

**THE HISTORY OF DECOTO**  
**CHAPTER 02**  
**1870 TO 1879**

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**\* BUILDING THE TOWN OF DECOTO \***  
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It was known that the town of Decoto was named after the three Decoto brothers, Ezra Sr., John and Adolphus; who bought a parcel of land of 334-acres from Jonas G. Clark circa 1866.

The Decoto brothers sold their land (284-acres) to the Western Pacific. In 1870 the Western Pacific Railroad was absorbed into the Central Pacific RR. The Central Pacific was interested in buying land to lay tracks and to buy land adjacent to their tracks for warehouses, train stations and, when, the prices of the raw land escalated because of their presence to make a pretty penny in selling land to merchants and other speculators.

But the Central Pacific was not interested in farming (other than to transport produce) or being farmers. So in 1870 the railroad sold 304-acres of land (which included part of the 284-acres the railroad bought from the Decoto's) to the Decoto Homestead Association.

Then in approximately March 1871 the Decoto Homestead Association sold this parcel of land to the Decoto Land Company who had filed for a Certificate of Incorporation on June 11, 1870 in the Alameda County Court. The company had bought 304 acres of land that had belonged to the Decoto Homestead Association. The Decoto Land Company now owned the entire town that would become Decoto except for a portion down the center, which was ceded to the railroad as a right-of-way.

The Decoto Land Company planned the layout of the town of Decoto in 1,500 lots at the cost of \$200 each, payable in 20 monthly installments of \$10 each. Each share represented a lot of 50 X 100 feet. Lots were to be distributed on November 14, 1871. No assessment for any purpose whatever could, be levied beyond said \$200, was their proclamation.

In March of 1871, Mr. Stephen Nolan of Oakland won the bid to plant over 20,000 trees in the town of Decoto for \$20,000. Mr. Nolan would plant and tend the trees for one year guaranteeing their growth and health. Decoto was described early on as "a name not especially euphonious, but is beautifully situated on a fertile plain on the

Central Pacific Railroad within sight of Mission San Jose, Alvarado, Haywoods, and other charming villages within a comparatively small radius.”

At this time the planting of the trees began. There were already on the premises 5,000 orange, lemon and lime trees when the planting began. There would be 7,000 poplar Lombardy trees, which were already ten feet high. Added to these were Australian gum trees (eucalyptus), and 500 Monterey pines. There were over 5,000 cypress trees as well as pepper trees, acacia trees, and cezurnia trees from Australia. To these trees some other varieties would be added as well as ornamental shrubbery.

The early spring of 1871 saw the preparation of the picnic grounds at Dry Creek, which had been a pleasure resort since about 1854. The company advertised the picnic site as being on the line of the Central Pacific Railroad within walking distance from the town of Decoto. They also touted the beauty of the grounds as “the most beautiful in the State.” At this time a dance floor was being built, as were the necessary buildings for picnic purposes.

In mid-March 1871, a party of one hundred and fifty gentlemen left the Oakland wharf for a pleasant ride through the beautiful Alameda Valley to the new town site of Decoto. The year before the Decoto Land Company had bought the town site from the railroad on favorable terms. The cars of the Central Pacific Railroad Company passed through the center of town, the Land Company having ceded to them the right of way on a strip three thousand feet long, and one hundred seventy feet wide and on either side of the railroad track where fine business lots could be had.

Within a week the company *claimed* it sold lots in the amount of \$18,000. The lots were 50 X 100 feet, and they were priced at \$200. The distribution was scheduled to take place on April 17, 1872. Shares that were not sold by that time were to be taken by the Central Pacific Railroad Company.

William Halley wrote in his book, *The Centennial Year Book of Alameda County (1876)*,

“...that the trees were planted, and evidently they did not receive much care and many of them died, yet there was quite a respectable grove of gum and cypress trees on the town site. But yet, notwithstanding its natural advantages, Decoto had failed to reach the dimensions of a town. This even though the company had made arrangements with the Central Pacific Railroad Company, whereby commuter tickets between the town of Decoto and San Francisco might be purchased for \$7.50 per month.”

In 1873 the citizens of Decoto (along with some Alvaradan’s) established a cemetery association. *The History of Washington Township*, written by the ladies of the Country Club of Washington Township described the founding of this cemetery:

“In 1873 the Cypress Cemetery Association was formed by the following trustees: J.C. Whipple, F.B. Granger Sr., Eb H. Dyer, John Hall, William Hayes, and J.M. Ingalls, all were from Alvarado with the exception of Mr. Whipple. Ten acres of land was purchased from Sanford Taylor. The tract was fenced and cypress trees were planted on three sides of the plot at the expense of Mr. Whipple.”

Religion became important to the people of Decoto during this decade and in either 1874 or 1875 a Sabbath School was founded. Again quoting from *The History of Washington Township*:

"In 1874 or 1875 W.M. Meserve organized the first Sabbath School. Miss Alvena Meyer (now Mrs. Carlton C. Crane) was chosen superintendent. The school was presented with a small library; some Bibles and songbooks by one of the Presbyterian Churches of Oakland. The school was abandoned after a time and it was not till after the new public schoolhouse was built that another Sunday school with Miss Alvena Decoto, in charge, was regularly organized by the Rev. Mr. Wirt in charge in the early 80's. From this grew the organization of the Congregational Church on December 9, 1893, through the efforts of Rev. F.H. Maar; and through the efforts also of the Christian Endeavor Societies of the State who raised the funds for erecting a neat building on a lot loaned for church purposes. This, the only "Christian Endeavor Church" in the state, was dedicated September 23, 1898."

But the town of Decoto needed a spark to invigorate its growth and infrastructure. So the Central Pacific brought in a gentleman named Andrew Jackson Hare as the railroad agent for the Central Pacific in Decoto, besides being the train station agent, Mr. Hare was also a land agent for the Decoto Land Company.

In July 1875 the town of Decoto was granted a post office. Andrew J. Hare was appointed as Postmaster for the new Post Office. In 1878 Mr. Hare opened a general store in Decoto to service the town. Shortly thereafter he erected a large grain warehouse in Decoto.

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\* **BIOS OF NOTABLE CIIZENS** \*  
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*Blacksmith / Carpenter and Building Contractor / Farmers / Lawyer / Merchant / Peddler / Postmaster / Real Estate / Railroad Section Foreman / Railroad Agent / Saloon Keeper / School Teacher / Warehouseman / Wells Fargo Agent*

**BLACKSMITH:**  
**Patrick Mathews:**

Patrick Mathews was born in Ireland in June 1831. He arrived in the U.S. in 1866. His wife, Mary was also born Ireland in May of 1835, and also entered the United States in 1866. Patrick and Mary had 10 children but only seven of them were alive by the 1900, and then two more died very young. They had four daughters and two sons: Sarah, Mary, John, Ella, Frances, Eugene and Catharine.

Miss Mary Jane Mathews was 26 years old when she passed away in Alvarado on March 19, 1989. She had been ailing for two years with what was thought to be malaria, but at the end was found to be consumption. Sarah Mathews Smith passed away in San Francisco on September 1, 1895, Sarah was the beloved wife of John Smith, and mother of May Smith. She was the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. P. Mathews of Alvarado, a native of New York, aged 35 years.

Patrick & Mary arrived in Alvarado in the 1860's. Here Patrick was employed as a blacksmith, however by the end of the 1870's he had relocated his shop to Decoto, and was well known in that town. Although Patrick had his blacksmith shop in Decoto he continued to live in Alvarado. By the year 1900 Patrick and Mary had only five of their ten children alive.

Ella Mathews was a charter member of the Alvarado Olivina Parlor, No. 61, Native Daughters of the Golden West. Later Ella would move to San Francisco along with her sisters Kate and Frances and her brother John.

Eugene Mathews would work at the Alvarado sugar mill and was seriously injured by a burn, when a lime pan boiled over scalding him. Several years later he would go to work in the Sugar refinery in Crockett, California.

On March 22, 1906 Patrick Mathews died at his home in Alvarado from an apparent heart attack. Mr. Mathews was one of Alvarado's oldest residents, having lived here over forty years. Mr. Mathews was a member of the Alvarado Reliance Lodge, No. 93, A.O.U.W. Mr. Mathews maintained his home in Alvarado but his employment was as a blacksmith in Decoto.

## **CARPENTER & BUILDING CONTRACTOR:**

### **Charles E. Dennett:**

Charles E. Dennett was born in Maine in August 1845. Jennie Dennett was born in Nova Scotia circa 1847. The date she entered the U.S. is not known. They had three children, William, Etta and Maud. In the late 1870's the Dennett's came to Decoto.

Charles was a carpenter and building contractor in Decoto. In 1889, Charles was the carpenter and contractor that built the Ed Whipple home on Whipple Road. The townspeople hailed it as a credit to the skill of the contractor Charles Dennett. The house contained nine-rooms and would stand as a monument over the heads of Mr. & Mrs. Whipple.

After 1891 there were no more articles in the area about the Dennett's. The 1900 census finds Charles Dennett as a widower living in Oakland California with his youngest daughter Maud and son-in-law Edward Chadbourne and daughter Etta.

## **FARMERS:**

### **Jacob B. Sherk:**

Jacob B. Sherk was born in Waterloo Township, Upper Canada, July 2, 1833. When he turned eighteen years of age he moved to Davies County, Illinois, where he stayed until 1854. On April 20, 1854 he sailed from New York for San Francisco via Panama and arrived in San Francisco May 18, 1854.

Once in San Francisco Jacob set off immediately for the gold fields in the Klamath and Butte Counties. He returned to San Francisco in the spring of 1865. He was then variously employed until May 1872, at which time he came to Alameda County.

He made his home in Decoto and went into the hop growing business with Mr. B. Benedict. In December 1887, J.B. Sherk delivered a carload of hops directly to W. Oakes & Son of London England.

Hop growing proved to be profitable for Mr. Sherk, and in March 1888, he purchased 62 acres of land from John C. Whipple on the west side of the county road (today's Alvarado-Niles Blvd). On this ranch Mr. Sherk continued to raise hops for several years. This land is located where today's Hop Ranch Road is located on the Alvarado-Niles Road and is the logical namesake for Hop Ranch Road.

Although J.B. Sherk's ranch was in Alvarado Mr. Sherk resided in the town of Decoto. He was married to Elizabeth Sherk, but they showed no children at this time.

In November 1894, Jacob B. Sherk's probate will is published in the *Oakland Tribune*. He left his entire estate to his wife Elizabeth, who was named executrix in the will along with his former partner B. Benedict as executor.

### **August May, Sr.:**

August May was born in Germany on May 11, 1831. He came to California in 1852 and settled in Alvarado in 1854. In Alvarado he entered into a partnership with A. Main in the butchering trade, which he continued until 1874.

On September 27, 1862 August May Sr. married Miss Sophia Platte, a native of Germany born on January 13, 1843. They had four children: George, August Jr., Bertha and Henry.

After leaving the butchering business in Alvarado, August purchased some 1,700 acres from Jonah Clark near the town of Decoto. Part of the purchase was the famed Decoto Picnic Grounds. Late in life August May Sr. retired and continued to live in Alvarado, although he had extensive land holdings in the Decoto area. One of August's largest landholdings in Decoto would later become the El Rancho Verde housing tract on the east side of Mission Boulevard across from Hillview Crest.

August May Sr. passed away on July 2, 1887 at the age of 56. Sophia May followed him to the other side on February 22, 1930 at the age of 87 years.

### **LAWYER:**

#### **Samuel H. Haney**

Samuel Haney was born in England in 1836, his date of entry into the U.S. is not known. His wife Rachel was born in France in 1846, her date of entry into the U.S. is not known. They had three sons: Henry, Leon and Alfred, and two daughters: Ester and Emma. He was a lawyer in Decoto in the 1870's and 1880's, but after that nothing was found for the Haney's.

### **MERCHANT:**

#### **Andrew J. Hare:**

**See Andrew's bio under "Railroad" below.**

## **PEDDLER:**

### **Dennis Sullivan:**

Dennis Sullivan was born in Ireland in 1835. His date of entry into the U.S. is not known. His wife Mary was born in Ireland in 1840. Her date of entry into the U.S. is not known. When the Sullivan's came to Decoto is not known, but Dennis was mentioned as being a peddler in Decoto in 1879. In October 1890 it was printed in *The Oakland Tribune* that, "Dennie Sullivan has sold out his huckster outfit and gone to San Francisco to live. His former residence (in Decoto) is now up for rent."

In the jargon of the time, the term "huckster" was given to peddlers. After this there is no other news about Dennis or Mary Sullivan.

## **POSTMASTER:**

### **James N.C. Hine:**

The listing of U.S. Postmasters indicates that James N.C. Hine was the first Postmaster for the town of Decoto, appointed January 9, 1871. I could find no information for a James N.C. Hine in Decoto, Alameda County, or California in this time period. Historical books indicate that Andrew J. Hare was appointed Postmaster of the new Decoto Post Office on June 3, 1875.

### **Andrew J. Hare:**

Postmaster at Decoto from June 3, 1875 to June 11, 1884

[See Andrew's bio under "Railroad" below.](#)

## **RAILROAD SECTION FOREMAN:**

### **Michael Kenneally:**

Michael Kenneally was born in Ireland in August 1836. Mary Kenneally was born in Ireland in February 1848. They both entered the U.S. in 1868 and were married circa 1869. In 1870 Michael had settled in Decoto working as a butcher.

However, at this time he was not living with Mary, he was boarding with John Laughlin in Decoto. There was a Mary Kenneally in 1870 who was working as a domestic servant in a San Francisco household who was the same age as Mary and was also born in Ireland, but I cannot be certain this was Michael's wife.

Michael and Mary had eight children, five of which lived to adulthood. They had three daughters, Mary, Ellen, and Anna and they had two sons Morris and Patrick.

In the years 1896, 1898 and 1900 Michael Kenneally served as an election official for the town of Decoto. He served with M. Souza, John C. Whipple, Carlton C. Crane, Anthony H. Bush, Rudolph Volmer, Henry May, Joseph F. Rose, Joseph H. Smith, J. H. Peterson, G.K. Taylor, C. Whipple Jr., T.S. Ferreira and John Carr over that period of time.

Mike resigned his position as section foreman with the railroad after 33 years and then announced he would move his family away. Mrs. Mary Kenneally came back to visit old friends in Decoto in July 1905. At this time she was living in Oakland.

## **RAILROAD STATION AGENT:**

### **Andrew J. Hare:**

Andrew Jackson Hare was born in Wooster, Wayne County, Ohio on October 15, 1838, to John and Catherine Hare. Andrew's father passed away when he was two-years old. He accompanied his mother to Reedsburg in the same county he was born, where he attended public schools. At the age of 18 he entered upon the profession of schoolteacher. In 1858 he entered the employ of his maternal uncle, Simon Kizer, where he also learned to be the Deputy Postmaster. In February 1859, he proceeded to New York where he took a boat to San Francisco.

Andrew Hare arrived in San Francisco on March 17, 1859. He then went gold mining at Indian Creek near Placerville, where he partnered in a mine with Albert Harmon. He married Miss Ella R. Hodgkin at Rose Springs on September 29, 1864, by the Rev. C.C. Pierce. After his marriage he taught school at Rose Springs in 1866 and 1867.

He remained in El Dorado County until March 1868, when he returned to San Francisco. On his arrival in the Bay Area he became employed by his father-in-law at the firm of J.W. Hodgkin & Co., a lumber dealer in South San Francisco where Andrew worked as a salesman and bookkeeper. While a resident there in 1870, he established and built the South San Francisco Lodge No. 212 of the F & AM Lodge, and was one of the charter members.

The 1870 census shows Andrew Hare married to Ella Hare with two children, Charles A. Hare, a son who was three-years old the time, and Emma E Hare, a daughter who was seven months old at the time. Also living in the household in 1870 was Catherine Hare, Andrew's mother.

The 1870 census shows Andrew as a clerk in a coal yard, and by 1874 he had established himself in the coal and wood business in San Francisco. In August 1874, Andrew moved to Decoto California, and in October 1874 he was appointed as an agent for the Central Pacific Railroad in Decoto. In June 1875, he was appointed as the agent for Wells Fargo and Company in Decoto, and on June 3, 1875, he was appointed as U.S. Postmaster for the new Post Office in Decoto. But for years he was known as an agent for the Decoto Land Company, the owner of the town of Decoto. But the town of Decoto did not sell a lot of lots as the Decoto Land Company had originally hoped.

Andrew Hare bought and conducted a warehouse on the sidetrack of Decoto and built it up to a capacity of 36,000 sacks of grain. He was also in charge of the Dry Creek picnic grounds from 1880 to 1882, and had a barley and feed mill in town. He also opened the first store in Decoto in 1878, which he later sold to the Beckwith Bros.

Hare was best known for his feed grinding mill, which prepared poultry and livestock feed, which he shipped to all parts of the west coast. The A.J. Hare Warehouse would eventually become part of the Salz Co., which had warehouses located throughout the south county.

In April 1881 Andrew, who had been a long time Mason, helped establish a lodge of the Ancient Order of United Workmen in the nearby town of Alvarado. He was a charter member with the title Past Master Workman. At this same time Andrew Hare was a member of the Alameda Lodge, No. 167, F & AM in Centerville.

In 1884 Andrew Hare filed an assignment for the benefit of his creditors. The Nevada Bank had brought suit against Hare and Sigmund Salz to recover a quantity of barley stored at Decoto, or \$38,130, the value thereof. The barley was stored with Hare, who afterwards admitted Salz to a partnership. One month later an attachment levied on A.J. Hare's barley at Decoto, at the suit of the Nevada Bank was released after the bank took possession of 15,000 sacks of barley.

At about this time Andrew J Hare and family disappear from the records of Washington Township and we next pick him up in September 1891 in Oakland, where he filed a petition for insolvency in his commission merchant business, showing debts \$5,669 and assets of \$600, that being the unencumbered portion of his homestead.

In 1905 Andrew Jackson Hare reappears as owning one quarter of the newly incorporated Jackson Mining Company near Shingle Springs, California. Shingle Springs is midway between Sacramento and Placerville. The business was subscribed at \$10,000 with directors being Andrew J. Hare, James Thompson, G.A. Gordon, John F. Gamber and Elias R. Hare.

In August 1922 Andrew J. Hare passed away in Oakland California. His son Charles was a city councilman for Bakersfield where Andrew was well known as he had spent a lot of time in Bakersfield. Besides his son he left his widow Ella and a daughter Mrs. Emma Gordon of Placerville.

### **REAL ESTATE AGENT:**

**Andrew J. Hare:**

**[See Andrew's bio under "Railroad" above](#)**

### **SALOON KEEPER:**

**William Graesslin:**

William Graesslin was born Germany in February 1842. He gives his date of entry into the U.S. as 1863. Kunundah (Connie) was born in Germany in May 1849. Her date of entry into the U.S. was given as 1866. The Graesslin's had four children, three of which survived into adulthood. Katherine was born in May 1875 in Kentucky, Lillian was born in March 1878 in Colorado, and Henry was born in August 1880 in California.



The Graesslin's came to the town of Decoto in 1874. In June 1879 William bought some property from Mr. W.H. Pomeroy, a gentleman who owned a saloon in Decoto. In 1881 William Graesslin was selling liquor, and was later a saloonkeeper.

The Graesslin's were not listed in any fraternal or social organizations and from this aspect there is little to report. Connie had been a resident of Decoto for 55 years when she passed away on July 9, 1929. Her husband William had passed away some years before, and he had been listed on the Decoto census of 1920.

### **Katherine Graesslin:**

Katie had many friends in Decoto where she would attend birthday parties and also attend school. They included Mollie & Annie Terkelson, Annie Juhl, Christina Anderson, Alfred Nesmith, Joe Haines, Will Dennett and James and Clara Whipple.

In March 1901, a Tennis Club for young ladies was formed in Decoto. Kate was one of the charter members which included: the Misses Alvina Decoto, Ella Whipple, Lottie Fereira, Grace Peterson, Inez Whipple, Alice Kelley, Zadie and Izobel Whipple, May Haines. The married ladies were: Mrs. I.R. Aikin, Mrs. Fred Meyer, Mrs. Henry May, Mrs. Reed and Mrs. Harry C. Searles.

As the years went by Kate remained single and she found herself spending a lot of time with her sister Lillian who had married Harry C. Searles. After the death of her parents Katie went to live with her sister Lillian and brother-in-law Harry Searles.

### **Fred Graesslin:**

Not much is known of Henry in his early years, but we find him in April 1901 trying his luck at accumulating a fortune in Alaska. He left near the end of April for a position in a large Alaskan cannery. By July 1904 Fred was back in the Bay Area where he had accepted a position with the Bauer-Switzer Malt Company in San Francisco.

### **Lillian Graesslin:**

In January 1900 we find a young Lillian Graesslin acting in a drama called "A Scrap of Paper" in the Decoto schoolhouse. Under the direction of Mrs. Carlton Crane (nee: Alvena Meyer), the impromptu stage had been arranged and most skillfully set with artistic decoration.

The cast of characters was excellently adapted to the talented young people of Decoto, which included:

Zadie Whipple	Ezra Decoto Jr.	Ella Whipple	Will Peterson
Will Anderson	Lillian Graesslin	Grace Peterson	May Haines
Louis Decoto	Charles Nesmith	Christine Anderson	

Vocal solos were performed by:                      Lotta Fereira                      Helen Crane

Later that year (1900) Lillian Graesslin married to Harry C. Searles.

See separate bio for H C Searles in a later chapter.

**SCHOOL TEACHER:**

**James Jones:**

James Jones was born in New Hampshire in 1836. His wife Martha (Mattie) was also born in New Hampshire in 1836. They had two children, a boy James E. and a daughter Leslie. James was the first teacher at the Cosmopolitan School in Decoto in 1868.

In 1870 the family was boarding with the F.W. Meyer family in Decoto. By 1880 the couple had relocated to Merrimack, New Hampshire.

**WAREHOUSEMAN:**

**Andrew J. Hare:**

[See Andrew's bio under "Railroad" above.](#)

**WELLS FARGO AGENT:**

**Andrew J. Hare:**

[See Andrew's bio under "Railroad" above.](#)

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\* **COSMOPOLITAN HOTEL** \*  
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The *Oakland Tribune* of November 8, 1925 included this photo with the following write-up about the town of Decoto, "Shown here is the old Cosmopolitan Hotel built nearly 50 years ago, and once the headquarters for the ranching fraternity."



I could find not articles (other than this one) of the Cosmopolitan Hotel in the town of Decoto. As a matter of fact, an *Oakland Tribune* article in the mid-1880s complained that there were no hotels located in Decoto. Finally in the early 1900s articles in the newspapers told of the Decoto Hotel in Decoto, not the Cosmopolitan Hotel. The Decoto Hotel was operated by a Mrs. Hibbard. Then on September 25, 1911, the *Oakland Tribune* announced that the Decoto Hotel had shuttered its doors the previous week.

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\* **MEMORABLE DECOTO EVENTS** \*  
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**May 3, 1871:**

### **Picnic at May Canyon:**

On May 3, 1871, the Brannan Guards of San Francisco held their fifth annual picnic in Decoto. The following newspaper article describes the grounds:

“The grounds lie immediately adjoining the town of Decoto, which has recently been planted with twenty-five thousand shade trees and ornamental trees, such as the Cypress, in a number of varieties, the Lombard Poplar, Cottonwood, etc., and are acknowledged to be the most beautiful in the State.

The dancing floor, 70 x 80 feet, with a Refreshment Saloon connected therewith, are completely shaded by the arching boughs of immense Sycamore trees and the adjoining hill are full of delightful rambles.

A stream of clear spring water courses directly through the Grove. The grounds are easily accessible via the Central Pacific Railroad, which will land all parties at the ground, being only an hour’s ride from the Ferry landing at Davis Street, through the magnificent Alameda Valley.’

### **May 1873:**

#### **Mayday Festivities at May Canyon:**

The Mayday festivities were very general this year, and picnics were held in almost every locality in the county, in grove, pavilion and hall, with the sound of music, the spreading of flowers, and the wreathing of bright garlands. At Dry Creek, near Decoto, the festivities were kept up for four days.

### **1874:**

#### **August May Sr. Buys Land in Decoto:**

August May Sr. came to Decoto in 1874 from Alvarado where he had been in the butcher trade. Mr. May started buying land in eastern Alvarado and in the Decoto Area until he had amassed over 1,600 acres. August May & Sophia May had four children: George, August Jr., Bertha, and Henry. August May Jr. would marry Miss Janet Decoto and together they would become Alvarado icons where Mr. May acceded to the presidency of the Bank of Alvarado. Miss Bertha May would go on to marry Henry Meyers, the architect for the new Alvarado School in 1924, and Henry would become one of Decoto’s leading citizens for many decades.

### **1874 or 1875:**

#### **First Sabbath School:**

In 1874 or 1875, W. M. Meserve organized the first Sabbath School. Miss Alvena Meyer (now Mrs. C. C. Crane) was chosen superintendent. The school was presented with a small library of bibles and songbooks by one of the Presbyterian churches in Oakland. This school was abandoned after a time.

### **February 1875:**

#### **Fire Destroys Ezra Decoto’s Barn:**

In February 1875 a fire occurred at Decoto, which consumed the barn of Ezra Decoto together with about fifty tons of hay, four valuable horses and harness, besides several sheds and outhouses. The origin of the fire was unknown, but it was first observed by the Decoto’s children. The building and hay were partially insured.

### **1879:**

**Real Estate Sale:**

H. W. Pomeroy sold to William Graesslin, lots 30 & 7, Block D in the town of Decoto.



**Trees Arrive from the East:**

Many years ago Andrew Patterson brought with him from the east to Decoto, a lot of cuttings and roots of the pecan, sassafras, sugar maple, mulberry, and walnut trees. In bringing these cuttings to Decoto Mr. Patterson experienced much difficulty, the trees having to be moistened every day. The cuttings having been taken in the autumn, on reaching Panama they began to sprout and grow and considerable skill had to be administered in transplanting them in the California soil.

**May 10, 1879:**

**Machinery for Alvarado Sugar Mill Arrives at Decoto:**

The machinery for the Alvarado sugar beet mill arrived at the Decoto Train Station on May 10, 1879. Eight teams of horses were engaged in hauling the equipment from the Decoto Station the three miles distance to the site of the mill on Alameda Creek in Alvarado.