

**Annie Murphy**

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**From:** Ross Gibson <rossericgibson@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 12:58 PM  
**To:** Annie Murphy  
**Subject:** Hemingway's S.C. Hero  
**Attachments:** Merriman PDF.pdf

Dear Commissioners

I served on the Live Oak Landmarks subcommittee of the County Historic Resources Commission in 2006, seeking overlooked landmarks to add to the county's inventory. Our committee was unanimous in our desires to protect the Bob Merriman Ranchette (1438 Capitola Road, near Live Oak Market). Here was the home of the Santa Cruz man who from 1936-1938 headed the "Abraham Lincoln Brigade" in the Spanish Civil War (the earliest international Anti-Fascist Movement to oppose Hitler and Mussolini), and who inspired his friend Ernest Hemingway to write the novel "For Whom the Bell Tolls," basing the novel's hero Robert Jordon on Robert (Bob) Merriman.

In 2006, the Bob Merriman Ranchette was owned by the County of Santa Cruz, representing the People of Santa Cruz County. The Andraes Ranchette next door to it was already listed on the county historic resources inventory, even though it was less historic than the Merriman Ranchette. But because the site was being considered for housing by the Redevelopment Agency, county leaders didn't want to consider the Merriman House for landmark status at the time. However, we received vague assurances that it *might* be retained on the site as a clubhouse for the complex, or moved to another site.

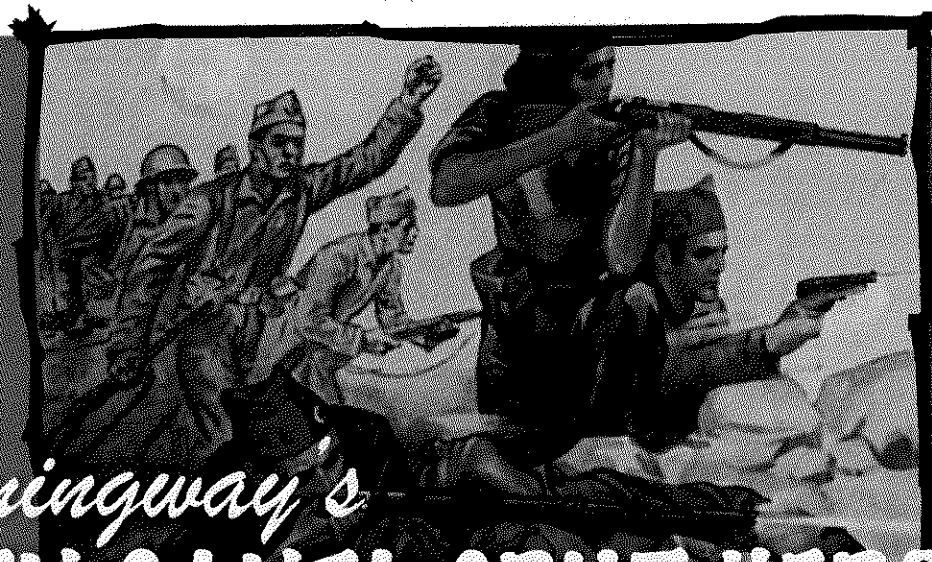
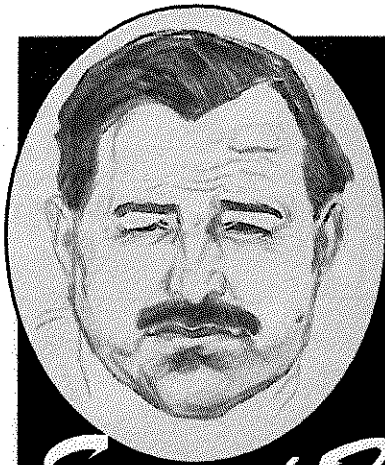
Today, however, the fate of the Merriman House is again up for debate, with redevelopment still framing the discussion. The only time we hear about Bob Merriman locally is in connection with this house, proving the building is the most viable interpretive tool for honoring those who foresaw World War II, and stood up for Democracy under the leadership of Merriman. Below is a PDF of my 2006 report "Ernest Hemingway's Forgotten Santa Cruz Hero: How Bob Merriman Inspired *For Whom the Bell Tolls*."

Please find a way to preserve this landmark.

Sincerely

Ross Eric Gibson





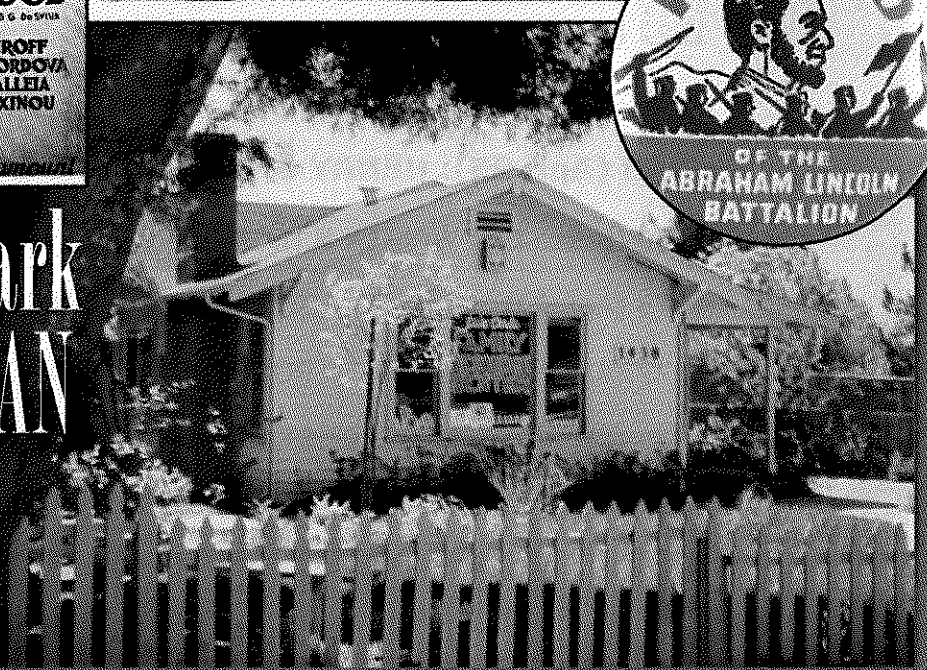
# Ernest Hemingway's FORGOTTEN SANTA CRUZ HERO

Featured in "For Whom the Bell Tolls"



## The Last Landmark of BOB MERRIMAN

by  
Russ & Eric Gibson



# Chain of Title

FOR THE BOB MERRIMAN HOUSE

*From Research by Steve Benson—Title Searcher  
For Ross Eric Gibson*

1916 (June 6): JAMES MORRISSEY'S "WILSON BROS. TRACT #1"

1918 (Apr. 29): JOHN & SUSIE GOETSCH

1921 (Nov. 4): I.A. & ELSIE GRAVELL

1922 (Feb. 28): V.E. ECKSTEIN

1922 (Apr. 28): F.E. CLARK

**1923 (Apr. 25): HENRY & FAYE MERRIMAN**

1930 (Sept. 29): WALTER & LOLA GOULARD

1973 (Apr. 27): DORIS C. [GOULARD] SCHLOSSER (on death of Walter)

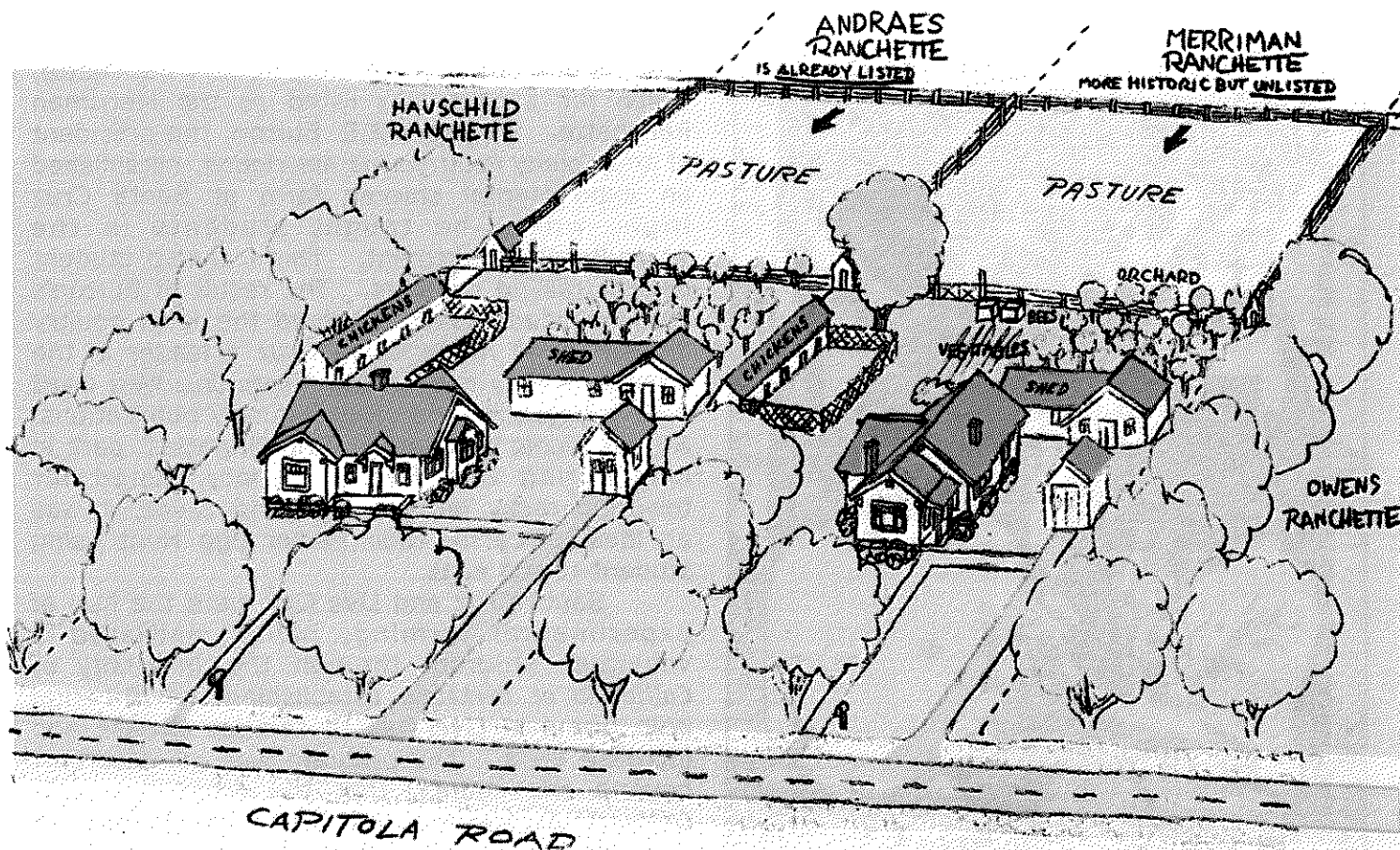
1977 (Aug. 5): HERBERT & ROSEMARIE LACKI

1985 (Feb. 6): JAMES & GERTIE JOHNSON

1994 (Oct. 24): REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY







## ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S FORGOTTEN SANTA CRUZ HERO: How Bob Merriman Inspired "For Whom the Bell Tolls"

By

Ross Eric Gibson

With Research Information from Phil Reader

In 1908, Robert Hale Merriman (called "Bob") was born to Henry and Faye Merriman in Eureka, California, where his father was a logger. The family later relocated to San Jose, then in the summer of 1922 they moved over the hill to Santa Cruz where they had relatives. Henry's mother -Mrs. J. Merriman Johnson- lived in town, while the Merrimans stayed at the Live Oak poultry farm of Henry's sister and her husband, Clarence E. Freitas. This was only a few doors west of the Live Oak Market on Capitola Road. Henry worked in an auto repair shop, and Faye wrote popular romance novels under several pseudonyms for lending libraries.

Live Oak looked like your typical suburban neighborhood, with craftsman homes in rows along the street, spaced about 20 feet apart behind a corridor of native live oak trees. But what made Live Oak unusual was that all the lots were deep three-acre ranchettes, mini-ranching subdivisions for raising poultry or

flowers. Unlike most rural areas with isolated farmhouses, the ranchettes placed the homes side-by-side for a sense of community.

The concept was born during the depression of the 1890s, when the failure of a single industry could throw hundreds of people out-of-work, creating a burden for the community. Santa Cruz County responded by encouraging backyard industries selling to a central co-op, so that if any individual failed, it wouldn't impact the industry as a whole. Santa Cruz became the state's *Queen City of Poultry* (second largest after Petaluma), and even developed its own Santa Cruz breed noted for prolific egg production. Chicken manure was used as a desirable fertilizer for the companion flower industry. By World War I, a stem nematode infestation on Holland bulbs resulted in an embargo on imports, and Santa Cruz became the *Bulb Capital of the Pacific*.

While attending Santa Cruz High School,



BOB MERRIMAN  
DURING THE HIGH SCHOOL'S  
"OLD CLOTHES DAY"



Bob helped out at the Freitas Poultry Ranchette, which for a time was listed as the Merriman Ranchette. Professor R.E. Burton, the president of the *County Poultrymen's Association*, established an experimental chicken farm at Santa Cruz High, where he taught students in the Agricultural Department. This included student poultry raising contests. The result of Burton's student-aided research helped the local poultry industry, and made Santa Cruz a leader in the science, widely read in the "*Santa Cruz West Coast Poultry Magazine*" and other industry publications. A class picnic was held at "the Pinnacles" park in neighboring San Benito County, noted for towering rocky outcroppings and caves, it was an ideal place for their Easter Egg Hunt using student-raised eggs.

Santa Cruz and Live Oak were the hub of experimental farming, having initiated a volunteer program through the *University of California at Berkeley*, establishing experimental bulb farms in Live Oak to combat disease and increase yield. The program was so important beyond the county, that the *Santa Cruz Bulb Growers Association* led tours of dozens of experimental Live Oak farms for visiting farmers and government officials. This innovative farming atmosphere would eventually have a major influence on the direction Bob's life would take.

Bob entered Santa Cruz High School as a sophomore. Some of the kids in his grade were judge's son Clifford Bias, Soquel wine-maker's daughter Sylvia Bargetto, Willett Ware who'd become County Auditor, and George Penniman who'd founded his own Land Title Company. The families of Wesley Campbell and Dorothy Leibbrandt owned large portions of the San Lorenzo rivermouth. Freshmen included the department store founder's son Charles Ebert, and the attorney's son Louis Rittenhouse.

Bob's girlfriend in high school was Ella Moody (the daughter of the game warden), and his friend Gorman Woody remembered that Bob preferred taking a drive up Highway 9 through the redwoods, than go to the popular tourist beach next to the boardwalk. Bob loved the peace of the redwood forests, and would also hike or drive in the Soquel groves near their Live Oak Ranchette. He also visited coastal lumber camps north of Santa Cruz, courtesy of classmate Viola Stoddard, daughter of the owner of San Vicente Lumber.

In Bob's Junior and Senior years, Santa Cruz became host to the original Miss California

Pageants, which became an annual event for over half a century. Yet the first was steeped in controversy, as the skin-tight bathing suits were deemed indecent by some, and presenting progressive women's roles that emphasized college and career, was seen as "turning out innocent daughters into wanton Flappers," who were "losing their femininity by aspiring to do men's work." To answer the preposterous idea that beauty queens were considered too "manly," Bob's class put on their own "Follies" fund raiser, consisting entirely of boys in drag. The debate over women's roles in the modern world would have a major influence in Bob's feelings about female equality.

The seniors staffed the yearbook, and Bob was its business manager, directing the sales of print ads to local merchants, and the sales of yearbooks. His friends also served on the yearbook staff, such as Don McHugh as assistant editor (later to be a firebrand journalist), Gorman Woody as art editor, and John Helms as sports editor. John and Bob attended all the games, John as a team member, and Bob as a yell leader but not an athlete. Home games were held at the high





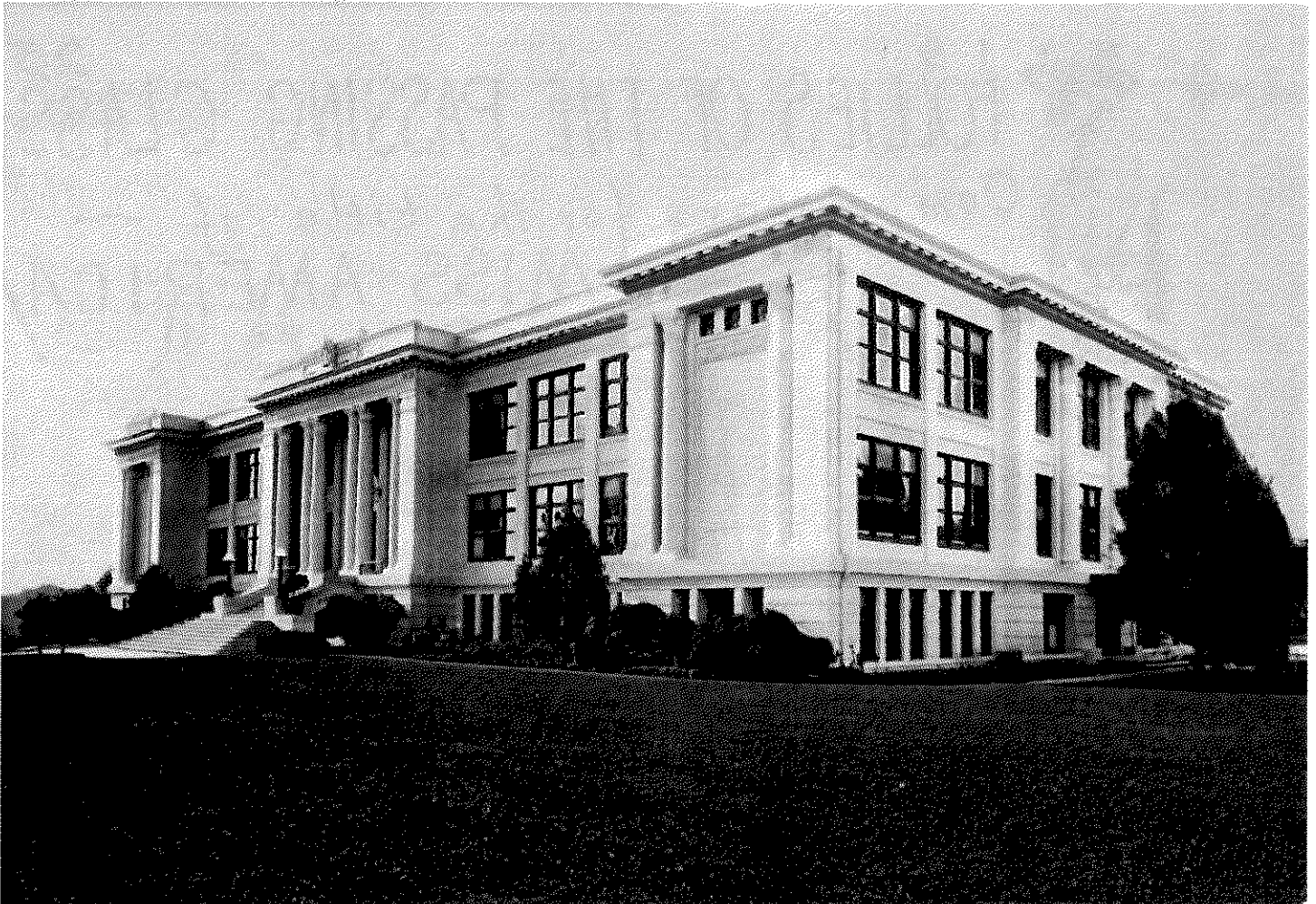
# CARDINAL



dedicated as Memorial Field to the 11 Santa Cruz High graduates who died in World War I.

Bob got his start in debating, not in the debating club (which he later joined), but arguing before the Student Body council. In his senior year, Don McHugh was student body president during the first semester, then John Helms became student body president in the second semester. Helms nearly missed his swearing-in when he discovered the seat of his pants showing too much of his student body, and he hurriedly patched his trousers in a private room as the public assembly waited. The student body was very active in local issues, once even debating a subject 3½ hours. They came out against smoking, long before it was seen as a health hazard. Philip Jordan and a younger Lillian McPherson (later Rouse) were children of the rival editors of the Santa Cruz News and the Santa Cruz Sentinel, and saw issues debated in their papers also debated in Student Body meetings.

On March 4, 1925, the students assembled to hear Calvin Coolidge inauguration live on the radio, a marvel for its





# SANTA CRUZ MORNING SENTINEL

ASSOCIATED PRESS DISPATCHES

DAILY EXCEPT MONDAY

SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA, FRIDAY, JANUARY 2, 1925

EIGHT PAGES

FOUR P.M.  
A.P. SERVICE

SANTA CRUZ NEWS

LATEST NEWS

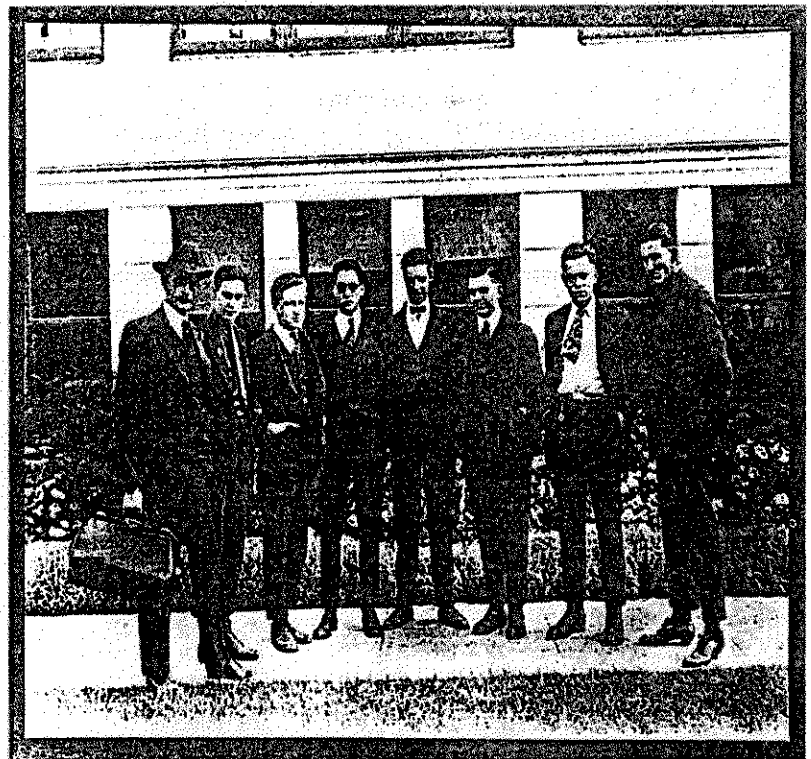
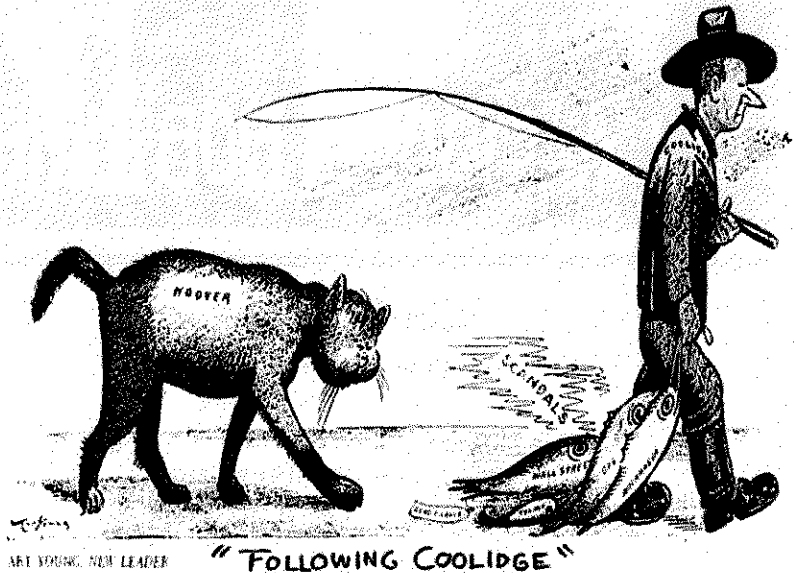
TWO SECTIONS

SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA, SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 1925

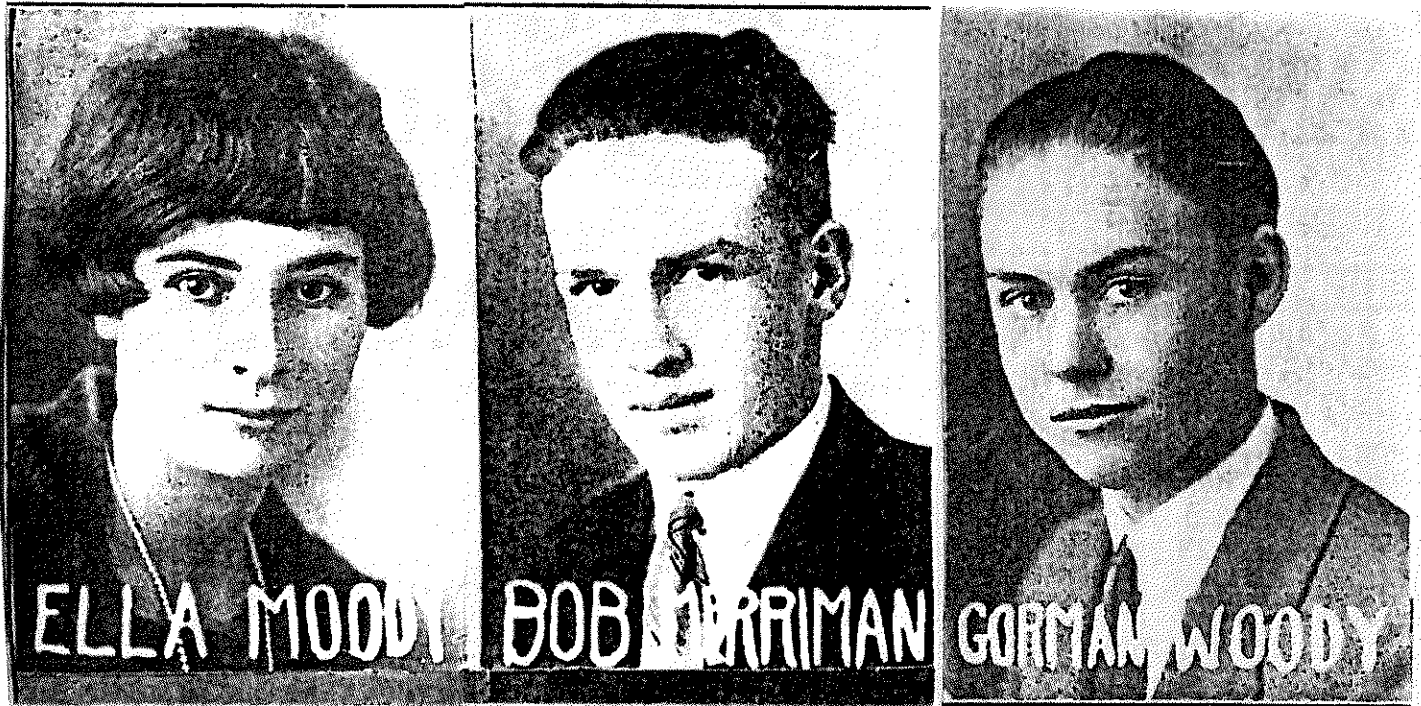
time. Coolidge was Vice President to Warren G. Harding in 1921, becoming president when Harding died in office August 2, 1923, then was reelected in November 1924. Santa Cruz felt a personal tie to the Harding/Coolidge administration because their Secretary of Commerce was Herbert Hoover, whose relatives owned the ranch at Waddel Creek, with Dorothy Hoover just a grade behind Bob at the high school. This branch of the Hoover family were strong conservationists in the Teddy Roosevelt tradition.

But the Merriman and Frietas families disliked the administration. Coolidge had become Vice President due to his national reputation as a strike breaker. Harding and Coolidge were politically stingy, cutting taxes while refusing to honor bonuses for the recent World War I veterans, and opposing Federal aid to farmers. As they maintained high import tariffs and National Prohibition, the administration pointed to Robber Barons getting richer and the climbing Stock Market as a sign of the nation's economic health (a false indicator built on unsustainable speculation). Then just before the election, their Secretary of the Interior, Albert B. Fall, was indicted for taking a \$100,000 bribe to sell to private operators the public oil-reserve lands in Teapot Dome, Wyoming, and Elk Hills, California.

Bob became a champion debater, able to see all sides of a subject, simplify complex issues, and present a convincing argument. But he was also starting to develop political positions that required an ethical justification. In 1925, one of the topics for debate was "Should Santa Cruz adopt the managerial form of government?" Bob was undefeated in



INTERSCHOLASTIC DEBATERS



## Cardinal

The Senior Pictorial

### STAFF

EDITOR

*Audrey Marcum*

BUSINESS MGR.

*Robert Merriman*

### ASSISTANT EDITORS

*Esther Fields*

*Geneva Henderson*

*Donald McHugh*

### ART EDITORS

*Gorman Woody*

*Audrey Edwards*

### SPORTS EDITOR

*John Helms*

every local debate that year, and the high schooler even placed 4th in a statewide debating competition held just over the hill at Stanford University.

Following Bob's Santa Cruz High graduation ceremonies in 1925, a reception was held for the graduates at the Unitarian's Hackley Hall. The Unitarians were well known supporters of progressive causes and issues, often taking courageous stands. They supported Woman's Suffrage, and during the 1918 Influenza Epidemic when the sick became outcasts even to treatment, the Unitarians made Hackley Hall available for the Red Cross Influenza Hospital. This kind of Social Justice advocacy had a profound influence on Bob's outlook on life. And Hackley Hall would later become one of Bob's lifelines at the darkest time in his life.

After graduation, Bob followed in his father's footsteps working two years in the Sierra lumber camps. Then he went to Reno in 1927 to enroll at the University of Nevada as an economics major, and second-string football recruit. But recruits had to be Nevada residents, so he worked his way through college with odd jobs as a pulp feeder at the paper mill in Floristan, a ranch hand, and cement worker. He earned \$7.50 a month in this campus Reserve Officers' Training Corp (R.O.T.C.) where he became a second infantry lieutenant. He



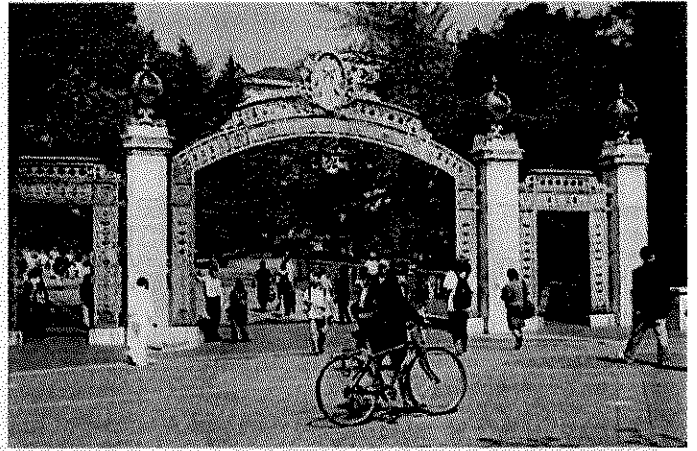
joined the Sigma Nu fraternity, was active in the yearbook, debating, and plays, and flew airplanes with his buddies.

When he met Marion Stone at a dance hall in Verdi (near Reno), she found the 6-foot 4-inch tall Bob to be dashing and adventurous. Marion was a Santa Barbara native just a year younger than him, a popular member of Gamma Phi Beta sorority, but employed as a live-in domestic to earn her way through college. When she graduated from the university in 1932, Bob married her, and took her to Lake Tahoe for their honeymoon. That summer they visited Bob's relatives in Santa Cruz, and enjoyed an outing to Paradise Park, a Masonic resort.

Bob became a U.C. Berkeley professor, and spent vacations in Soquel and at the Frietas Ranchette. He taught economics during the depths of the Great Depression, a subject that was a matter of life and death to many. The Hoover Administration seemed preoccupied with preserving "police state" Prohibition, while following a Do-Nothing "Be-Patient-for-Prosperty-Is-Just-Around-The-Corner" approach. This radicalized many who needed help right away, and legitimized fringe groups that seemed responsive to public needs.

Bob supported the famous San Francisco General Strike. In the face of penniless Dust Bowl refugees pouring into California, Bob started taking the lessons of the Live Oak Ranchettes seriously, the product of the previous depression, and investigated other farming models as well. His work soon won him the Newton Booth Traveling Fellowship, to study first-hand the agricultural problems of various European countries that were also experiencing hard times.

The Merrimans went to Europe together and toured the continent. Bob was studying the economics of the Soviet Collectivist experiment in 1936 when the Spanish Civil War broke out. But



*Merriman & friend at Paradise Park in the summer of 1932.*



The "California Farm Bureau" building on Pacheco Ave. was the University of California's official Egg-Laying Contest headquarters



Bob Merriman & wife Marion. Cartoon about Merriman below.



**BUT IT'S NOT A HARMLESS BLOWHARD  
WAVING ITS ARMS! IT'S A MONSTER!**

when Spanish democratic Loyalist forces faced an arms embargo from the world's democracies, only Russia sent supplies to the Spanish Loyalists. It wasn't because Russia supported democracy (being only a month away from a bloody Stalinist purge of Russia's anti-totalitarian Bolsheviks). It was because Spain's dictator Francisco Franco was supported by anti-Communists Benito Mussolini of Fascist Italy and Adolph Hitler of Nazi Germany, as well as importing Moroccan troops and North African Legionnaires. Americans generally believed we had our own problems at home and Isolationism would keep us out of another war. But Bob worried this was only going to strengthen Fascism in Europe, and lead to a wider conflict if Spanish democracy was killed.

So Bob left his studies and his wife in Moscow in late 1936, and went to Spain to be among the earliest Americans to join Europe's first Anti-Fascist movement. They gathered in Figueras near the French border, and in early 1937 organized a 96-member International Brigade. While condemned as violating America's neutrality, the American fighters were dubbed the "Abraham Lincoln Brigade" to stress that defending democracy was not anti-American. Bob's R.O.T.C. experience led to his assignment training the American volunteers in field striping rifles and machine guns, reconnaissance, signaling and fortifications. In February 1937, Bob led a battalion in the battle of Jarama. Bob was injured by shrapnel, cracking his shoulder in three places, and replaced as battalion commander by Oliver Law, the first American black man to ever lead a military force. When Marion received a telegram that Bob had been injured in battle, she rushed to be with him, and nursed him back to health.

In Spain, Marion encountered the marginalization of women so common in conservative Spanish society. Yet as she involved herself working with refugees and keeping records, she became accepted as the only woman in the foreign brigades. Bob eventually rose to command the now 450-member Abraham Lincoln Brigade with Marion as his staff assistant; then Bob became Chief of Staff of the International Brigade, which represented fighters from 54 countries.

The war attracted journalists and writers such as George Orwell and Ernest Hemingway. But they didn't find the romantic war they had envisioned. Conditions were miserable, and casualties extremely heavy in this Dress Rehearsal for World War II. Hemingway met with Bob and Marion in war-torn Madrid, and together they conceived a broadcast for American radio to



4073—Hackley Hall, Santa Cruz, California



describe the deprivations under which the Loyalists fought. Later, as conditions got worse, Bob couldn't convince Marion to return to the U.S. for a rest, even though she was suffering from dental pain. Marion feared if she went home, U.S. authorities wouldn't allow her to return to a forbidden battle-zone. But Bob finally convinced her that his forces desperately needed financial support, and sent her home on a fund-raising tour. Marion took the precaution of having her passport identify her as providing humanitarian medical support, the only aid to Spain not banned by the U.S.

Marion arrived in the States in November, 1937, stopping in San Francisco, where the "Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade" were headquartered. This support group had been created because friends and relatives were not permitted to send parcels to individual brigade soldiers; but by mailing in bulk, their supplies periodically got through. Marion was joined on a statewide speaking tour by the executive secretary of the "Friends," Miss Lee Levy of San Francisco, and by Mrs. Ann Hawkins of Berkeley, the wife of a Lincoln Brigade officer.

Meanwhile, the Frietases were actively involved in (if not the founders) of the Santa Cruz Chapter of the "Friends of the Lincoln

Brigade," and were growing concerned from newspaper reports and Bob and Marion's correspondence, of the brigade's activities and needs. In February, 1938, Marion, Levy and Hawkins brought their fund-raising drive to Santa Cruz county, and stayed with Marion's in-laws.

On February 24, Marion's trio appeared in Santa Cruz at the Unitarian's Hackley Hall, under the sponsorship of the "Women's Alliance of the Unitarian Church," the "Women Today Club," and the Santa Cruz Friends of the Lincoln Brigade. Bob's grandmother and the Frietases were featured at the local events. The speakers were treated to a noon luncheon at the Hall, sponsored by the women's groups, before the evening lecture.

Because of widespread curiosity and misinformation, Marion asked for time after the talk to answer questions. Many of Bob's local classmates were surprised at his involvement, not having regarded him as politically active, much less a Communist. Marion explained that while over 50% of the brigade were Socialists or Communists, she and Bob were not, and they made no distinction with those fighting Fascism to save Democracy. Kasper Bauer offered the first donation, which produced an outpouring of

A page from Hemingway's handwritten manuscript of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*: part of the monologue of Robert Jordan during the last hours of his life.

financial support. They spoke next in Salinas on their southward lecture tour.

Eight weeks later, the situation had changed radically. Bob disappeared in the battle of Gandesa in April. Early reports were that he had been captured by Franco, and held as a prisoner-of-war. Marion was again in Santa Cruz seeking public support to petition the U.S. government to negotiate his release. Then word came from the Franco regime that there was no paperwork showing he'd ever been logged into prison. The big fear was this meant Franco had executed him, although conflicting reports also suggest he died in battle.

Ernest Hemingway turned Robert Merriman into the character *Robert Jordan*, in his novel "For Whom the Bell Tolls." The message in the title was that the Spanish Civil War wasn't announcing the lone death of Spanish democracy, but our own as well, if we didn't defend democracy even in distant lands from the rising tide of totalitarianism. The

# ERNEST HEMINGWAY



• FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS •



MARION MERRIMAN IN SANTA CRUZ IN 1987

Spanish Civil War was won by the Fascists, yet as the dress rehearsal for World War II with the same cast of dictators, the fight itself may have changed the course of history. Franco sat out the war rather than give the axis powers a third front against America and England. And when the United States entered the war, it followed the same strategy as the Lincoln Brigade of allying with Soviet Russia, even after Stalin had briefly been an ally of Hitler.

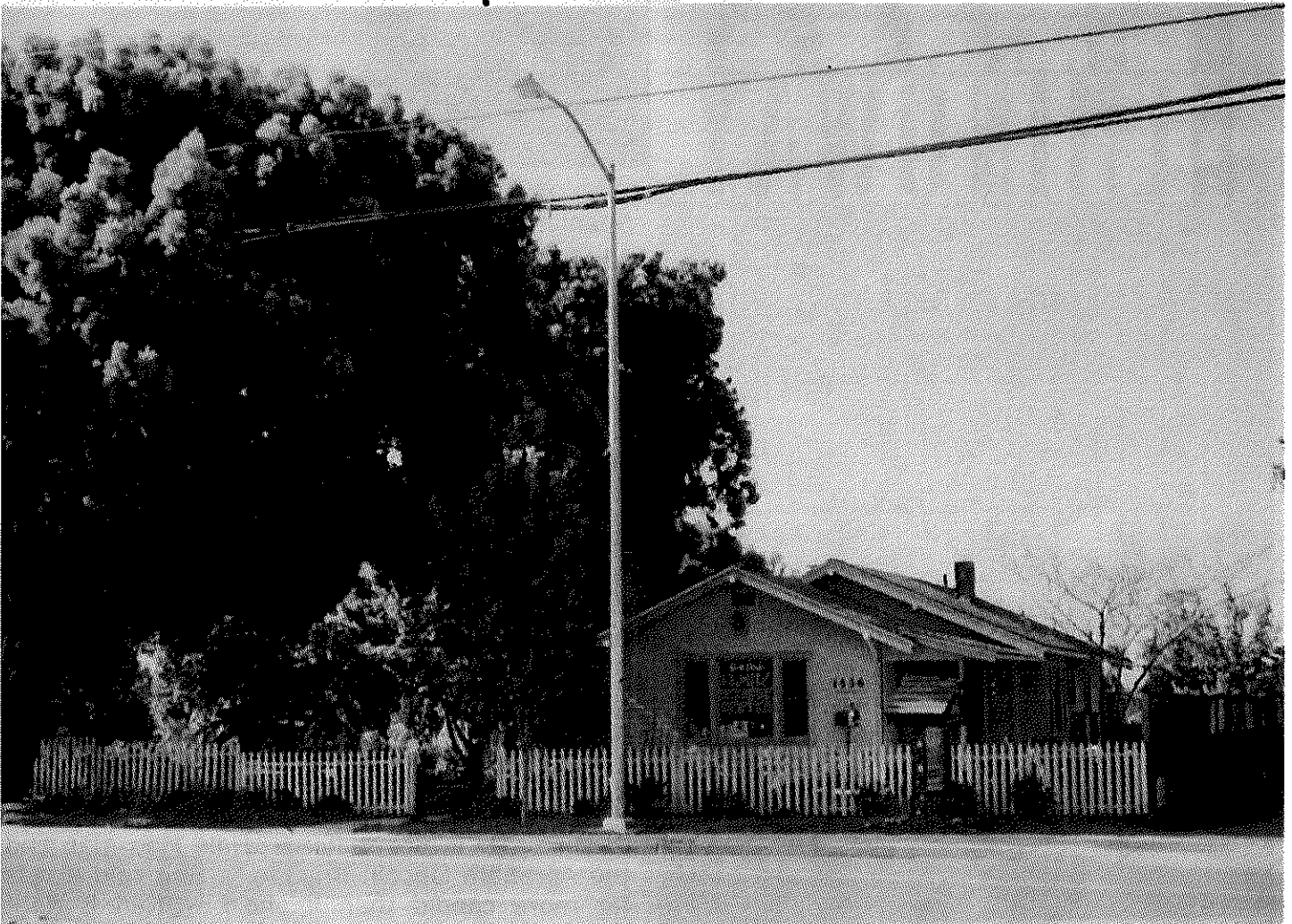
Yet when World War II ended, and the Cold War with Communism began, Lincoln Brigaders were subject to the first angry "Viet Nam home-coming" type experience. They were targeted in Joseph McCarthy's Communist Witch Hunts, which made Brigade veterans and their supporters (a number from Live Oak) fearful to speak of their experiences for half-a-century.

In the 1980s, Marion Merriman Wachtel was convinced by Pulitzer-prize-winning Reno journalist Warren Lerude to co-author "American Commander in Spain—Robert Hale Merriman and the Abraham Lincoln Brigade." She said it was far more candid than if she'd written it right



after the war (especially her reluctance to admit she'd been raped during the war). The book was published in 1986 on the brigade's 50th anniversary, and during the book tour to Santa Cruz in 1987, other Santa Cruzans still spoke reluctantly of their own involvement in the brigade, while one acquaintance of a brigade member preferred to remain anonymous in comments to Sentinel reporter Marybeth Varcados. Marion died two years later in 1989.

Even eulogized by Hemingway as a character in his important novel, no community has claimed Merriman's legacy as a subject for commemoration. Support from his Santa Cruz friends and relatives helped for a time to overcome American resentment and apathy, and they called him a Santa Cruz boy with pride. Yet much of this important chapter of our heritage has been lost because of the straight jacket of silence imposed upon it. And lessons bought with blood are being forgotten, and paid for again in suffering as the cost of forgetting. "...So send not to ask for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."





# HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BOB MERRIMAN HOUSE

Gibson's 2006 Analysis for the County Historic Resources Commission and County Board of Supervisors

The Merriman House is significant for the following seven reasons:

**1. BACKYARD INDUSTRIES:** The Merriman House is a model ranchette. The 3-acre ranchette was a significant innovation promoted by the County in response to the Depression of the 1890s. It represented a way people could be self-employed on a small scale, while selling goods to large county co-ops. If any single ranchette failed, it would not impact the industry as a whole.

**2. RANCHETTE SUBDIVISION #1:** No less innovative than the Backyard Economy, was the Ranchette Subdivision. The transformation of Live Oak into a Farming Suburbia is unusual in the history of developments. The Wilson Bros. led the way, and the Merriman House is part of the first of these subdivisions in 1916, called "Wilson Bros. Tract #1," leading the way for all others.

**3. FLOWER & POULTRY CAPITALS:** These ranchettes served Live Oak's flower and poultry industries. By the end of World War I, Live Oak had become the Bulb Capital of the Pacific with famous locally developed hybrids, plus the state's Queen City of Poultry production (after Petaluma), with a popular Santa Cruz strain of high egg-yield chickens. Live Oak being giants in two industries is more notable in that it was based on mostly small scale backyard farming. Many pocket farms like Merriman Ranchette produced both poultry and flowers.

**4. JAME MORRISSEY:** James Morrissey is a well-known local philanthropist, who owned and developed the Merriman ranchette. He is remembered for creating *Morrissey Boulevard*, landscaped as the grand entrance to the City/County-owned *De Laveaga Park*. He also donated land for the *Santa Maria Del Mar* Catholic retreat, as a vacation spot for women and the poor. It was for Morrissey that the Wilson Bros. created their Ranchette Subdivision #1 in 1916.

**5. WILSON BROS. BUNGALOWS:** The Wilson Bros. had their own variety of Craftsman bungalow, interpreting the normally broad-beamed style in a distinctive delicate manner.

## 6. ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE:

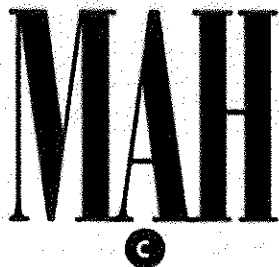
Previous information showed Mr. & Mrs. Clarence E. Freitas as residents of the ranchette from around 1920 to the mid-1930s. We now learn this was not as the ranchette's owners, but as its caretakers. In fact, it was owned by Mrs. Freitas's brother Henry Merriman from 1923 to 1930. Henry's mother lived in Santa Cruz, and his wife Faye was a novelist under several pseudonyms. The Merriman/Freitas family living at the ranchette became the nucleus of a large group of *Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade* thriving in the Santa Cruz / Live Oak area. This was the brigade of American fighters in the Spanish Civil War against Franco, Hitler, and Mussolini just prior to World War II.

## 7. HEMINGWAY'S HERO:

Bob Merriman, the son of Henry and Faye Merriman, would outshine them all as commander of the *Abraham Lincoln Brigade*. But during his years at the Merriman Ranchette, Bob distinguished himself in Santa Cruz High School as a champion debater and yearbook staffer, and his experiences in ranchette farming led to a study of alternative farming methods around the globe to aid in combating world hunger. As commander of the *Lincoln Brigade*, he was a friend of Hemingway and George Orwell, and when Merriman was captured and killed by Spanish dictator Franco, local headlines called him a Santa Cruz man. Hemingway changed his name to *Bob Jordan* as the hero of his novel "*For Whom the Bell Tolls*."

## = CONCLUSION =

There is nothing in a local landmark designation that would preclude new development on the site. The Merriman House is small enough that, if necessary, it could be re-situated on site as a club house for the new complex. Or it could be moved to a location where it can be better appreciated and featured as an historic attraction, museum, interpretive center, and-or-research center for Live Oak. While moving a landmark is *not preferred* with a state or national listing in losing historic context, the best local example was when Watsonville's historic Rogers House was moved to the County Fairgrounds, a setting better suited to its farmhouse origins than the commercial strip that had overwhelmed its original site.



(PROPOSED 2006  
APPLICATION FOR COUNTY  
LANDMARKS PLAQUE. NEVER  
SUBMITTED, BUT STILL VALID)

Submitted

Action Taken

APPROVED

NOT APPROVED

## HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION FORM

Address: 1438 Capitola Road, Santa Cruz

Popular Name/Designation If Any: "BOB MERRIMAN RANCH HOUSE"

### CONTACTS:

Owner: The People of Santa Cruz County Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: 1701 Capitola Road, Santa Cruz

Owner's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

If the building is NOT owner occupied:

Building Occupant(s) Name: Live Oak Family Resource Center Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*  
**BASIC INFORMATION ON BUILDING:**

Date Built: June 6, 1916 (Definite ☒ Approximate ☐)

Architect: Wood Bros. Style: California Bracketed/Craftsman

Builder/Developer: James Morrissey's "Wilson Bros. Tract #1"

Original Use: Chicken Ranchette

Original Owner If Known: John & Susie Goetsch

Additional information about architect, use, style, original or subsequent owners, other features i.e. major exterior remodeling:

The C.E. Freitas Chicken Ranchette was part of a unique chicken farm suburban subdivision of deep lots, with ranch homes aligned like a suburban neighborhood.

Proposed Landmark  
Page 2

DOCUMENTATION:

Nomination Prepared By: Ross Eric Gibson  
Phone Number: (831) 423-1932 Email: rossericgibson@comcast.net

- ☐ Chase's "Sidewalk Companion"  
☐ County's "Survey of Historic Resources"  
☐ City's "Historical Building Survey"  
☒ Other published source (s), old or new: "Ernest Hemmingway's Forgotten Santa Cruz Hero--The Last Landmark of Bob Merriman," by Ross Eric Gibson, 2006  
☒ Specific research (photos, title search, old newspapers, etc.)

Info. on Bob Merriman: "American Commander in Spain--Robert Hale Merriman and the Abraham Lincoln Brigade," by [his wife] Marion Merriman and Warren Lerude, 1986

\*\*\*\*\*

**SUGGESTED WORDING FOR PLAQUE:** Wording (see attached sample)

1916  
"BOB MERRIMAN HOME"  
Led Abraham Lincoln Brigade  
in Spanish Civil War,  
Inspired Hemingway's  
Signature "For Whom the Bell Tolls" Date

\*\*\*\*\*

**RETURN THIS FORM WITH A CURRENT PHOTO AND ANY ATTACHMENTS TO:**  
**The Museum of Art & History, 705 Front Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060**  
**Attn: Marla Novo**

Questions? Call (831) 429-1964 ext. 7019

Supplementary material in the form of photocopies, newspaper clippings, etc. is encouraged.

