**

**Free training available**

Gain in-depth knowledge about the rich history of the greater Fallbrook area by becoming a docent with the Fallbrook Historical Society. Meet others who share your interest in the history of San Diego North County, while learning from peers, experts, and guests. With available training, flexible scheduling and variety of roles, even a limited availability can be mutually beneficial. One day a month or every two months – whatever you can do. Docent activities include greeting and engaging guests to the museum facilities, representing the Historical Society at special events, providing tours of the Fallbrook Heritage Center and Reche Schoolhouse, and broadly serving the Historical Society's essential mission of educating the community about the history of Fallbrook and surrounding areas. If you enjoy interacting with people, consider joining the ranks of our docents. Experience the satisfaction and personal accomplishment that comes from joining such a stimulating and worthwhile organization, right in the heart of Fallbrook.

For more information and to join the FHS docent pool, please contact our Docent Coordinator, [jeffduhachek@gmail.com](mailto:jeffduhachek@gmail.com)

## Plan a Visit

### Reche Schoolhouse Open:

Includes the Schoolhouse, the Hindorff Adobe, the Indian Rocks

1319 S. Live Oak Park Rd.

Open the second Saturday  
of each month  
1 p.m. – 4 p.m.  
or by appointment

### The Heritage Center Open:

Includes the Main Museum, the Pittenger House, the Gem & Mineral Room, the Ford Room, the Don J. Rivers Interpretive Center (the Barn), the outside displays

1730 S. Hill (at Rocky Crest Dr.)

Open Thursdays and Sundays  
1 p.m. – 4 p.m.  
or by appointment

### The Caboose at The Railroad Heritage Park (Caboose Open)

Main Ave. at Elder St.

During Community Events

Fallbrook Historical Society facilities are available for private tours by appointment. Call 760-723-4125.

## A Letter to the Membership

From

Fallbrook Historical Society President Roy Moosa

**Dear Historical Society member:**

**Due to recent conditions our facilities have been closed and we will be unable to hold our general meeting in June as planned. As you know, the general meeting is usually when we present an annual report to our members, hold our Board member elections and present the Pioneer of the Year, Vintage Business and, member of the year awards.**

**We hope to present the awards at a future date when things get back to normal. In the meantime, we are holding our Board office elections via e-mail and mail in order to remain within our bylaws.**

**The Board members below have terms expiring this year and are willing to remain on the board if re-elected.**

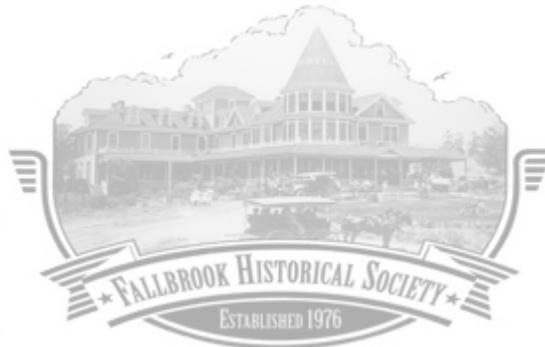
**Please respond back as to whether you agree that these individuals should remain as Board members with a yes or no vote per individual. Also, please don't hesitate to nominate any other member or yourself if you feel that member will be an asset or if you would like to become more personally involved.**

**Roy Moosa  
Pat Saunders  
Jauher Zaidi  
Don Mclean Jr.  
Mary Belton**

**We would appreciate a reply no later than June 15th.**

**Thank you.**

*The Fallbrook Historical Society's mission is to bring history to life by educating the community and others about Fallbrook's rich heritage*



**FALLBROOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Secretary: Julia Weldy  
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Tom Frew: Historian  
Leo Romero: Special Events  
Jeff Duhachek: Webmaster/Docents  
Jauher Zaidi: Social Media  
**Pat Saunders: Gift Shop**

**Fallbrook Historical Society**

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[Recipient]

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