

# THE HISTORY OF DECOTO

## CHAPTER 06

### NOVEMBER 1910 THRU 1919

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 \* **DECOTO DEMOGRAPHICS** \*  
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1910 DECOTO CENSUS						
US Born to US Parents		Foreign Born & Children of Foreign Born				
State	Pop.	Country	For. Born	US Born	Total	Pct.
California	62	Canada	2	1	3	0.5%
Illinois	4	China	10	0	10	1.5%
Iowa	1	Denmark	2	2	4	0.6%
Kansas	1	England	2	2	4	0.6%
Kentucky	1	Germany	5	5	10	1.5%
Maine	4	Ireland	1	3	4	0.6%
Michigan	1	Italy	5	0	5	0.8%
New York	1	Japan	16	0	16	2.4%
Pennsylvania	4	Portugal	193	312	505	76.9%
Tennessee	5	Scotland	2	0	2	0.3%
		Sweden	2	8	10	1.5%
		US Born/Us Parents:			84	12.8%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>Total:</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Does not include 102 persons from the Masonic Home</b>						

The 1910 Decoto Census was not mixed into the Niles Census for this decade, so the figures are very reliable. The total number of people in the Decoto Census (including the Masonic Home) was 757. There were 100 persons listed on the Masonic Home census, so therefore the number of persons in Decoto proper was 657. Of the 657, 84 were born in the U.S. to U.S. born parents, and 573 were foreign born or first generation of U.S. born from foreign parents.

The Portuguese population in the period 1900 to 1910 grew 12.1% from 64.8% in 1900 to 76.9% in 1910. All major foreign countries, except Portugal, saw their percentage of the population drop including U.S. Citizens.

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**\* BIOS OF NOTABLE PERSONS \***  
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*Barber / Brick Manufacturers / Cannery / Carpenter / Dressmaker / Hotel / Incubator Manufacturer / Merchants / Notary Public / Painter / Pencil Manufacturer / Physician / Post Master / Rail Road / Railway Construction Co. / Saloon Keepers / School Teachers Trustees / Teamster*

**Barber:**

*Manuel Correia / Frank Silva*

**Manuel Correia:**

Manuel Correia (Correa) was born in California in 1882. In 1910 he was living in Decoto with his older brother Frank, both showing they had been widowed. Manuel was working for wages as a barber. By 1920 Manuel had remarried and had two children. His wife Flora was born in California in 1893, their two children were Marjorie and Milton. At this time Manuel owned his own barbershop in Decoto. By 1930 Manuel and family had relocated to Castro Valley where Manuel was the proprietor of a grocery store.

**Frank Silva:**

Frank Silva was born in Portugal in 1882. His date of entry into the U.S. is not known. In 1920 Frank was working as a barber for Manuel Correia in Decoto. He was also boarding at the Correia home. Nothing was found after 1920 for Mr. Silva.

**BRICK MANUFACTURERS:**

*California Brick Company / Oakland Paving Brick Co.*

**California Brick Company:**

In 1913 the California Brick Company reopened the defunct plant of the Oakland Paving Brick Company, which along with its associated clay pit straddled the Niles (Fremont) and Decoto (Union City) city-limit line. The California Brick Company was incorporated in June 1913 at Oakland with a capital stock of \$400,000, by M. M. Birmingham, H. A. Kunz, and J. F. Locke. C. E. Fuller was manager of the plant and was previously manager of the Buffalo Paving Brick Company in Buffalo, Kansas. A sales office was set up in the Phelan Building in San Francisco, with L. R. McKenzie as the sales manager.

This company specialized in paving brick, but also made common brick, face brick, and partition hollow tile. Over the next year, the plant underwent a major remodeling effort to place it on a profitable basis. New machinery was installed including an improved auger machine for paving brick, new dry pans, a large continuous kiln with 16-foot chambers and a flue to take waste heat from the kilns to the drying tunnels, new handling machinery, a 10-ton traveling crane for both the plant interior and the yard, and a well-equipped

laboratory with a complete set of recording instruments. By May 1914 the California yard employed 100 workers. Shipments of 90,000 firebricks were made to Vancouver, British Columbia, sewer brick to Berkeley, paving brick to Oakland and Modesto, and common building brick supplied the Masonic Home in Decoto and some of the buildings in the San Francisco Presidio.

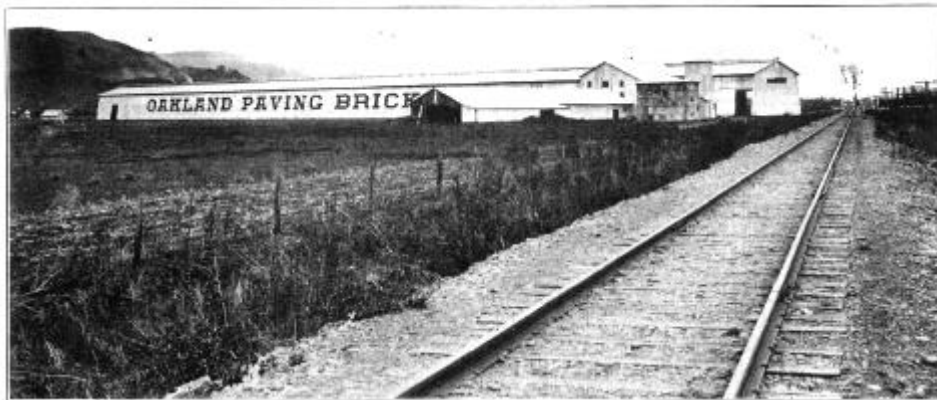
By 1920 this operation became a California branch of the W. S. Dickey Clay Manufacturing Company, based in Kansas City, Missouri, which began in 1885 by Walter S. Dickey. N. A. Dickey was the president and manager of the California Brick Company, and A. C. Meyers was the plant superintendent, and G. C. Thomas was the terra cotta engineer. E. B. Stoddard was the sales manager. The San Francisco office was at 604 Mission St. and the Oakland office was at 351 12th St. and later at 2053 Webster. They also had a warehouse at 105 Jackson St., Oakland.

The plant was called WS Dickey's plant no. 18. It contained three dry pans, two stiff mud machines, one dry press, and four repress machines. The bricks were dried in the dryers supplied with waste heat from the kilns. The bricks were fired in two Haigh continuous kilns, each 600 feet long and containing 42 chambers, connected by a large tunnel. A large overhead traveling electric crane was used for loading. Crude oil fueled the kilns. The plant had a 40,000 brick per day capacity. Between 75 and 150 men were employed. The company ceased operations in 1937 at which time the property was sold to the Pacific States Steel Co.

### **The Oakland Paving Brick Co.:**

In 1909, C. K. Holloway interested a couple of Oakland capitalists into organizing a new brick company after locating 49 acres of clay between the towns of Decoto and Niles. The principals were L. G. Burpee, who was vice-president and manager of the First National Bank of Oakland; and E. A. Heron, who was president of the Oakland Consolidated Traction Company.

On January 15, 1910, the Oakland Paving Brick Company was incorporated with a capital stock of \$200,000, each share selling for a dollar. Burpee was president, Heron was vice-president, and Holloway was secretary and treasurer of the brick company. The main office was in the First National Bank Building in Oakland. This company also acquired control of the Livermore Fire Brick Company's plant in Livermore.



The Oakland Paving Brick Company plant near Decoto.

The clay deposit at Decoto was 20 feet thick resting beneath two feet of soil, which had to be removed by a horse scraper. Near the clay pit was built one of the largest brick plants in California. This plant had a capacity of 250,000 bricks per day, nearly half of which included paving bricks. All types of red brick were made: paving brick, repressed face brick, both plain and molded, impervious red front brick, hard building brick, and hollow fireproofing brick.

The plant buildings were arranged in an "L" shape, the longer member of which was 976 feet in length and 75 feet in width. The huge sign of the company name on the side of the building was said to be 550 feet in length, with each letter being 20 feet wide and 15 feet high!

Penfield brick setting machines were used. The whole length of the building was served by a ten-ton, 62-foot traveling crane, built on wooden supports and operated by a 220-volt alternating current motor. The crane and all of the brick making machinery were furnished by the American Clay Machinery Company. The plant was fully electric with 2,200-volt induction motors, controlling apparatus, and transformers. The buildings were lighted by electricity.

Clay excavated from the pit was dumped into a hopper. A belt conveyor carried the clay to a 24-inch disintegrator, where the clay was thoroughly crushed. Then the clay was carried by a chain conveyor to a hopper above the pug mill, into which it was fed as needed. The clay was ground fine and mixed with water to the right consistency. From the pug mill, the mixed clay was sent to the No. 65 brick machine immediately below and extruded through a die to a No. 83 rotary cutter. The cut bricks were then carried by an off-bearing conveyor belt to four automatic represses, if they were to be made into paving bricks, otherwise the off-bearers would remove the bricks and stack them in units of 500.

All rejected bricks would remain on the conveyor belt to be dropped from the end into a conveyor beneath the floor, which returned them to the pug mill. All of the machinery was driven by a line shaft, which was driven by a 250 h.p. motor.

The crane picked up the brick units and stacked them in a double continuous dryer, each dryer with a capacity of 150,000 bricks. After the dryers were filled with bricks and covered with wooden covers on wheels, hot air was blown through apertures on each side at the bottom. The hot air was blown in by a 240-inch fan driven by a variable speed motor, which allowed the amount of air to be regulated. The moist air was drawn from the dryer by two 84-inch disc fans driven by a 10 h. p. constant speed motor.

Crude oil was used for heating. Oil was stored in a 6,000-gallon oil tank, located some distance from the plant. A duplex 14x10-inch Clayton air compressor driven by a 50 h.p. induction motor furnished the air, including that used for atomizing the oil in the burners for the kilns and hot air furnaces.

After drying for 24 hours, the brick units were removed from the dryer by the brick setting machine and stacked in the kilns, which were 625 feet in length. After the burning, the setting machine removed the bricks for cooling. The

cooled bricks were hand-loaded onto cars. Any bricks broken in the dryers or kilns were ground up in nine-foot dry pan driven by a 40 h.p. motor and delivered to the pug mill.

Finished bricks were shipped to market by rail, the plant being conveniently situated between the lines of the Southern Pacific and Western Pacific railroads. The site had a dedicated rail spur which was given the acronym "PABRICO," which was an abbreviation of "paving brick company." If you look at a map of the Fremont-Union City boundary at the Alvarado-Niles Road where it intersects with the railroad tracks you will still see that area is still titled "PACRICO."



Bricks produced at the Oakland Paving Brick Co. between 1911 and 1912.

The plant started up on March 24, 1911, with 30 workers. In October 1911, G. Meyers became the plant superintendent, having transferred from the Livermore Fire Brick Works. It wasn't until December that bricks were finally shipped. As might be expected from the company name, their specialty was red paving brick. These pavers were red, vitrified brick, with the name "OAKLAND" impressed into one of the faces, cornered by four round raised lugs. Unfortunately, the pavers failed as good street pavers, so the company had to unload them as sewer or building bricks. This was unfortunate because paving bricks were being shipped to San Francisco and Oakland from as far away as Los Angeles and Seattle due to the lack of local supply of paving bricks. By April 1912 the pavers were no longer being made and red common brick became the main product at the plant. Unable to sustain itself on common brick, the plant shut down by the end of April.

In July 1912, the company brought in Mr. Penfield of the American Clay Machinery Company to help make alterations at the plant so that it could operate profitably. There were plans to retool the plant to make face brick, ornamental brick, enameled brick, and terra cotta. Although the plant was remodeled and equipped with new machinery, it never reopened. The plant

was sold a year later to W. S. Dickey Clay Manufacturing Company of Kansas City. This firm reopened the plant under the name of the California Brick Company.

## **CANNERY:**

### **Rosalono Enea, Manager**

#### **Decoto Canning Co.:**

Work would start on July 5, 1919, at the Decoto canning factory, one of the largest canneries in this part of the country. A large volume of business was expected this year, and the problem of sufficient labor to handle it was bothering the management.

The company placed an ad in the newspaper:

Help Wanted:

For a long season; good wages, free camping grounds, tents; good water; nice chance for your summer vacation; apricots now on; pears, tomatoes, etc. later.

Decoto Canning Co., Alameda Co., R. Enea, Mgr.

I could find no further mention of the Decoto Canning Co., or the Decoto Cannery during this period. Also I could find nothing of a Mr. R. Enea. From the total lack of further information on this cannery it is possible that it never got off the ground.

## **CARPENTER:**

### **Frank Soares:**

Frank Soares was born in Portugal in 1854. He entered the U.S. in 1873. Frank was married (name of first wife unknown), and had four children by her. A daughter named Rosie and three sons named Joe, Edward and Raymond. The reason of the departure of his first wife is not known. Frank remarried in 1908 to Maria Silva, 45, also of Decoto. Frank was a residential carpenter in Decoto about 1910. After this nothing could be found about Frank and Mary Soares.

## **DRESSMAKER:**

### **Miss Mary Bernardo:**

Mary Bernardo was born in California in 1891 to John and Flora Bernardo, immigrants from Portugal. Miss Bernardo was a dressmaker for a private family in Decoto in 1910. She was still living at home in 1920, but did not show being employed at that time. She was still single.

## **HOTEL:**

*Decoto Hotel, Henry Slem / Anthony H. Bush*

### **Henry Slem:**

#### **Decoto Hotel, aka Decoto House:**

The Decoto Hotel, which had been under the proprietorship of the Hibbard family since the early 1900's changed hands on July 25, 1911. Henry Slem of

Oakland became the new landlord of the Decoto House at the beginning of August 1911.

Henry Slem of Berkeley became the new proprietor of the Decoto Hotel in late July 1911. Just two weeks later Mr. Slem purchased a string of lots in Decoto from the William Jung family of Alvarado. Mr. Slem then moved into the William Jung property where he had expected to stay permanently.

In November 1912 Vernon Higgins of San Francisco purchased the old William Jung place from Henry Slem. Mr. Slem was in Decoto in early November and sold two more lots to Mr. Higgins. Mr. Higgins would move his Victor Incubator Factory from San Francisco to Decoto.

Henry & Lizzie Slem then purchased from Christina Jung of Alvarado block F & Y of Decoto from the estate of William Jung of Alvarado.

Over a period of the next two years the Slem's disposed of their Decoto properties to various individuals. No other bio info was found for the Slem's.

### **Anthony H. Bush:**

Anthony Bush was born in New York in August 1837. His wife Alice was born in New York in November 1846. They had two children, Alice and Anthony.

The Bush's were in Decoto from the mid 1890's to just before 1900 when they moved to Berkeley, where Anthony was an auditor for the railroad. By 1904 they had moved to San Francisco. But they always stayed in touch with the folks from Decoto, visiting the town every so often. In 1907 Alice Bush bought lots 15 to 23 in Block D in Decoto.

Henry Slem became the new owner of the Decoto Hotel/House at the beginning of August 1911. In mid-September Anthony Bush visited Decoto as the new owner of the Decoto House. The following week the Decoto Hotel/House closed its doors.

After this was no further mention of the Bush's in Decoto.

### **INCUBATOR MANUFACTURER:**

#### **Vernon G. Higgins:**

##### **Victor Incubator Co.:**

Vernon G. Higgins was born in California in 1867. His wife Orilla was born in Pennsylvania in 1876. They were married in 1892 and had seven children: Vernon R., Braidwood, Graham, Raymond, Fannie, Carol, and Norma.

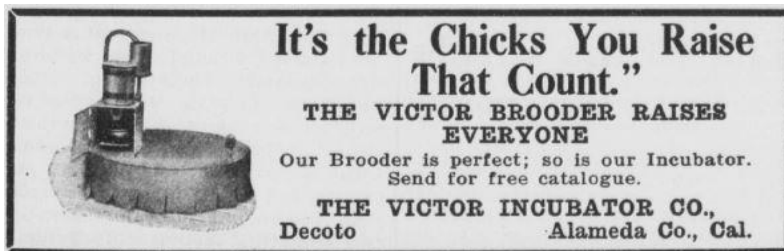
In 1910 Vernon was working in a real estate office in San Francisco. In 1912 Vernon bought the old place of Henry Slem in Decoto and would there move his incubator factory from San Francisco to Decoto. While not manufacturing on a very large scale Mr. Higgins' plant would be a valuable for to Decoto. Mr. Higgins will also move his family to Decoto.

Mr. Higgins joined with Sigmund Salz, Frank Hartman, John Olson, John Sandholdt, Fred Meyer, F.B. Williams, Robert Haines, G.S. Tungate and Frank Goularte in the founding of the Decoto Farm Bureau in June 1914.

The last article found in Decoto for Vernon Higgins or his incubator was in 1915. The 1920 census shows him back in San Francisco manufacturing his Victor Incubator, although his son Braidwood was living in Decoto as a lodger and working as a carpenter for a blacksmith.



Wooden incubator for eggs, heated by wood and kerosene. Glass door in the front permits viewing of the eggs. Marked "Victor Incubator Co., Decoto Calif."



Commercial ad in the *Pacific Rural Press*.

## **MERCHANTS:**

*Manuel L. Avilla / J.D. Burrows / Tony Ramero*

### **Manuel L. Avilla:**

Manuel L. Avilla was born in California in 1879. His wife Frances was born in Portugal in 1879. She entered the U.S. in 1890. The couple had two children, Walter and Wilbert.

Manuel operated a grocery store and meat market in Decoto for many years. He is first shown in the 1910 census and he was already operating his store at



this time. In 1940 he was still showing that he was operating his grocery store and meat market.

On August 14, 1940 Avilla's Grocery Store, Brown's Shoe Shop, and the Decoto Library were burned to the ground. These buildings, located on Railroad Avenue, started on fire from the basement of Avilla's Store. The tank house was also burned as did a small building next to the store. Endangered were four houses and a garage close the blazing buildings, when their roofs caught on fire. Avilla's Store had stood for many years in Decoto.

Besides operating his store Manuel was active with organizing the Decoto Boy Scouts in 1924 and also was active with the local Holy Ghost Annual Portuguese Festival.

I located a grave at the Holy Sepulcher Cemetery in Hayward for Manuel Lewis Avilla dated 1942.

### **J.D. Burrows:**

J.D. Burrows was mentioned as a Decoto merchant in June 1914. What type of retail store he operated was not mentioned, only that he had left for the East in preparation for a visit to Ireland and other parts of Europe before returning to Decoto again. I could not find where he ever returned to Decoto.

### **Tony Ramero:**

Tony Ramero was born in Spain in 1893. He entered the U.S. in 1915. His wife Mary was born in Spain in 1895 and she also entered the U.S. in 1915. They had three children living with them in Decoto in 1920, Annie, Jeater and Tony. Also living with them was Annie M. Ramero, widowed mother who entered the U.S. from Spain in 1918. The 1920 census shows Tony Ramero as a grocery store keeper. There were no articles after the 1920 census to show where the Romero's may have relocated.

### **John M. Goularte:**

Jon M. Goularte was the proprietor of the Goularte Cash Grocery Store. He offered choice fresh fruit and vegetables, and dried and salt fish of all kinds.

### **NOTARY PUBLIC:**

#### **Miss Harriet Joyce:**

Miss Harriett Joyce became a Notary Public for the town of Decoto, having just received her commission in November 1913. Miss Joyce maintains her office in the J.L. Olson Merchandise Store. Miss Joyce would later marry John L. Olson, merchant of Decoto.

### **PAINTER:**

#### **Benjamin Gober:**

Benjamin Gober was born in Tennessee in 1860. In May 1909 Benjamin married Georgia Plumlee of Decoto. Georgia was born in 1885. Benjamin had two children from a previous marriage, Benjamin and a daughter named Willie. For Benjamin this was his third marriage and for Georgia her second.

In the 1920 census Benjamin gave his employment as a painter. This was the final entry for Benjamin Gober in Decoto. Mrs. Gober remarried in November 1927 to Luther W. Hamilton, 47, of Decoto. I could find nothing else for Mr. Gober, either obituary or divorce proceeding.

## **PENCIL MANUFACTURER:**

### **Essex Lumber Co. (Pencil Mfg):**

Mr. H.S. Crocker went into the office of the *Hayward Daily Review* in September 1912 to inform them if labor could be found for a lead pencil factory that would soon be opened in Decoto.

Shortly thereafter one of the Edward Salz warehouses was remodeled and used for the factory under the name "The Essex Lumber Co." and a lease of six acres of ground was secured in town. The cedar lumber to fuel the factory's production was brought by train from Tehama and other counties where cedar grows and would be worked at the mill into pencil lengths. The company produced pencil blanks that were shipped east to be made into lead pencils. Mr. Crocker said that wood would be delivered to the plant and about 50 to 60 hands, men and women, were to be employed all the year around.

The wood used in making pencils comes from the incense cedar of the Sierra Nevada's. Because of the growing scarcity of this product back east (and in Europe), the pencil companies came west to obtain its product. The wood for the pencils of the American Pencil Company of New York is cut, prepared and shipped from the Essex Lumber Co. in Decoto. The Decoto plant receives the lumber, which is graded, sorted and then cut into pencil sized blocks. These cedar blocks are then loaded onto trains and shipped to the American Pencil Co. in New York to be fashioned into lead pencils.

In September 1916 the Essex Lumber Co. announced plans to open a new pencil factory in North Sacramento. The plant would consist of the manufacturing plant proper, dry kiln, and a warehouse in addition to a large lumberyard. Unfortunately for Decoto the plant made perfect sense, it was closer to the product and, although Decoto had excellent rail transportation, the rail line to the east was better situated.

After late 1913 nothing was found in Decoto for the Essex Lumber Co, and after 1922 nothing was found for the Essex Lumber Co. in Sacramento.

## **PHYSICIAN:**

### **Dr. James Hanley:**

James C. Hanley was born in California in 1878. His wife Kathryn was born in Ohio in 1882. They had two sons, James and Jack. Dr. Hanley came to Decoto circa 1912 and after 1916 nothing was found for Dr. Hanley in Decoto.

Dr. Hanley moved to the City of Hayward prior to 1920 where he was found living on Castro Street (today's Mission Blvd.). Dr. Hanley actively practiced medicine in Southern Alameda County for 40 years. He started his practice in the town of Decoto where he used to make his daily calls on a bicycle. The doctor relocated to the City of Hayward in 1915 where he was known as the "happy-go-lucky" doctor.

Dr. Hanley passed away on August 17, 1947.

## **POSTMASTER:**

### **Miss Harriet Joyce (Olson):**

Miss Harriet Joyce was born in Connecticut in November 1881 to Patrick and Harriet Joyce of Ireland. The Joyce's came to Alvarado just prior to the turn of the century. Harriet had two sisters, Mary who was born in May 1875 in Connecticut, and married to John L. Olson of Alvarado just after the turn of the century; and Kathryn Olson who was born in Connecticut in April 1877. Kathryn married Mr. L. Aurich of San Francisco.

In 1903 Mrs. Mary (nee: Joyce) Olson moved to Decoto with John to open a general merchandise store with John H. Ralph of Alvarado. Within a few weeks after the purchase of the store Mary Olson moved to Decoto to be with her husband.

Patrick Joyce, father of Mary, Kathryn and Harriet Joyce; passed away in Alvarado in 1906. Mrs. Harriet Joyce and Miss Harriet Joyce then moved to Decoto to live with John and Mary Olson.

On August 29, 1906 Mrs. Mary Olson (nee: Joyce) died. Mrs. Harriet Olson and Miss Harriet Olson continued to reside with John Olson in Decoto.

On July 14, 1914, Mrs. Harriet Joyce passed away at Decoto at the age of 59 years, leaving Miss Harriet Joyce with son-in-law John Olson.

Miss Harriet Joyce had apparently spent a good deal of time working in the general store, for in 1909 *The Oakland Tribune* wrote that: "Miss Joyce, the postmistress, was in the metropolis during the week on a shopping tour." I could not find where Miss Harriet Joyce was ever officially appointed as Postmistress of Decoto and the designation was probably a symbolic gesture given to her for her work in the Post Office as John Olson's sister-in-law.

In 1915 Miss Harriet Joyce is shown as Mrs. Harriet Olson. John and Harriet would run the general store until the death of John Olson in 1941.

## **RAILROAD:**

*P.S. Johnson / Cyril E. Jasmin / Leon E. Simmons*

### **P.S. Johnson:** **Station Agent, S.P.:**

Southern Pacific Station Agent P.S. Johnson for Decoto has been visiting his wife in the hospital in November 1911, as she is very ill. P.S. Johnson left Decoto in April 1912 to take over the station at Elmira.

### **Cyril E. Jasmin:** **Contracting Freight Agent WP:**

Cyril E. Jasmin was the contracting freight agent at Oakland for the Western Pacific Railroad when he was promoted to station agent for the Western Pacific at Decoto.

Cyril Jasmin was born in Missouri in 1879. His wife May was born in Missouri in 1883. They had a son Cyril Jr. who was born in Utah.

After arriving in Decoto, Cyril became involved in the formation of the Decoto Chamber of Commerce in January 1911. However after this nothing further was found for Mr. Jasmin in Decoto. He was located in Creswell Oregon in 1920 as the Station Agent for the local SP Depot.

### **Leon E. Simmons:**

#### **Western Pacific Agent:**

There is mention of a Mr. Simmons in Decoto for a few scant years, but I was unable to locate any bio info on the Simmons family. The family is mentioned in Decoto articles until about June 1915 and then nothing further was found.

### **RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION CO.:**

#### **Willett-Burr Railway Const. Co.:**

Walter M. Willett and Percy Burr, and their construction company the Willett & Burr Railway Construction Company purchased ten acres of land in Decoto in February 1912. At the time it was believed that this was the first step toward initiation of the constructing of the Key Route from Oakland to San Jose.

The Key Route was an electric traction line that started in the East Bay just after the turn of the century. The system went as far south as Hayward and then stopped. But it was always hoped that it would go through Decoto on the way to San Jose. But it never came to be. The land that Willett & Burr bought, it was thought, would be used for a construction yard and repair shops to support the coming building boom for the Key Route, which would include an electric rail line through town. Of course this never came to pass.

The company had men at work in March 1912 planting trees around their yard. The company also received permission from the Board of Supervisors to lay a spur track from the Southern Pacific across Railroad Avenue at a point near the Dry Creek. The closing of the streets they desired was almost assured.

The Willett – Burr Company had been the railroad construction-engineering firm involved in the Eureka extension of the NW Pacific Railroad. In 1913 Willett – Burr participated in the building of the dam above Strawberry in Tuolumne County. In 1917 the company put on a large new force of employees at their Decoto yard in order to fill an order for a large number of new freight cars.

After this it seems the company did not play a large part in Decoto. In July 1933 a fire swept through the central storehouse and machine shop of the Willett & Burr Contracting Company at Decoto, destroying some \$15,000 worth of equipment and materials. The origin of the blaze was not discovered, but it was thought that transients, possibly entering in search of a place to sleep, in some way started the conflagration.

It was not until February 1940 that the Willett – Burr yard was again in the local news. Manuel Silva, foreman at the corporation yard of the W.M. Willett Construction Company of S.F. reported to authorities the theft of a quantity of copper and brass pipes and valves from two ancient locomotives stored in the yard. The engines are of an early type used on construction railroad lines and were kept here for sentimental reasons. They were stripped of their copper and brass by a thief who presumably intended to sell the metal for junk. Value of the metal is about \$3, although replacement value of the pipes and valves was placed at \$100 by Mr. Silva. Mr. Silva reported a hobo was seen in the yard Tuesday night, and the company was advised to disallow use of an old boxcar on the premises as a refuge for hoboes.

In the early spring of 1942 the old Willett & Burr Construction Yard at Decoto was purchased by Claude T. Lindsay of San Francisco who is the builder of prefabricated houses for defense workers. By April 1942 workers were already engaged in reconditioning the property, which at one time was operated as a railroad construction yard. More recently it has been used for the storage of machinery and equipment by various contracting firms. Large sheds and shops are situated on the 15-acre site, and according to plans, materials in car load lots will be delivered to one end of the plant and prefabricated houses will emerge from the other. Employment will be given to between 100 and 200 men, it is said.

### **SALOON KEEPERS:**

**Morton C. Juhl:**

**James Rasmussen:**

**Charles A. Drury:**

**W.A. Hellwig:**

**A.W. Jones:**

**Maud Drury:**

Morton Juhl sold his saloon, which he had engaged in for many years, at the intersection of the Hayward-Niles and Decoto Roads to Mr. James Rasmussen in March 1910.

James Rasmussen sold the saloon in September 1910 to Charles A Drury and W.A. Hellwig.

In January 1912 the principals involved in the business were Mr. Drury and an A.W Jones. At that time they made an application for the renewal of their liquor license. The liquor license was denied on the basis of a large number of persons claiming that the petition of the proprietors for a renewal does not contain the proper signatures for those of adjacent property owners. The matter was held over.

One week later the petition was resubmitted under the principal names of A.W. Jones and Maud Drury. The application was referred to the license committee for a report, there having been a protest to a renewal of the license.

A written protest was received from F.W. Meyer on January 31, 1912, against the granting the liquor application of Drury & Jones, Decoto. Accompanying the protest was a communication announcing the withdrawal of the signatures of the following from the application of said Drury & Jones: Louis Lagorio, John J. Ponte, Manuel P. Brazil and T. Silva. The matter was referred to the Judiciary, Printing and License Committee. This is the last reference on this article.

## **SCHOOL TEACHERS & TRUSTEES:**

*Teachers / Trustees*

### **Teachers:**

*Miss Elma Ingalls / Miss Dorris Whipple / Miss Ella M. Taylor*

#### **Miss Elma Ingalls:**

Miss Elma Ingalls was born in California in 1885. In 1910 she was boarding with Mrs. Hibbard in Decoto and was a teacher at the Decoto School. In 1900 she was living with her parents in San Jose Calif., John M. and Emily Ingalls, formerly of Alvarado.

In October 1911 Elma purchased a home from Ed Salz in Decoto in preparation of becoming a permanent Decoto resident. As well as teaching in the Decoto School in 1910 Miss Ingalls had a large group of friends in Decoto that she socialized with. One was Ellen Cockefair, also a teacher at the Decoto School, as well as the Misses Mary & Marjorie Jackson, Wynoma Hibbard, Charlotte Meyer, Christine Anderson, and Gertrude May.

However by 1920 things seemed to have changed considerably for Miss Ingalls for at that year she was back in San Jose living with her widowed mother and working in the public school system as a teacher.

#### **Miss Dorris Whipple:**

Dorris Whipple was born in Decoto in August 1889 to Edwin and Emily Whipple. Dorris graduated from Washington High in Centerville in 1908 and immediately attended San Jose Normal School (today's San Jose State University) where she earned her teaching credential.

After Dorris graduated from Normal School, Dorris and her sister Izobel moved into a little cottage on the Searles lot adjoining the Salz lot. Then Doris began her teaching career at Decoto in 1914. However after 1915 nothing can be found for Dorris Whipple.

#### **Miss Ella M. Taylor:**

Miss Ella M. Taylor of Oakland was elected special teacher of music in the Decoto School in July 1914. This was the only article about Miss Taylor, nothing further could be found.

### **Trustees:**

*Henry May / Edwin Whipple / Harry C. Searles / Daniel Jackson / John Sandholdt*

## **Henry May, Trustee:**

[See bio in Chapter 05 page 18](#)

## **Edwin Whipple, Trustee:**

[See bio in Chapter 03 page 4](#)

## **Harry C. Searles, Trustee:**

Harry Searles was born in July 10, 1876, at Rohnerville, in Humboldt County, California. Harry was living in Rohnerville in 1880 with his mother and sister along with John and Clara Peterson. The Searles family moved to Hayfork in Trinity County in 1881. Here Harry learned his love for the outdoors and the mountains in the region. In 1888 the Searles family moved to Decoto and this would become Harry's permanent home. Also joining the Searles in Decoto at about this time was John & Clara Peterson and family from Rohnerville.

As a young man in Decoto Harry loved to play the new rough and tumble sport called football. On New Year's Day in 1896, Ezra Decoto Jr. fielded a football team to play a game against the boys from Hayward High. On the Decoto team were such names as: Luna, Juhl, Peterson, Whipple, Carr, Anderson, Haines, Decoto (Louis) and Searles. That New Year's Day dawned cold and foggy and till early in the afternoon the fog seemed to become thicker, but by the time the game began the sun was shining brightly. From the start it was evident that the Decoto boys outclassed the Hayward players. The Decoto boys were considerably heavier and showed greater skill in every style of playing. The game ended with Decoto winning 18 - 0. After the game the victors and the vanquished, together with the officials and some friends, went to the Hayward Villa for supper.

This was also a time of merry-making and socializing in Decoto. When the new boarding house at the Masonic Home was opened it was the scene of a gay dancing party in April 1898. The building had just been completed and Fred Hurlburt, the building contractor wanted to become better acquainted with Decoto young people so he cordially invited them to have a good time. There was dancing and socializing and at midnight, coffee, cake and sandwiches were served. Among the young people were: the Misses Edith Rogers, Edna Whipple, Alice and May Kelley, Lillie and Kate Graesslin, Etta Graham, Christina Anderson, Isabella and Zadie Whipple, and among the young men were: Fred Hurlburt, Harry Searles, George Peterson, Will Anderson, Louis Decoto, T.S. Ferreira, Jim Hellwig, Johnnie Whipple, Edward Whipple, Bob Haines, Harry Miller and H.E. Kelley.

On June 13, 1900, Harry C. Searles was married to Miss Lillian Graesslin, daughter of William Graesslin, who had been residing in Decoto since 1879. The following year Harry joined the Salz Feed & Grain business in Decoto where he would remain for his entire business career.

Harry, like a few other of the Decoto lads belonged to the Alvarado Parlor of the Native Sons of the Golden West. In May 1902 he was chosen as one of the delegates of the Alvarado Parlor to attend the Native Son's Convention in Santa Cruz in May 1902.

In January 1911 the progressive citizens of Decoto organized a Chamber of Commerce. Harry Searles as a charter member of the group and was elected to its first Board of Directors. Their first major project was to obtain better

lighting for the town of Decoto. Harry joined J.L. Olson and T.S. Fereira on a committee for this purpose.

In May 1911 Harry took on the duty of becoming a ballot official for the town of Decoto. Harry would continue to serve as a ballot official for Decoto for a number of years. In the mid 1920's when Harry's other duties in the town were so time consuming that his wife Lillian took over his position as a Decoto voting official.

In February 1920 the school board of the Alvarado School floated a plan to increase the size of their school population by trying to talk the Alameda County School Board to increase the size of its boundary at the expense of the Decoto School District. The Decoto School Board of Trustees, which included Harry Searles, Henry May and John Sandholdt, bitterly opposed the scheme drawn up by the Alvarado School Board of Trustees calling for boundary changes. The idea was quietly left to expire without further action from the Alvarado trustees.

Decoto was one of the few towns in southern Alameda County that did not have a Boy Scout troop. This was rectified in May 1924, when Peter Decoto agreed to become the Scoutmaster of the Decoto Boy Scout Troop. Henry Haines was his assistant. Harry Searles figured prominently in the creation of the troop by becoming chairman of the Boy Scout committee in the Decoto Chamber of Commerce. Herbert Harrold, A.N. Benson, J.L. Olson, Antone Amaral, Manuel Caldeira, Henry May, Raymond McNulty, M.L. Avilla and Enos Pimentel served on the committee with Harry Searles.

Decoto would get a new grammar school in 1926. The school opened in September 1926 as a result of the hard work of the Board of Trustees comprised of Harry Searles, Henry May and John C. Whipple. Allison Peacock, former principal of the Mayfield Grammar School, commenced his duties in that semester in succession of E.G. Wood who had resigned to engage in business activities in Fresno. The teachers that opened that new school were: Miss Tillie Logan, daughter of James Logan (who would later marry Vernon G. Goold of Washington High), Miss Carrie Entriksen, Miss Beulah Meyers, Mrs. Ruby L. Rogers, Mrs. Emma Miller and Mrs. Grace Hawley Erickson.

Besides being a school trustee for the Decoto School District, Harry also served as a trustee on the board of the Washington Union High School in Centerville. In March 1929 Harry was replaced as a trustee at the high school by his good friend John C. Whipple.

Harry Searles spent his entire occupational career at the Salz Grain Warehouse in Decoto, retiring in April 1943 after spending 42 years as the foreman and then salesman for the company.

There was a celebration on June 16, 1950, for a pioneer school trustee of the Decoto Grammar School. Harry C. Searles, 73 and his wife Lillian, 72, were honored at a big event celebrated at the home of their son, Harry Alwyn Searles. The event was the 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of Harry and Lillian Searles. Attending the event was Paul Martin, of Oakland who was principal of the Decoto School in 1900. Assisting Mrs. Searles in receiving were Mrs.



Harriet Olson and Mrs. Clara May, long-time neighbors and Mrs. Vivian Logan of Alvarado, who rendered piano music during the reception.

Harry was given the ultimate honor due a school trustee who had spent 35 years serving the citizens of Decoto. It was decided by the Decoto Elementary School District Board of Trustees to name an elementary school after Harry Searles. In January 1955 the job of designing of the new school was given to Ponsford and Price who suggested a hexagonal farm, a cluster type of experimental construction design not used in California.

Neal Kauffman was named teaching principal of the new Searles School, which was established in the primary wing of Bernard School for the next school term pending completion of the Searles Elementary School on 15<sup>th</sup> Street Decoto in September 1956. All children in west Decoto attended this school. In January 1956 the Searles School had 163 students, all being taught at Barnard School while awaiting the new quarters on 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

On August 4, 1958, Harold C. Searles passed away at Decoto. He was the husband of Lillian Searles and father to Harold Alwyn Searles, both of Decoto; and grandfather of Harry G. Searles of San Jose and Sandra Searles of Decoto. He was a native of Rohnerville, Humboldt County California. He was a retired salesman of the C.F. Salz Co. warehouse in Decoto.

The Decoto community was lessened by the amount of this man who gave of himself to the community and its citizens. Harold Searles was a graduate of Decoto Grammar School and the old Washington Union High School in Centerville. He married a hometown girl in Lillian Graesslin and went to work for a hometown business in the Salz Warehouse where he spent 42 years. From 1906 to 1939 he served as a member of the Decoto School Board and he served one term as a high school trustee in Centerville. Harry also served many years with the Decoto Boy Scouts and was very active in the Decoto Chamber of Commerce. Harry was the Past Master of the Masonic Lodge No. 167 of Fremont Ca., a past patron of the Orient Chapter, OES, of which his wife was a past matron, and he was also a past president of the Men's Club of Washington Township.

#### **Lillian Graesslin Searles:**

Lillian was born to William and Connie Graesslin in March 1878 in Colorado. She had a sister Katherine who was born in Kentucky in May of 1875, and a brother Henry who was born in August 1880 in California. The Graesslin's left Colorado for California in 1879.

In April 1898 there was a dancing party thrown at the Masonic Home up on the hill. Many of the young people from Decoto attended including Harry C. Searles and Lillian Graesslin.

On June 13, 1900, Harry C. Searles and Lillian Graesslin were wed and they settled down in Decoto. They had two children, but only one survived to adulthood. Harold Alwyn Searles was born in 1908, and like his father Harry, he would become a force in the progress of the town of Decoto.

Lillian Searles was a member of the Decoto "500 Club" (a card game popular in the early 1900's before Whist became popular) along with her husband

Harry. Lillian was also an active member of the Presbyterian Church and Order of the Eastern Star in Centerville and the Ladies Guild of Decoto.

In 1926 the Washington Township PTA was launched with Mrs. Fannie Robie of Alvarado as president. Representing Decoto in the organization was Mrs. Lillian Searles and Miss Tillie Logan.

### **Daniel Jackson, Trustee:**

Daniel Jackson was born in Ohio in September 1854. Daniel's wife Emma was born in California in 1857. They were married in 1877 and had three daughters: Clara, Mary and Marjory.

In 1895 the family was living in Alvarado where Daniel was in the dairying business. The Jackson's were active in the Alvarado Presbyterian Church and Alvarado social circles. Besides being in the dairy business Mr. Jackson was the road foreman for Alvarado and in 1899, and he was on the Board of Trustees for the Alvarado Grammar School.

The Jackson Granger Dairy Company drew up Articles of Incorporation in August 1903. The directors were: Daniel Jackson, Farley B. Granger, Susan H. Granger, T. F. Jackson, and Fred C. Harvey, all of Alvarado. The dairy was located in Decoto. In November 1903 Daniel Jackson and family moved to Decoto.

### **The Jackson Granger Dairy Company of Decoto (from the *Pacific Rural Press of San Francisco, January 23, 1904*):**

"The Jackson-Granger Dairy Co., Inc. is rapidly pushing to completion their various buildings on the Patterson Ranch near Decoto. This place consists of 325 acres of the best land in the vicinity, which the company has leased for a term of years. Carpenters have been at work for several weeks erecting a large cow barn, which is a model of its kind. Fully 125,000 feet of lumber have been used in its construction. It is 126 feet long and 149 feet wide, and will hold eight strings of thirty-three cows each, or 264 cows.

The arrangement of the barn is such as to afford every possible convenience for cleanliness and to give plenty of light, and also secure the very best ventilation possible. Its location gives it excellent drainage facilities. Electric lights will be placed throughout the barn, as well as in the other buildings. A tank house, milk house, cookhouse and other buildings will also be put up. A 10 H.P. electric motor will be installed for pumping and other purposes. The milk will be shipped to San Francisco. The officers of the company are: Farley B. Granger, Jr., President; F.C. Harvey, Vice President; and D. Jackson, secretary and manager. The company is incorporated for \$50,000."

In August 1913, the Jackson-Granger Dairy Co. was dissolved and the land would be farmed by Daniel Jackson. The dairy business was discontinued.

As he was in Alvarado, Daniel Jackson was active in civic affairs becoming an election official in Decoto voting matters in 1904. In 1910 Daniel Jackson and

Edwin Whipple were both elected to the Board of Trustees of the Decoto Grammar School.

The last article on the Jackson's in Decoto was the news that John Sandholdt was appointed school trustee to fill the vacancy caused by the removal of D. Jackson to Alameda in December 1914.

### **John Sandholdt, Trustee:**

Johannes (John J.) Sandholdt was born in Denmark in 1856. His wife Kirsten was also born in Denmark in 1856. They had one child, Emma Sandholdt, who died on January 24, 1923 as Mrs. Emma Sorenson.

John Sandholdt appears in Decoto in 1912. Prior to that there is no mention of John Sandholdt in Washington Township. He is introduced to Decoto in the following news article from *The Hayward Twice a Week Review* of August 27, 1912:

"J.J. Sandholdt, who for more than 30 years has lived on the marshes near the F.M. Smith place at Mount Eden, will make his home in Decoto in the future. As soon as the new home, which he is having built is completed, the family will occupy it. The lots are on the main highway in front of the Ezra Decoto home, a most delightful situation, and the house is to be a commodious structure of concrete, artistic and comfortable. The barn and outbuildings are already finished. Such families as the Sandholdt are a valuable asset to the community, and are welcomed with much interest and good will."

John Sandholdt became a member of the 1913 township water committee that included from Decoto: Henry May, Albert Silva, J.C. Whipple, Frank Goularte, J.L. Olson, D. Jackson, Mrs. Frank Goularte, Mrs. M. Pimentel, Joe Pimentel, John Cordeiro, Fred Trask, Manuel Perry, Joe Maciel, Ezra Decoto Sr., M. Correia, M. Brown, George Machado, Thomas Silver, Antone George and J.F. Rose.

The following year John Sandholdt was appointed to fill the vacancy of Daniel Jackson on the Decoto School Board when Dan Jackson announced he was relocating to Alameda.

The Alvarado School Board of Trustees petitioned the Alameda County Board of Supervisors in February 1920 to extend the Alvarado School boundary towards Decoto, thereby taking some students from the Decoto District. John Sandholdt went on record to state that he, as well as Henry May and H.C. Searles, the other members of the Board of Trustees of the Decoto School District, wished to vehemently object to any changes in the boundaries between the Alvarado and Decoto School Districts. John Sandholdt passed away February 21, 1928 in Hayward, Calif.; his wife Kirsten followed him on January 11, 1952.

### **TEAMSTER:**

#### **Enos Pimental:**

Enos Pimental was born in Portugal in January 1855. He entered the U.S. in either 1879 or 1880. His wife Anna was born in California in June 1870. They had seven children, four sons and three daughters. Enos was in Decoto before

the turn of the new century and was last shown in the 1930 census. He worked on farms as a farm laborer and in 1920 he worked as a teamster.

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**\* DECOTO GRAMMAR SCHOOL \***  
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*Teachers / Principals / School Trustees / Misc. School Activities*

**TEACHERS:**

Appearing as teachers during this decade were Miss Ellen Cockefair, Miss Elma Ingalls, Miss Dorris Whipple, Miss Izobel Whipple, Miss Mary Jackson, and Miss Ella M. Taylor of Oakland as a special music teacher.

**PRINCIPALS:**

Chris Runckel started the decade as the principal for the Decoto Grammar School. In July 1911 it was announced that Miss May Jenkins would become the principal of the Decoto School. Miss Jenkins seemed to have resided in Decoto in the 1890's and had taught school there as a teacher in 1896 along with Miss Julia Emerson. After the announcement on July 1911 that Miss Jenkins had been chosen as the new principal. In August 1913 it was noted that Chris Runckel was again the principal of the Decoto Grammar School.

**SCHOOL TRUSTEES:**

Schools trustees during this decade that were publicized were Edwin Whipple, Daniel Jackson, Henry May, Harry C. Searles, and John Sandholdt.

**MISC. SCHOOL ACITIVITIES:**

**Decoto School has Agricultural Instruction Course:**

The Decoto Grammar School had the distinction of being the first rural educational institution in the county to be given agricultural instruction in the eight grade by the agricultural department of the University of California in November 1910. C.A. Stebbins, instructor in agriculture, conducted a series of lessons on modern learning, with special attention paid to intensified culture of the ground. Stebbins prepares the lessons for several weeks ahead and then visits the school as often as he can.

**1911 Graduating Class:**

The Decoto School graduating class of 1911 consisted of ten members. Every member of the class was awarded a diploma of graduation. The following is a list of graduates:

Elsie Costa	Tony Costa	Clarence Maciel	Manuel Maciel
John Martin	Mary Martin	Martha Runckel	Jeanette Peterson
Carrie Silva	George Smith		

**Decoto School Demonstrates New Game: Volleyball:**

George W. Frick, County Superintendent of Schools, along with Joseph Dias, Principal of the Centerville School visited the Decoto School in November 1911. During their visit the students of the upper grades gave the Superintendent a demonstration of

the new game of volleyball, which became quite popular, and was introduced to both the Decoto and Centerville Schools by Miss Jackson, the physical education teacher.

#### **Alvarado School Tries to Annex Decoto Students:**

A movement was started in Alvarado in January 1912 to annex the Decoto and Alviso school districts but it was solidly opposed. Petitions were circulated in the section that it proposed to annex, but there was considerable opposition to the movement. Alvarado School Trustee Vandepier and Principal T.S. McCarty, of Alvarado, were the instigators of the plan. The school trustees of Decoto sent a remonstrance to the board of supervisors. It was understood that like action would be taken by the Alviso Board of School Trustees.

#### **Field Trip to San Francisco June 1913:**

Chris Runckel, Principal of the Decoto Grammar School, and Miss May Haines, teacher, led the children of the school on a field trip to San Francisco in June 1913. Those in the party were Carrie and Elsie Silva, Agnes Enos, Rosie Bernardo, Ollie Duarte, Rose Smith, Joe Costa, Joe Kelly, and Louise Runckel.

The trip included a visit to the San Francisco Mint, the San Francisco Post Office, and the San Francisco Court Room with its elegant furnishings. From there the group went to Golden Gate Park and saw all of the animals and spent quite of time in the museum. They visited the Old New England Kitchen, the Egyptian Room, and the art galleries. They then went to the Cliff House and then visited the Sutro Baths. They then took a ferry boat ride on their way back home.

#### **June 1913 Graduating Class:**

The Decoto School graduating class of June 1913 consisted of five members. The following is a list of graduates:

Rose Bernardo, Graham Higgins, Thelma Pearce, Tony Pimentel, and Wm Pimentel

#### **1914 Christmas Play:**

In December 1914 the students presented the play "Christmas with the Pixies," as part of their Christmas tree exercises. Taking part in the play was:

Alfred Brown	Lillian Santos	Marie Swanson	Willie Evans
Mabel Caton	Roy Silva	Willie Kelly	Georgie King
Joe Swartz	Josephine Bernardo		

#### **Decoto Outclassed by Irvington in Baseball:**

The Decoto baseball team played the Irvington School team in May 1915, but they were completely outclassed by the Irvington team, which was by far the best school in the township. The score was 12 to 0. One day later the Decoto team played the Newark boys and won by a score of 8 to 7. The next week they would play Niles in Decoto.

#### **Some Students in Decoto may be annexed to the Alvarado School:**

The circulation of a petition in April 1916 on the part of a number of the residents of the Decoto School District asking that a portion of the district be annexed to the Alvarado School District in order that a number of the smaller children may not have so far to go to attend school. A suggestion of a new road directly from Decoto to the Creek Road was also raised. The Chamber of Commerce will probably be asked to take the matter up soon.

#### **1916 Graduating Class:**

The Decoto School graduating class of 1916 consisted of eight members. Every member of the class was awarded a diploma of graduation. The following is a list of graduates:

Helen Fostene	Louise Hanley	Aurora Maciel	Felix Plaza
Mabel Pointe	Eva Swanson	Joe Swartz	Ed Swartz

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**\* SOCIAL, CIVIC, & RELIGIOUS ORGS \***  
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*500 Club / Afternoon with the Bunnies / Catholic Church / Congregational Church / Country Club of Washington Township / Decoto Band / Decoto Chamber of Commerce / Decoto Gun Club / Decoto Social Club / Drama Club / Farm Bureau / Library / Owl Club / Post Office / Rail Road / Road District Foreman / Sewing Society / U.P.E.C. / Voting Precinct*

**"500" Club:**

The "500 Card Club" met at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Henry May in March 1910. Despite the stormy weather all the members were present and played with vim while the storm raged outside. At the close of the game an hour or so was devoted to story telling and to the discussion of a spread to supply the inner man, which Mrs. May is so noted in presenting in appetizing form.

The Union "500 Club" of Niles held its first meeting for the 1911 season this week. The club is a regional club with Mr. & Mrs. Edwin Whipple and Mrs. D. Jackson as members representing Decoto.

**Afternoon with the Bunnies:**

A new ladies club met in September 1913 called "The Afternoon with the Bunnies." The first meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Gober.

**Catholic Church:**

A large congregation attended the Catholic Church in March 1910 to listen to the Palm Sunday Mass.

The Catholic Church gave a dance for the benefit of the Decoto Catholic Church on January 23, 1915. The dance was a great success. The sofa pillow made by Mrs. J. Abreu was won by P. Dwyer.

An entertainment and dance for the benefit of the Decoto Catholic Church was held at Silva's Hall on February 13, 1915

A voting contest for the most popular young lady of Decoto was being conducted by the ladies of the Catholic Church in March 1915. The contest will close on April 10<sup>th</sup>. At the last count the following young ladies were entered: Agnes Bernard, May Martin, Camelia Santos, Agnes Enos, Olida Perry, Margaret Smith and Jessie Mello.

The Catholic Church held an entertainment and dance on the night of St. Patrick's Day at Connor's Hall in Niles. The affair was given under the joint auspices of the Catholic Churches of Niles and Decoto, of which Rev. John A. Leal is pastor.

The two churches have combined in an effort to raise funds with which to build a parsonage for the pastor. This event is expected to assist in the building fund. Perhaps the greatest attraction of the evening was Essanay Movie Studio comedic personality Ben Turpin.

The Catholic Church is having the premises surrounding the church cleaned up, getting ready to fence in the property.

### **Congregational Church:**

Rev. Evanson resigned his pastorate at the Congregational Church in March 1910, having accepted a call to the church at Bay Point. The pulpit at this church will be supplied by students from the seminary in San Anselmo.

The Rev. Frederick Maar, pastor of the Fourth Congregational Church of Oakland for the last seven years, tendered his resignation March 12, 1911, and it was accepted at a meeting of the congregation held Wednesday evening in the parlors of the church. Rev. Maar was graduated from the Pacific Theological Seminary 21 years ago. He built the Congregational churches at Niles, Decoto and Mission San Jose. For seven years he was pastor of the Churches at Niles and Redwood City.

The Rev. G.D. King, pastor of the congregational Church in Decoto, spent a few days in Oakland in December 1912. Mr. King has preached to the people of this church for more than a year and is very much beloved and respected by all in this community. He is more than three score and ten years old (70 years old), yet never misses a Sunday sermon.

The Congregational Church of Decoto named leaders and officers of the church. Rev. G.D. King is Elder and Pastor, Mr. J.S. Egger, Deacon; Mrs. Ezra Decoto (Sr.), Deaconess; Mrs. F.W. Meyer, Clerk; and Mrs. Ezra Decoto (Sr.), Treasurer. The Music Committee is composed of Miss May Haines, Organist; Mr. J.S. Egger, Chorister; and Miss Mary Jackson, Soprano Leader.

### **Country Club of Washington Township:**

On Tuesday, September 6, 1910, the members of the Country Club of Washington Township enjoyed a delightful hour when each woman presented the money she has earned during the summer to the clubhouse-building fund with a recital of its history. It was said that the total of these sums represents a goodly figure and that the hope was not altogether vain that within the year the artistically planned clubhouse would be ready for occupancy.

This meeting was the annual outing, which ushers in the new season and was held at "The Maples," the beautiful grove on the Patterson place in Decoto. After the al fresco luncheon an interesting program was presented by the newly elected executive committee. The club officers were: President, Mrs. Carlton C. Crane; Vice President, Mrs. Marion Mowry; Secretary, Mrs. R.H. Hunt; Financial Secretary, Mrs. Thomas Powers.

### **Decoto Band:**

In January 1910 the Decoto Band secured a new instructor, Professor Bettencourt of San Leandro, and rehearsals were held twice a week. The band planned on giving a

dance before Lent when their advanced proficiency would be met. They did, however, give a warm-up performance at the end of January at Silva's Hall.

The Decoto Brass Band was present in the Graduation ceremony of the Decoto School in June 1911, in which they were in uniform and played several selections.

The Decoto band held its first annual banquet at the Decoto House in August 1911. The banquet was a success and it has been settled that it will hereafter be an annual event.

The Alvarado band and the Decoto band played at the barbecue in Alvarado on September 2, 3, 1911.

### **Decoto Chamber of Commerce:**

The progressive citizens of Decoto recently met in a body and organized a Chamber of Commerce on January 22, 1911, and elected the following officers:

President: Henry May  
Vice President: Fred Meyers  
Sec-Treasurer: C. E. Jasmine

Board of Directors:	Henry May	Fred Meyers	T. S. Fereira
F. J. Caldeira	H. C. Searles	F. Rabello	Albert Silva
J. L. Olson	F. Goularte	Charles Nesmith	

By Laws Comm:	T. S. Fereira	E. C. Jasmine	Fred Meyers
Finance Comm:	Judge Fereira	J. F. Ramsay	M. Bettencourt

The organization determined (1) to encourage the location of a cannery in Decoto, (2) to secure better facilities for the shipment of products, (3) and to obtain adequate lighting for the roads through town. The organization would also work for the immediate extension of the Oakland Traction Company's Hayward line from Hayward to Decoto, which unfortunately never came to pass.

At the regular meeting of the Decoto Chamber of Commerce on February 8, 1911, the members drew up a resolution, which they presented to the officials of the Southern Pacific Company in an effort to have them co-operate with the trustees of the town in filling in the mud holes along Front Street. Another resolution requesting the Western Pacific Railroad to widen its approaches to the crossing at Decoto Road was also taken under consideration.

A committee consisting of J. L. Olson, H. C. Searles and T. S. Fereira was appointed to take up the matter of securing new streetlights for the town, while Henry May was chosen as the representative of the organization to the meeting of the California Development Board.

Following up the progressive movement manifested throughout Alameda County, representatives of several Chambers of Commerce of Washington Township met at Centerville on May 1, 1911, and perfected an organization to be known as the Associated Chambers of Commerce of Washington Township. The main purpose of the organization was to centralize the views of the community in regard to public improvement and greater development of the township and Alameda County. The



officers elected were: President, T.D. Witherly, Irvington; Vice-President, A.T. Biddle, Newark; Secretary, C. E. Jasmin, Decoto; and Treasurer, F. T. Hawes of Centerville. Henry May and T. S. Fereira was also present to help represent Decoto.

The Decoto Chamber of Commerce would sponsor a float representing the products of Decoto in the township parade at Centerville on July 4, 1911.

Representatives from various chambers of commerce of Washington Township met in Decoto on July 6, 1911, and formed a central organization composed of three members from each chamber in the township. At the meeting there were three delegates from each of the following towns: Niles, Decoto, Irvington, Centerville, Alvarado, Newark, Mission San Jose and Warm Springs. The associated chambers will interest itself in promoting inter-city transportation and will promote the establishment of an automobile service between the various towns of the section.

An illustrated booklet is to be published showing the resources of this portion of Alameda County. It is the plan of the organizers to actively co-operate with the Oakland Chamber of Commerce in boosting the entire county.

Through the efforts of the Decoto Chamber of Commerce the district is to have electric streetlights in the near future. Twelve lights are to be installed in the more thickly populated parts of Decoto. The county will assume a portion of the expense.

The Decoto Chamber of Commerce gave a grand ball on the evening of Saturday, August 19, 1911. It was intended to raise funds to aid in the work of improving and advertising the town. The following committee on arrangements was in charge of the affair: Charles Nesmith, H.C. Searles, C.E. Jasmin and T.S. Fereira. The floor manager was Henry May and his assistants were T.S. Fereira, H.C. Searles, F.W. Meyer and J.L. Olson.

The Decoto Chamber of Commerce elected two new members, H.C. Kennedy Jr., and O.F. Trask in September 1913.

A meeting of the Associated Chamber of Commerce of Washington Township was represented by members from Mission San Jose, Centerville, Alvarado, and Decoto was held in the library building at Decoto in November 1913. The following officers and members answered the calling of the roll:

Henry May	Henry Lachman	J. E. Wamsley	F. T. Hawes
E. L. Farley	T. E. McCarty	Frank D. Martin	M. H. Lewis
J. J. Sandholdt	J. L. Olson		

Concluding the calling of the roll the first order of business was the report of the Committee on Transportation. Henry Lachman, chairman of that committee spoke at some length on this subject and of his endeavors to bring about a convenient train service of the Southern Pacific Company for the transportation of pupils to and from high school. He had taken up the matter with L. Richardson, district passenger agent of Oakland, but had so far been unable to make satisfactory arrangement, although the matter is under advisement by the company's officials.

F. T. Hawes of Centerville, chairman of the committee of organization, reported that he had received no response to an invitation to the Newark Chamber of Commerce to join the main body.

At March 1914 meeting of the Decoto Chamber of Commerce the following new members were added to the roll: Tony Caldeira, Manuel Correa, Joe Garcia, and John Luna. Over twenty members were present at the meeting.

The Chamber of Commerce had a meeting held a meeting in March 1915 to prepare a booklet describing the beauties of Decoto and the surrounding country.

The Chamber of Commerce had a rousing meeting in April 1915 at the hall. The need of sidewalks was the topic discussed, and no doubt the Chamber will build them out of its own funds, at least on Main Street, and perhaps on Fifth Street. Sidewalks would be the theme for many decades and it was not until the late 1950s that sidewalks were put in throughout the town of Decoto.

### **Drama Club:**

The Decoto Dramatic Club held an entertainment and dance in Silva's Hall on the evening of August 7, 1912. Preparations were made weeks in advance and the members of the organization were enthusiastic over the prospects of a large crowd. A feature of the program was a two-act farce entitled, "Too Much Married." The parts in the sketch were all handled by local amateur thespians, which had been practicing faithfully during the past weeks. In addition to the playlet, a number of vaudeville stunts were put on.

### **Decoto Gun Club:**

The Decoto Gun Club prepared for a duck hunt on its preserves near Alvarado in September 1911.

### **Decoto Social Club:**

The Decoto Social Club met in the Decoto schoolrooms on March 22, 1910. Then in May 1911 the club announced a social dance to be given at the Decoto House for the benefit to install a tennis court on the school grounds.

### **Farm Bureau:**

The Decoto Center of the Farm Bureau was formed in Decoto on the morning of June 21, 1914 by President H. R. Robinson at an enthusiastic meeting of prominent farmers. Among the members of the Decoto Center are:

S. Salz	Frank B. Hartman	J. H. Olsen	J. J. Sandholdt
F. W. Meyer	F. B. Williams	V. G. Higgins	R. T. Haines
G. S. Tungate	F. Goularte		

The Alameda County Farm Bureau Association named Henry May of Decoto as one of the members of annual meeting and picnic committee in March 1917.

In February 1919 John Whipple, local head of the Decoto Farm Bureau, met with the other heads of the Alameda County Farm Bureau.

### **Library:**

Beginning on the first of October 1910, the residents of every part of Alameda County will be entitled to all the privileges of the Oakland Free Public Library. This

was made possible by the Board of Supervisors creating an Alameda County Library system under the provisions of the legislative act adopted in April 1909.

Branches are to be established in twelve towns in different parts of the county. These branches will all be under the supervision of the Board of Library Trustees of the Oakland Library, which is to receive \$12,000 annually from the county for the support of the system. The branches will be established at Decoto, Irvington, Alviso, Niles, Warm Springs, Mount Eden, Mission San Jose, Sunol, Newark, Alvarado, Centerville and San Lorenzo.

Fifty volumes are to be placed in each branch, to be changed every three months. In addition to this, a weekly delivery will be made to each of the twelve stations, whereby all special demands for books will be supplied. The privileges, enjoyed by all Oakland residents will be extended to residents all over the county.

The Oakland Library began opening branch sites in Alameda County and on December 11, 1911, the Decoto Branch of the Alameda County Library system was formally opened.

The Decoto Library announced that in July 1912 it had the types of books and periodicals on hand:

Fiction:	154
Juvenile Fiction:	77
Magazines:	12
Miscellaneous:	3

In June 1913 the Decoto Chamber of Commerce recommended Mrs. Lizzie Williams as the replacement for the former Librarian, the late T.S. Ferreira.

### **Owl Club:**

The Owl Club of Decoto held its annual dance on Saturday, April 5, 1913, at Silva's Hall in Decoto. Knudsen & Thorndyke's Orchestra furnished the music for the evening.

### **Post Office:**

T.W. Lee has was appointed Postmaster of Decoto in February 1912, H.M. Lewis Jr., having resigned.

Postal inspectors, railroad detectives and the sheriffs of two counties joined forces on July 24, 1914, in a manhunt in Alameda and Santa Clara Counties following the blowing of a safe at 2 o'clock this morning in the Post Office at Decoto by cracksmen, who rifled the strong box of \$400 and escaped in an automobile.

The safecrackers were believed to be members of a gang of yeggmen whom the United States authorities have pursued across the continent. According to Sheriff Barnett the same gang has been involved in three robberies, once robbing the Post Office at San Lorenzo, again cracking a safe in the Alvarado Bank, and on another time, rifling the safe in Con Donovan's saloon in Oakland.

The Decoto Post Office is situated in the store building owned by J. L. Olson. The robbers used nitroglycerin, muffling the explosion with a blanket. The safe door was

blown through a counter. Seizing the money the robbers leapt into a waiting auto and fled toward San Jose.

The explosion in the Decoto Post Office threw the town into a panic. It was impossible for some time; however, to secure telephonic connection with Oakland as the telephone office is situated in the same store that houses the Post Office. Eventually a message was finally got through.

The Post Office store at Decoto, owned by John L. Olson, was broken into on October 16, 1917, and 90 pennies taken from the cash drawer. Nothing else was molested. The sheriff's office has no clew as to the identity of the penny collector.

### **Railroad:**

The local station agent for the Western Pacific Railroad, Mr. L. Simmons, was united in marriage with Miss Whitehead of Salt Lake City August 1913.

### **Road District Foreman:**

F.W. Meyer was the Road Foreman for the town of Decoto for this decade. Persons assessed charges for the use of the road were:

### **Decoto Road District Fund:**

Frank J Silva	T. Pimentel	J. Andrade
M. Carlos	F.W. Meyer	J.C. Roble
A.R. Silva, Jr.	F. Brown	J. Costa
T. Medeiros	T. Andrade	

The Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution in August 1910 authorizing the county surveyor to prepare plans and specifications for macadamizing a portion of the county road leading from Hayward to Decoto, beginning at the township line between the townships of Washington and Eden.

A petition signed by more than a dozen freeholders of the Decoto Road District was presented in March 1911 to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors asking that the county accept a 60-foot wide road located in the town site of Decoto. It is a continuation of the county road known as "H" Street. The acceptance of "I" Street as a county road from a point known as Railroad Avenue up to Twelfth Street in that place was also asked. The matter was referred to the County Surveyor Haviland, who will render his report before final action is taken. Those who signed the petition were:

T. S. Ferreira	M. L. Avilla	Albert Silva	J. H. Smith
M. J. Pimentel	M. B. Maciel	C. Lynch	J. L. Olson
G. H. Williams	William Graesslin	W. G. Wright	F. J. Caldeira

The Niles Canyon Road through the glen (Sunol) was opened to motorists in June 1911. Many large parties started their trips through this beautiful part of the country and report the road is in very good condition.

At a largely attended meeting of the Hayward Chamber of Commerce on December 1, 1911, in the town hall, a committee was appointed from the local body to cooperate with the chambers of commerce of Washington Township in "boosting" the proposed extension of the foothill boulevard from Hayward to San Jose.

A petition signed by M.J. Pimentel, Frank J. Caldeira and 25 others was received in February 1912, asking for the abandonment of portions of "C," 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Streets. Accompanying the petition was a bond in the sum of \$100 with Albert Silva and J.L. Olsen as sureties. The bond was accepted. Sig Salz and Henry May were appointed viewers for the abandonment of the streets. The petition asking for the abandonment of portions of "C," 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Streets in Decoto was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in April 1912, as there having been no protests against the closures of the street.

A mile and a half of the Niles Road between Valle Vista and Hayward was concreted and the contractors were ready to start asphaltting in August 1914. The preparing of another mile of the road here for asphaltting has been commenced. Surveyors are engaged in inspecting the road between Valle Vista, Decoto, and Niles, which will also be improved. When the work is completed this part of Alameda County will have one of the finest motoring roads in the State.

Because of the roadwork between Niles and Mission San Jose, a detour at the Decoto Road to Centerville was implemented in April 1915. The detour then continues on the lower road (Alvarado to Irvington) to San Jose. Milpitas Road is still unfinished, and the road is very rough through the town.

### **Sewing Club:**

The Sewing Society met with Mrs. Ezra Decoto Sr. in December 1912. Much work was accomplished by the goodly number of ladies present.

### **U.P.E.C.:**

The meeting of the U.P.E.C., held in March 1914, was a well-attended and a very successful one.

### **Voting Precinct:**

#### **May 1911:**

#### **Silva's Hall (10<sup>th</sup> & "I" Sts)**

Election Officers:

Inspector: F. S. Margarito

Judges: H. C. Searles, G.H. Williams

Clerk: W. A. Anderson

#### **September 1911:**

Inspectors: F. S. Margarito and H. C. Searles

Judges: H. H. Smith and D. H. Williams

Clerks: W. A. Anderson and A. Vargas

Ballot Clerks: George Small and Henry May

#### **October 1912:**

#### **Polling Place: Silva's Hall**

Inspectors: M. B. Maciel and James C. Hanley

Judges: Mrs. Mary Pimentel and Mrs. Annie Pierce

Clerks: H. C. Searles and J. H. Smith

#### **March 1914:**

#### **Election of Water District Directors:**

**Precinct 2 Officers:**  
**Polling Place: Silva Hall, Decoto**

Inspector: Joe H. Smith  
Judge: Harry C. Searles  
Clerks: George Small and A. Freitas

**August 1914:**

Decoto Precinct Officers:  
Inspectors: F. J. Caldeira, F. S. Margarito  
Judges: Mrs. M. Pimentel, Henry May  
Clerks: H. C. Searles, Mrs. F. W. Meyer

**April 1916:**

**Decoto Voting Precinct Officers:**

Inspector: Henry May  
Judges: Enos Henriques, M. B. Maciel  
Clerks: Frank J. Caldeira, Mrs. Gertrude T. Trask, and H. C. Searles

**August 1916:**

**Decoto Voting Precinct Officers:**

Inspector: Henry May  
Judges: Frank A. Mendonca, Jr., Antone Frates  
Clerks: Harry C. Searles, Enos S. Hendricks, and John L. Olson

**October 1916:**

**Decoto Voting Precinct Officers:**

**Polling Site: Silva's Hall**

Inspector: J.H. McKeown  
Judges: Mrs. Pimentel, F.J. Caldeira  
Clerks: Gertie T. Trask, H.C. Searles, and Henry May

**August 1917:**

**Polling Place: Silva's Hall**

Inspector: Pete Decoto  
Judge: Enos Hendrickson, Harry Searles  
Clerk: Henry May

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**\* WORLD WAR I \***

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In June 1917 draft registrations began at Silva's Hall in Decoto for induction into the U.S. Military Service for World War I. The registrar at the Decoto Draft Office was Emanuel George. The following person's names were drawn in July 1917 to among the first three thousand eligible draftees in Alameda County District No. 2:

Alameda County District #2:

Joseph H. Medeiros	John Duarte	Tomyoshi Morita
Joseph F. Perry	Marcel Sigelsia	Manuel Mello
Manuel B. Travers	L.P. Zwissig	Manuel R. Maciel
Ernest Sequeira	Giaconio Biale	Urban P. George
John P. Mello		

The third Liberty Bond Loan Drive was under way with district chairmen throughout the Bay Area in April 1918. In the Decoto area the chairman was Henry May. Then in September 1918 Manuel George became the chairman of the Liberty Drive for Decoto.

October 1918, To the School Children:

Because the school has been temporarily closed, the school children have in no wise lessened their war activities, chief among which, at the present time is the collecting of fruit pits and nutshells. They cannot take the materials to school this week, but they figure that they can work overtime and have a big amount with which to swell their school's quota as soon as school reopens. Remember, a blue ribbon of honor to the school with the largest quota each month; it will be presented by the *Oakland Tribune* and it will be no less an honor than the Cross of War which is given to a soldier for saving the life or lives of his comrades; for two hundred peach pits will produce enough carbon to save one soldier from untold suffering and perhaps death from the fumes of mustard gas.

Children throughout the county are invited to cooperate with the children of Oakland in this campaign. They will send their material to the nearest Red Cross headquarters:

- Pleasanton: Mrs. Thomas Silver
- Niles: Mrs. Edna Overacker
- Irvington: Mrs. Sarah Decoto
- Newark: Mrs. M. L. Cockefair
- Centerville: Mrs. J. A. Bunting
- Sunol Glenn: Mrs. A. W. Ebright
- Livermore: Mrs. E. T. Knox
- Alvarado: Mrs. August May
- Decoto: Mrs. C. H. May
- San Lorenzo: Mrs. Martin

Nine Alameda County towns went over the top for the Victory Loan Drive in April 1919. With this announcement, the Victory Loan Committee asserts that Alameda County has made a creditable beginning and will "finish the job" in style. The towns were Alvarado, Irvington, Niles, Centerville, Decoto, Alviso (district), Newark, Mission San Jose and Warm Springs.

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**MASONIC HOME**

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The 1910 Census showed that the population at the Masonic Home was 100 persons. The population consisted of 89 inmates and a Masonic Home staff of 11 persons. The home was now limited to widows and the aged, the children having been shipped to another Masonic Home in Southern California.

Although officials at the Masonic announced that they would retire the office of the superintendent of the home, the 1910 census shows that Dr. Frank B. Hartman was the superintendent of the home with Mrs. Mary B. Noble as the Matron.

During the decade the home continued its pattern of growth and adding buildings to the compound. In 1911 Edward Coleman, Grand Treasurer of the Order, donated

\$40,000 for the building of hospital on the grounds. On January 21, 1911, the hospital was formally dedicated and was attended by Masons from all parts of the state.

In August of 1914, the cottages at the Masonic Home to the rear of the Siminoff Temple were moved further back of the complex to make room for a big annex. Finally the Past Master's Association of California donated the funds to erect an 85-foot flagpole and a 20-foot American flag on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June 1917.

The holiday season was always well observed at the Masonic Home with feasting, games, dancing, the distribution of presents and a program of musical and literary exercises. Special preparations were made to make the celebration unique in affording pleasure and entertainment to the inmates of the home.

Other special events were also celebrated, like the Washington Birthday celebration of 1910, when a special program of songs and speeches being features of the occasion. The home was specially decorated with small American flags in honor of the event and refreshments were served after the program, in which inmates of the home took part. Patriotic songs were sung and addresses on Washington were made.

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\* **MEMORABLE EVENTS** \*  
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**January 1910:**

**De Avilla Silva's Home Destroyed by Fire:**

While Mr. & Mrs. De Avilla Silva, who reside in a cottage in a cottage in May's Canyon, were at church on Sunday morning, their home caught fire, and was totally destroyed before they were aware of it. Five hundred dollars, which was hid in the house, was taken out as a mass of metal. It is supposed the fire was caused through the fact that Mrs. Silva left dinner cooking on the stove.

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**How Far to Warm Springs?"**

An automobile party rode into Decoto the other day, and meeting one of the natives the driver asked, "How far is it to Warm springs?"

"I reckon it is about eight miles," answered the Decoto resident.

"Great guns," replied the man in the gasoline wagon, "we made it in eight minutes. How's that for making time?"

"Do you call that making time?" replied the man from Decoto?

"Can you beat that?" asked the man in the automobile.

"Well, I just guess we can," replied the man from Decoto, "do you see that hay stack over there, and do you see that bull? Well the other he got stung by a bee and he went around that stack so fast that he slapped himself in the face with his tail."





**Grand Jurors Named:**

One hundred names have been drawn from Alameda County residents to form a Grand Jury pool of prospective jurors. From Decoto the names of George Small and Frank Caldeira were drawn.

**February 1910:**

**Attending the Kirmess at Oakland was:**

|                            |                      |                       |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Mr. and Mrs. Decoto        | O. M. Crane          | Mrs. & Mrs. Haines    |
| Mrs. Schoenstedt           | Miss Mary Jackson    | Miss Marjorie Jackson |
| Miss Elma Ingalls          | Miss Ellen Cockefair | Miss Wynoma Hibbard   |
| Miss Winnifred Schoenstedt |                      |                       |

**March 1910:**

**Postlewaite's Move from Decoto:**

Miss Wynoma Hibbard and Gertrude May entertained the pupils of the local Sunday school Saturday afternoon as a farewell to Hartley and Rhoda Postlewaite, who leave soon for their new home in the southern part of the state.



**Oliver Trask – Gertrude Peterson to Marry:**

License to marry Oliver F. Trask, Coalinga, 33 & Gertrude T. Peterson, Decoto, 22,



**SP Office Robbed:**

The Southern Pacific Railroad Office in Decoto was robbed on March 10<sup>th</sup> by burglars and several valuable packages of dress goods belonging to the express company were stolen. Yeggman, who have been working in that section are suspected. The agent of the railroad company having received an unusually amount large sum of money for the day had taken it with him to his hotel. Sheriff Barnet and the railroad company sent detectives to the place.

**June 1910:**

License to marry, Frank J. Caldeira, 40 & Mary A. Bettencourt, 29, both of Decoto.

**July 1910:**

There are four candidates for Justice of the Peace for Washington Township. Two are to be nominated. The Candidates are: T.S. Fereira, Decoto; Champion D. Stivers, Niles; Samuel Sandholdt, Centerville and Joseph Wamsley, Irvington.

**November 1910:**

**Wm Morgan – Wynoma Hibbard to Marry:**

License to marry, William B. Morgan, 24 & Wynoma G. Hibbard, 19, both of Decoto.

**March 1911:**

**Water in Niles Canyon is High:**

Never in its history has the Niles Canyon Creek (Alameda Creek) been as high as it is at the present time. The creek has overflowed its banks, damaging orchards, farms and vegetable gardens to the extent of many thousands of dollars. Residents of the

Niles and railroad laborers have been working night and day in an attempt to repair the large bridge.

The chicken ranch of John Vargas (Niles) was completely covered by water, sweeping stock, houses and fences before it. The entire town of Alvarado is under water. The sugar beet crop of the Alameda Beet Sugar Company has been destroyed.

Throughout Livermore, Centerville and Newark the water has reached the lower floors of the houses and has forced the residents to seek other quarters. Cattle have been driven to the hills. The damage in the county road and county bridge at Niles will make all travel impossible for at least a couple of weeks. It was thought that the waters would recede enough to allow the men to repair the damage, but with the heavy rains this morning in the foothills the water has started to rise again.

In the vicinity of Niles whole truck gardens have been washed away and between Centerville and Niles the people have been entirely cut off from travel, without making a long detour via Decoto. Travel between Niles and Oakland is at present accomplished over the mountain road.

**May 1911:**  
**Eradicating Squirrels:**

Government inspectors, under the direction of Dr. Blue, are making short work of the ground and tree squirrels, which infest the hills in this section of the county (Hayward, Decoto, Niles, and Warm Springs) and cause the loss of many thousands of dollars to the farmers yearly. William A. Boyer, in charge of the local work, is accompanied by about thirty men. They make their headquarters on the old May place near Decoto.

**June 1911:**  
**Graesslin Home Robbed:**

Burglars entered the home of J.B. Graesslin and secured about \$40. They left no clue to their identity.



**Pea Pickers on Strike:**

The pea pickers went on a strike last week demanding a raise from 50 to 75 cents a sack. They got the raise.

**July 1911:**  
**W.E. Pimentel Oversees Squirrel Eradication:**

W.E. Pimentel of Decoto has been appointed deputy inspector to see that the campaign being carried by the federal authorities to exterminate squirrels is carried out to the letter in this vicinity. Thousands of the pests are being poisoned by the farmers in the surrounding country. The State and county authorities are taking a hand in the work.



**Township Baseball League Discussed:**

Baseball fans in the Washington Township vicinity are contemplating the forming of a baseball league to include, Niles, Centerville, Alvarado, Newark, Irvington, Decoto, Mission San Jose, Pleasanton, San Leandro, Hayward and San Lorenzo. It is pointed

out that among the different teams there are some first-class players and that the national game should be encouraged. It is felt that baseball is one of the best advertising mediums a section can have, and that this feature should appeal to the businessmen of the lower portion of the county. An effort will be made to get the cooperation of the commercial bodies of the surrounding towns.

**August 1911:**

**Squirrels Continue to Plague Farmers:**

The urgent necessity of farmers destroying squirrels in Alameda County was set forth forcefully by Dr. Rupert Blue of the United States Army, who is superintending the campaign against the introduction of the plague. To a *Tribune* reporter Dr. Blue stated that infected squirrels had been found all the way from Decoto in Alameda County to the foothills beyond Lafayette in Contra Costa County.

"In the last six weeks," said the doctor, "plague infected squirrels have been found in Alameda County between Decoto and Lake Chabot, and in Contra Costa County in Wildcat and Pinole canyons. They have also been found in the foothills in Contra Costa County around Lafayette. I have also found such squirrels in the suburbs of Oakland and Berkeley."

**September 1911:**

**Suffrage Meeting:**

A suffrage mass meeting, under the auspices of the Oakland Suffrage Amendment League, was held in Decoto on September 23rd as a feature of the whirlwind campaign being carried on throughout Alameda County. Local women interested in the suffrage amendment were out in force and a number of women from neighboring towns were also present.



Some electric street lights were installed in Decoto in September 1911. The more populated and busier streets received light. The town owes the Chamber of Commerce a big thank you.

**October 1911:**

**From the Niles Press:**

"It is reported on excellent authority this week that the Patterson estate has sold to Breen and Bancroft, a real estate firm of Oakland, the tract of 410 acres lying between the California Nursery and Decoto. At the end of a year from the present time it is the purpose of the purchasers to cut the land up into 5 and 10 acres tracts, and place it upon the market. It is understood that the purchase was made for an Eastern syndicate. The sale, if it goes through as at present, appears likely will be one of the largest made in the township in recent years. The price paid is reported to be in the neighborhood of \$425 an acre."

The effect of this sale is bound to be very beneficial on the town of Decoto as it will open up for settlement one of the residence sections in the township. The Patterson estate has also sold this week to August and Henry May, the 83-acre tract adjoining the McWhinney place on the Decoto-Centerville Road. This tract, which is very desirable land, will probably be cut up into small tracts also.

As a result of these sales it is expected that other large tracts in the Decoto neighborhood will eventually be cut up and the population of the district is bound to be materially increased.

**August 1912:**

**May Canyon Party:**

Miss Mary Jackson, Miss Charlotte Meyer, Miss Elma Ingalls, Miss Marjorie Jackson and Miss Christine Anderson entertained friends at an outdoor supper in May Canyon in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Martenstine of Niles.

**November 1912:**

**First Born Township Resident of Portuguese Ancestry:**

Mrs. Maria Garcia Pimentel, who is serving on the Decoto board of election, is said to be the first woman of Portuguese parentage to be born in Washington Township. She is acting as one of the Republican Judges on the board today. Mrs. Garcia is a direct descendant of the first family in the township to inhabit one of the oldest adobe landmarks in Alameda County. The house was rented from Don Jose Vallejo by A. J. Garcia and his family. The Garcia's lived there until 1885 and Mrs. Mary Garcia was one of the four children to be born in the old house. In her younger days the only schools in the township were Centerville, Alvarado, Mount Eden and Hayward.

**January 1913:**

**Edison Moving Picture Show in Decoto:**

The Sunday Night Movie at the Edison Moving Pictures in Decoto showed "Baby Betty," a Selig production, a story of the Civil War, "Broncho Billy's Narrow Escape," and two other short movies.

**February 1913:**

**Washington Township Baseball League:**

Washington Township will have a baseball league of its own. Irvington, Niles, Centerville, Decoto and Newark will probably be granted franchises. Enclosed grounds will be secured in each town.

**June 9, 1913:**

**T.S. Ferreira Passes Away:**

T. S. Ferreira of Decoto has recently passed away. The Alameda County Board of Supervisors named J.E. Wamsley formerly of Irvington to replace him as Justice of the Peace at Decoto.

**July 1913:**

**Decoto Lad Leaves Decoto Team to play for Fruitvale:**

Gil Peterson, who has been playing sensational ball for Decoto in the Washington Township league, has resigned from this team and will hold the shortstop position for the Ambrose Tailors, the new Fruitvale team. Peterson is a sure fielder and heavy hitter and will be a good man for the tailors.

**August 1913:**

**Washington Township Baseball Standings:**

|             |    |   |      |
|-------------|----|---|------|
| Niles       | 11 | 1 | .917 |
| Newark      | 10 | 2 | .833 |
| Decoto      | 4  | 7 | .364 |
| Centerville | 2  | 8 | .200 |

(Irvington withdrew from league play)



**Washington Township Population:**

|                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| Niles            | 1,500 |
| Centerville      | 1,425 |
| Newark           | 1,200 |
| Alvarado         | 1,100 |
| Irvington        | 1,050 |
| Decoto           | 850   |
| Mission San Jose | 800   |
| Warm Springs     | 600   |



**Edwin Whipple Family Relocates to Berkeley:**

The Edwin Whipple family has departed Decoto for Berkeley, their new place of residence. Their Decoto home has been sold to J.P. Silva. Miss Isabel and Dorris Whipple will reside at the John Whipple place until the end of the school term when they will move to Berkeley. Miss Annis Whipple will remain with them until the end of the school year, Annis is in the eighth grade.

**September 1913:**

**Milk to be shipped from Decoto:**

The town of Decoto will cease being a shipping point for milk. The Jackson-Granger Dairy has been dissolved and the barn is being torn down and the lumber sold. Henry Borghi has given up his lease and will also cease the dairy business.

**October 1913:**

**A Tale of a Sad Dog:**

Arthur Whipple of Decoto has a hapless dog, Pete, which is now, on account of an inordinate curiosity, a hairless dog. He is under the care of a veterinarian and hopes are held out for his recovery. But he will never be the same. His fine courage and his canine precocity will never recover from a harrowing experience when he inadvertently explored a lair of blackbirds.

He didn't mean to be a vandal. He just stumbled upon the covey of birds and flushed them before he knew what he was doing. Then they attacked him before he knew what had fallen upon him. With unerring precision they picked him clean of fur, so now he wears a red flannel union suit to keep him warm and also for decency's sake.

The fight was fast and furious and would have resulted in defeat even more ignominiously for Pete had not assistance arrived in the last round. Whipple chanced upon the silent drama quite accidentally, but in time to save the dog, all but exhausted and hairless.



**Decoto now a Flag Stop for the WP Railroad:**

Decoto is now a flag stop for the Western Pacific No. 4, which arrives in Decoto at 8:30 p.m. This train leaves San Francisco at 7:30 p.m. and Oakland at 8:10 p.m. This will give passengers returning from these cities one hour longer before returning home. The train will also stop for eastbound passengers.



**Isobel and Dorris Whipple Share Cottage:**

The Misses Isobel and Dorris Whipple have moved into their cottage on lot next to the Edw. Salz office. They will have a cozy little home near the Decoto Grammar School, where both are engaged as teachers.

**November 1913:**

**Automatic Drop-Gate Installed by SP:**

A new automatic crossing signal gate, the first of its kind used on the Pacific Coast, was installed this week at the main Southern Pacific crossing this month. It works on the principal of a semaphore and when a train is approaching the crossing arm drops down over the road. From the arm a number of chains, which brush against the driver thus warning him of an approaching train. The device is equipped with electric lights to warn at night and a bell is also attached.



**M. Salz Marries Irma Clayburg:**

Married, Milton H. Salz, Decoto to Irma Clayburg, San Francisco.



**Gertrude May Studies to be a Teacher:**

Miss Gertrude May is attending the San Jose Normal School to receive her teaching credentials. She is boarding there since the recent timetable changes at the railroad.



**John C. Whipple Comes to Decoto:**

From the History of Decoto we can learn that in 1852 John Whipple came to California, and by 1859 he had located to the San Pablo area. It was in 1862 that John, William, and Job Whipple were engaged in a farming venture. In that year the three brothers returned to New York State. Job married Phoebe Doty and settled in Monroe County, New York.

We now fast forward to November 1913, Job Whipple came to visit in Berkeley, a place where the three brothers had engaged in farming in 1851 to 1856. Job visited his younger brother Edwin Whipple, who now lives in Berkeley. Job looked to see the Berkeley he had known almost 60 years ago. The site of the present Greek Theater was part of the Whipple pasture back in those days. Now it was somewhat difficult to recognize the old hills now covered by beautiful homes. Still Mr. Whipple had no difficulty locating the site of one of their old barns on what is now Dwight Way. After farming in the Berkeley Hills for five years the brothers drifted apart.

**December 1913:**

**Decoto Member of Township Water Committee:**

The water committee of the township has suggested that the following persons act on the campaign committee for the election of December 30. From Decoto:

|             |              |                     |                  |
|-------------|--------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Henry May   | Albert Silva | J. C. Whipple       | Frank Goularte   |
| J. L. Olson | D. Jackson   | Mrs. Frank Goularte | Mrs. M. Pimentel |

Joe Pimentel  
Joe Maciel  
M. Brown  
J. F. Rose.

John Cordeiro  
Ezra Decoto  
George Machado

Fred Trask  
John Sandholdt  
Thomas Silver

Manuel Perry  
M. Correia  
Antone George

**April 1914:**

**Ladies of Danish Society Escape Death:**

Mrs. Hans Sorenson of Valle Vista, Mrs. J.J. Sandholdt of Decoto, and Miss Mamie Forslund were the most seriously hurt of the party of six members of Danish Societies who narrowly escaped death when their auto crashed into a street car here yesterday morning, they showed a decided improvement in their condition this morning. All will probably recover.

**Married, Herbert Harrold, Decoto to Inez Whipple, Decoto:**

Mr. Herbert Harrold of Decoto has married Miss Inez Whipple of Decoto.

**May 1914:**

**Married, John C. Whipple & Edith Harmon.**

John C. Whipple (II) has married Edith Harmon.

**July 14, 1914:**

**Mrs. Harriett Joyce Passes Away:**

Mrs. Harriet Joyce, aged 59 years, a native of Connecticut and mother of Mrs. L. S. Aurich, Miss Harriet Joyce and the late Mrs. J. L. Olson, died Tuesday evening, July 14, 1914, at the Olson home opposite the Southern Pacific Depot.

**October 1914:**

**Mrs. L.E. Simmons Receives Birthday Party:**

The birthday party given to Mrs. L.E. Simmons Sunday by her friends was well attended by local women and visitors from San Francisco. Among those present were: Mr. and Mrs. Harry Searles and son, Alwin, Mr. and Mrs. V.G. Higgins, Mr. and Mrs. L.C. Page, Mrs. Manuel Avilla and her sister Miss Cunha.

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**Mrs. Madaria Injured in Buggy Ride:**

Mrs. Mae Madaria is recovering from injuries incurred when she was thrown from her buggy on the Niles Road about a mile east of Hayward on Thursday evening. Mrs. Madaria was driving home at night from her Decoto ranch to San Leandro and in turning to one side of the road, on which repairs were being made, one of the wheels of the buggy caught in the guy wire of a telegraph pole, overturning the vehicle. She was thrown to the ground, severely wrenching her knee. Two automobilists found Mrs. Madaria dazed and informed her brother, who brought her into San Leandro. She will be under medical care for some time.

**November 1914:**

**Fred Meyer family Relocates to Oakland:**

The Fred Meyer family will leave Decoto this week to make their home in Oakland. A theater party consisting of the Misses Izobel and Doris Whipple, Miss Helen Crane and Miss Elma Ingalls, was given in San Francisco Friday evening.

**December 1914:**

**Orchardists Replant Old and Diseased Trees:**

The whole countryside around here seems to be alive with trees on the move. Thousands of new trees are moving in like a band of recruits to take the place of the fallen in orchard land, upon which disease and old age have waged warfare. Gaps in the orchards are being rapidly filled up by vigorous young trees. In some instances whole orchards, which were decimated by the sour sap disease, which broke out after the hot spell last March, have been replaced. Orchardists from San Leandro to Niles are busy planting, among them Hans Sorenson of Decoto, who is planting 2,800 trees. Other orchardists are planting as many 3,000 trees. The prolonged hot weather of last spring proved disastrous to the orchards around here. Thousands of old trees, which might have lived to bear harvests of fruit for several more season were killed off, in many instances only the young trees surviving.

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**Tomato planting will Decrease:**

It is expected that the amount of tomatoes planted in Decoto this coming year will decrease due to the increased price the Alvarado Sugar Mill is contracting for beets. It is believed that farmers who would be planting tomatoes in the coming year will switch to sugar beets instead.

**April 1915:**

**Commission Merchants:**

Commission merchants now make daily trips to towns in Washington Township to purchase early garden vegetables for San Francisco markets. A lively scene is being enacted daily on the streets of Niles when the commission merchants and farmers haggle over prices. Manuel Alameda, who operates a 25-acre farm near Decoto, anticipates at least 100 sacks of potatoes. In addition to the peas and potatoes, Alameda has planted string beans and corn, both of which are showing up well.

**June 1915:**

**Hayward Bests Decoto in Ball Game:**

By scoring two runs in the first half of the tenth inning at Decoto last Sunday, Hayward won the contest over Decoto 7 to 5. The line-up for Decoto:

|                |               |            |               |
|----------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| SS: Pimentel   | C: V. Higgins | 1B: Hawley | 3B: Smith     |
| 2B: R. Higgins | LF: May       | RF: Neves  | CF: Margarito |
| P: Meyers.     |               |            |               |

**April 21, 1916:**

**William Coats Killed:**

William H. Coats, a Decoto blacksmith, was run down and instantly killed by a Southern Pacific train near here April 21, 1916. The engineer applied the emergency brakes when he realized that Coats did not hear the warning whistle, but the accident could not be averted. Mr. Coats was 37 years of age and had lived here for several years. He was a native of California and was a widower.

**May 1916:**

**Hayward Eyes Decoto's Land:**

Enlarging the Hayward's border by taking in a slice of Castro Valley and the holdings extending below the bay and in the direction of Decoto is advocated by I. B. Parsons, President of the Bank of Hayward, and is among the propositions on which the Hayward Chamber of commerce is expected to take action on this year.





A pleasant surprise was tendered Mrs. H.C. Searles last Saturday evening by a few of her friends. Those in the party were:

Mr. and Mrs. Henry May      Dr. and Mrs. H.W. Emerson      Mr. and Mrs. A.T. Biddle  
Mr. and Mrs. W.C. Graham      Miss Nancy McKeown      Miss Flora McKeown

**July 1916:**

**SP Train to Santa Cruz:**

The Southern Pacific train to Santa Cruz Mountains and Ocean Beaches, Saturday July 22<sup>nd</sup>, leaves Decoto at 3:55 P.M. and returns Sunday July 23<sup>rd</sup>, departing Santa Cruz at 6:00 p.m.

To: Resorts in the San Cruz Mountains, Bathing Beach, Casino and Board Way, Swimming Tank, Casa Del Rey Hotel and Cottage City, Grill and Cafeteria.  
Round trip tickets on sale!

**August 1916:**

**Autos in Washington Township:**

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Alvarado         | 33             |
| Centerville      | 66             |
| Decoto           | 15             |
| Irvington        | 55             |
| Mission San Jose | (Not Reported) |
| Newark           | 36             |
| Niles            | 81             |
| Warm Springs     | 21             |

**August 16, 1912:**

**Neil Sullivan Killed:**

Neil Sullivan, son of William Sullivan Superintendent of the Oakland Paving Brick Company at Decoto, was run over and killed by the Western Pacific train that reaches Decoto about 9:05 a.m. on August 16, 1912. The young man, who held the position of Ass't Superintendent under his father, was in the act of crossing the track in his automobile when the accident occurred. The automobile was reduced to kindling wood, the train struck it with such force, and young Sullivan was frightfully mangled and had one leg cut off by the train wheel.

**November 1916:**

**Hayward Still Covets Decoto Land:**

Hayward, this city of nearly 3,000 inhabitants, may be dis-incorporated, but only that it may be reincorporated with an area more than five times its present size and with a population of close to 6,000 people. Proposed annexation of land which will bring the area of the city up to thirty square miles and which will embrace a portion of Castro Valley, the Homestead district, and land in the direction of Mt. Eden and Decoto is under the consideration of the town board and the Chamber of Commerce.

**December 1916:**

**H.C. Searles Fined for Actions:**

A cow traveled all the way from Decoto to Livermore in an animal ambulance to stand as a mute witness against H. C. Searles, who was accused by J. Ponte of having maimed the ruminant. Searles demanded a jury trial and Judge Ralph

Richmond was ready to proceed with the drawing of a panel, when Searles decided to waive his right to be tried by twelve of his peers.

Searles admitted on the witness stand that he had thrown some bisulphide of carbon on Ponte's cow, but declared that this chemical compound could not have injured her. Dr. Carpenter testified that the Bisulphide is harmless when applied externally.

To the amazement of Searles, he was fined \$20. Judge Richmond contends that the defendant changed his plea from "not guilty" to "guilty" and that there was no alternative but to fine him. Searles denied that he pleaded guilty, and he is upheld by his attorney, B.C. Mickle, who hints that he will take the matter up with the District Attorney.

#### **April 1917:**

##### **Decoto Chinese National Found Dead:**

Lim Long, 70 years old, was found dead in Decoto today in the cabin where he had lived alone for many years. The aged Chinese was a member of the Suey Sing Tong, which is doing battle all along the Pacific Coast with enemy oriental organizations. The murder was probably committed some time during the night. Lim Long was killed while asleep, evidently, the position of his body indicating that he was lying on his cot when the attack was made. He was beaten and stabbed. The shack in which he lived belonged to Tom Yick.

#### **October 1917**

##### **Harness Thievery:**

An epidemic of harness thievery in the vicinity of Hayward and Decoto has caused the sheriffs office to begin an investigation. Two sets of harness were stolen from a barn of Frank Silva near Decoto last night.

#### **November 1917:**

##### **M. White to Marry O. Duarte:**

License to marry, Manuel White Jr., 22, Alvarado, and Ollie Duarte, 18, Decoto.

#### **December 1, 1917:**

##### **Albert Silva Passes:**

In Decoto, December 1, 1917: Albert Silva, beloved husband of Annie and devoted father of Clarence, Gertrude, Roy Albert, and the late Ollie Silva. A native of the Azores, he was 58 years old.

#### **June 1918:**

##### **Ezra Decoto Sr.:**

First to come and the last to go, Ezra Decoto Sr., 84, the only surviving pioneer of the south end of the county, first American settler at Decoto, after whom the town was named, will hoist a great flag to the top of the 84-foot flagpole, recently erected, at a flag dedication ceremony this afternoon. The address will be made by District Attorney Ezra W. Decoto Jr., son of the pioneer.

The senior Decoto came to California in '52 and was a member of the vigilantes. At a very early date he took up farming on Alameda Island, in the section that is now the city's business center. Here he grew strawberries for the San Francisco market. When he went to the present site of Decoto the wild mustard was so high that going through it on foot was like negotiating a jungle, and wild horses and steers ran the

ranges. Ezra has lived at his home for over half a century with his wife, Janet Decoto, who at the age of 78 is still hale and hearty. Decoto's favorite resting place was under an orange tree planted by him over forty years ago.

**February 1919:**  
**Calaveras Dam Called Unsafe:**

"The Calaveras Dam is unsafe, and in realization of that fact I have drawn plans for a new dam in which the factor of safety to a higher degree is recognized."

This is the context of the testimony of Allan Hazen, hydraulic engineer, and until December 1, 1918, in the employ of the Spring Valley Water Co., when called to the stand today before the State Railroad Commission (forerunner to the State P.U.C.) to testify concerning the action brought by the Alameda County Water District to place the construction of the dam under the supervision of the engineers of the commission.

That the Calaveras Dam, across Calaveras Creek to Alameda County, should be built under the supervision of the State Railroad Commission is the burden of the hearing before the commission.

Counsel for the water district has asked that a thorough investigation be made of the Spring Valley Water Company's plans and alleged that a slide which occurred March 24, 1918, has aroused the fear that the dam may prove a menace to the plans of Niles, Centerville, Irvington, Newark, Decoto and Alvarado. It is also contended that the completion of the plans should not be permitted until it is determined by the Railroad Commission engineers that the plans of the Spring Valley Water Company provide for the highest degree of safety. Following Hazen's testimony the commission indicated that an order would be issued complying with the request of the Alameda County Water District.

**July 1919:**  
**Decoto Township Champs:**

Decoto won the championship of Washington Township Sunday, when they handed the boys of Irvington a 12 to 4 lacing. Every Decoto batter had at least one hit in the game with Marshall and Rodrigues having three hits apiece. Decoto plays Hayward at Decoto next Sunday, and a large crowd is expected as Hayward has a big string of victories.

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**Decoto Cannery:**

Oakland and Decoto canneries have secured the bulk of the Bartlett pear crop in this section (Danville), which is regarded as one of the best in many seasons. The growers commanded high prices. Pears and peaches brought \$85 a ton, while apricots were contracted for \$110 a ton. Buyers are anxious to get the fruit and competition is keen among the representatives of the various concerns.

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**Decoto Bests Hayward:**

The Hayward baseball team travels to Decoto Sunday to meet that team in a game. Decoto claims the championship of Washington Township, while Hayward, which is one of the fastest amateur aggregations around the Bay. It was only last Sunday

that Hayward gave the Kimball Electric nine a good trouncing. "Hank" May will hurl for Decoto, while 'Cy' Mitchell or 'Lefty' Caldeira will do the mound honors for Hayward. Hayward will have the same club that played last Sunday and the Decoto boys will have to do some fast playing to keep pace with them.

The Haywards Cubs, which up to last Sunday had a string of seven straight victories, went down to defeat Sunday when the fast Decoto nine gave them a 15 to 1 lacing. "Shine" Silva, pitching for Decoto, pitched his usual good game, striking out fourteen and allowing but three hits.

**September 1919:**

**Niles & Decoto Children See Free Moving Picture Show:**

All the boys and girls of Niles, Decoto and vicinity were invited to attend a big free moving picture show and entertainment to be given at the Rex Theater in Niles. The entertainment was put on under the direction of the *Oakland Tribune's* 50,000 Club and the Rex Theater.

**December 1919:**

**Niles Water System Extended to Decoto:**

The residents of Decoto are to have a water system. The Railroad Commission has made an order authorizing the Citizen's Water Company of Niles to issue \$10,000 of stock and borrow \$5,000 from the Bank of Centerville, the money, or such of it as is necessary, to be expended in extending the Niles system within the limits of Decoto. The deal includes the purchase from J.C. Shinn of the property known as the Citizen's Water Company. The price was \$2,800. The rates for water that prevail in Niles will be the same charged to Decoto.