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## The Reactor

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### Return to those days of yesteryear

Let's do a little time travel, a la Star Trek, with the help of the California Blue Book, published in 1909 by the California Secretary of State. There are some among us 90-plus, with sharp memories of the California of 1909, only three years after the 1906 quake. It was not that long ago, but it was a very different world.

Almost one Californian out of four, 475,000 people, lived in San Francisco. Fifty seven percent of the state's two million residents lived in just 26 cities. Twenty three of those communities had fewer inhabitants than today's Pacifica, 12 of them under 10,000.

San Mateo County had a grand total of 12,094 people.

Of the 53 Notaries Public in the county, one, H.B. Wright, lived in Salada Beach, now part of Sharp Park. The board of Supervisors and 12 other officials ran the county. They did it themselves. Civil service employees were rare or non-existent. Supervisors got \$900 a year

and 20 cents a mile, plus 20 cents a mile for service as road commissioners (not to exceed \$300 per annum).

The 12 officials combined received about \$30,000 a year. In addition, the Sheriff got 25 cents a mile, one way. (Present-day jurors are the only people still paid mileage and stipends based on 1910 standards).

San Mateo county officials were all male. In most counties, the token woman, if there was one, was the county Superintendent of Schools. There were 21 women in that office, out of 58 counties. San Francisco was run by men, with one interesting exception. The city's head librarian, of course, was a man, but the librarians in charge of the six branches were all maiden ladies. Mary Kincaid served on the Board of Education. Educated women could be teachers and librarians, a few superintendents of schools. That was it.

The head of the Sonoma State Home, formerly the California Home for the Care and Training of Feeble-minded Children, was Dr. William J.G. Dawson. He earned \$3,600 a year. Mrs. M.A. Storey was a seamstress employed at the home. She made \$420 a year. John Pagani was a vegetable gardener there — \$540 a year. Stenographer Tilly Fredericks earned \$840 a year. L.D. Green was the dairyman. His annual salary was \$648. His wife, cook at the dairy, earned \$180. We can hope she was part-time.

W.W. Campbell was head astronomer at Lick Observatory, an erudite man who also ran the place. His income? \$4,500 a year. Heber D. Curtis, astronomer, received \$2,400 a year.

Full professors at UC Berkeley earned \$3,600 a year, assistants and associates half that, or less. The entire departmental salary budget for Geology and Mineralogy was \$10,500. The salary budget for the department of English was \$21,800.

William Ahlers, a blacksmith on the Belt Railroad earned \$4.50 a day. W.C. Beyer, a roundhouse helper, received \$3 a day. The Governor's pay had only recently been raised to \$10,000 a year. If there are roundhouse helpers in 2080, I wonder what they will be earning?