

"Tokens of History"

By

Chet Sunde, Psy.D.

October 2013

*The two sides of this month's token tell two very different tales:
one bright and cheery, the other dark and sad...*



E. BORBECK / WINE & LIQUOR / MERCHANT / REDDING, CAL. / DOUBLE EAGLE / WHISKEY
GRAND ENCAMPMENT I.O.O.F. REDDING, CAL. / (scene: mountains, river) / 1900



First, the reverse of the token tells a happy tale: one-hundred and thirteen years ago this month, Redding was the host of the Grand Encampment of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, or IOOF. As I am not a member of this fine fraternal organization, I will turn to Wikipedia for enlightenment:

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) is a global altruistic and benevolent fraternal organization derived from the British Oddfellows service organizations of the 17th century. There are a number of explanations of the origin of the name – for example:

In 17th century England, it was odd to find people organized for the purpose of giving aid to those in need and of pursuing projects for the benefit of all mankind. Those who belonged to such an organization were called "Odd Fellows".

The Order is also known as "The Three Link Fraternity", referring to the Order's "Triple Links" logo - three links contain the letters F, L and T, (Friendship, Love and Truth).

The word "Independent" in the organization's name was given by the English parent organization as part of the chartered title of the new North American chapter:

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows was founded on the North American Continent in Baltimore, Maryland, on April 26, 1819 when Thomas Wildey and four members of the Order from England instituted Washington Lodge No. 1. This lodge received its charter from Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows in England.



(Then and now: the home of the Redding IOOF, built in 1888, sits just southwest of the Shasta Historical Society)

**REDDING NOW
THE MECCA OF
ODD FELLOWS**



From October 1900:

Redding, Oct 15—On the eve of the Grand Encampment of Odd Fellows, Redding presents the most beautiful appearance in all its history. For twenty-one blocks the streets are gaily decorated with cross flags, bunting and the colors of the three orders represented in the encampment. Nearly every business house and dwelling in the town is appropriately decorated. Spanning the street at the Odd Fellows' Hall is a beautiful arch, in imitation of granite, studded with incandescent lamps in colors of the order and bearing on its walls the emblems of the fraternity.

Already the town is crowded with visitors from nearby and intercounty points. To accommodate the biggest crowd the town has ever attempted to entertain, every residence in Redding has been thrown open to provide sleeping quarters for the guests.

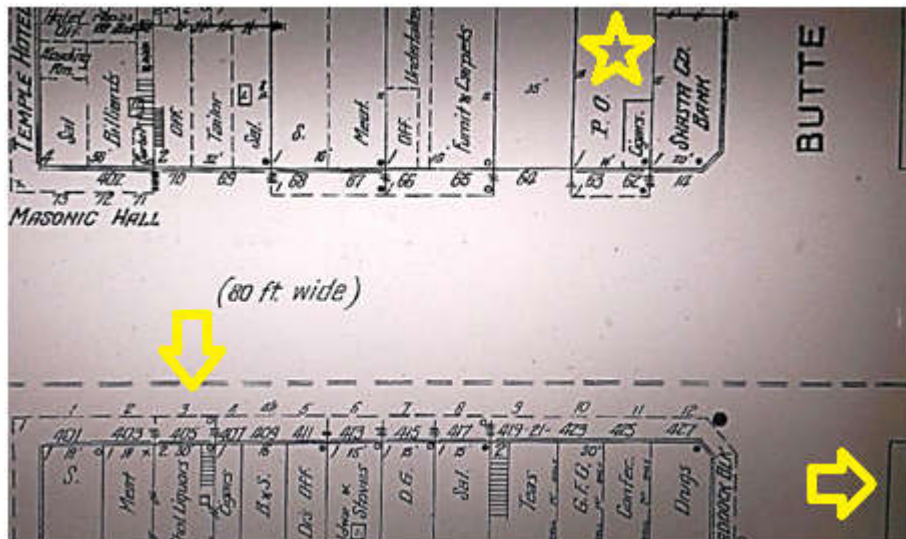
Three hundred delegates arrived by the 5 o'clock train this afternoon from the south...To-night the town was brightly illuminated, and a concert was given by the Patriarchs Militant band at Armory Hall. Big delegations are expected from the south to-morrow.

Shasta Encampment No. 14 is the title of the lodge here, which was honored by being chosen host for this session of the Grand Encampment. The executive committee is composed of Frank W. Smith, president; Louis Moore, A. J. Wright and S. P. Fillman, vice presidents; T. B. Smith, M. Prose and Matthew Patterson, secretaries; Fred Michaelson, treasurer.

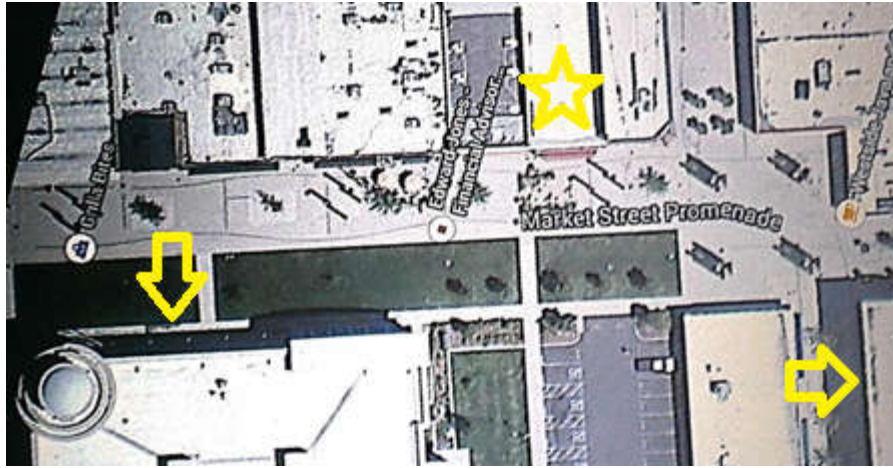


Now for the sad tale told by the front of the token: "E. Borbeck" was Edward Hugo Borbeck, an immigrant from Germany, who is listed as a Redding saloonkeeper in 1896, and wholesale liquor dealer by 1900. I was unable to find out much about his life, but one interesting item was the fact that his business was located very near to the current home of the Shasta Historical Society.

Below is an image from the 1904 Sanborn map showing Market Street between Tehama and Butte. In the top right corner you will find the Shasta County Bank building, which is still standing. Next to that is the current location of the SHS (yellow star), at that time containing both the post office and a small cigar store. The IOOF building is indicated by the bottom right arrow, and the downward arrow indicates Borbeck's location at 405 Market Street.



Below is the same section of Redding, this time a satellite view from Google Maps. You will see that Borbeck's location is now contained by the Shasta College building.



The only other item that I was able to find about Borbeck's life was his involvement in the founding of a Redding chapter of the Knights of the Royal Arch in 1907:

*KNIGHTS ROYAL ARCH INSTALL
LOCAL LIQUOR AND CIGAR DEALERS HAVE A GOOD EVENING.*

The Redding branch of the Knights of the Royal Arch, an organization of the liquor and kindred businesses which is as wide as the continent, met Friday night at their usual meeting place and with interesting ceremonies installed the following representative officers for the ensuing year:

L. F. Morton, Valiant Commander; A. L. Myers, Lieutenant Commander; Ed Borbeck, treasurer; August Gronwoldt, orator; Al Irwin, recorder; J. Brass, master of ceremonies; E. Zeis, master of guard; Anton Herzlier, Tyler; and five trustees who are G. H. Gronwoldt, Joseph Hoefer, Charles Barner, King Quadrus and Henry Frickinger.

After the initiation the meeting became social over the banquet table and a jolly good evening was spent, as only the K. R. A.'s can spend it.

Many of the gentlemen listed as fellow founders of the Redding chapter will be listed as "bearers of the pall" at Borbeck's funeral just three years later. But before we get to that, I suspect that most readers will not have heard of the Knights of the Royal Arch. Here is some information I found compiled from various newspaper articles across the nation as other chapters were being founded in the early 1900's:

The Knights of the Royal Arch are a semi-secret protective and beneficial order, membership in which is confined exclusively to persons engaged in the liquor traffic. The organization was organized in Hot Springs, Arkansas in the late 1890's. No denial is made by those interested in the order that one of its chief objects is to influence legislation in favor of those engaged in the liquor business. Politicians of both parties are to be made to understand that unless they give consideration to the interest of liquor men they will be held to account at the polls.

The constitution of the order of the Knights of the Royal Arch provides that membership is open not only to brewers, wholesale liquor dealers, saloonkeepers and barkeepers, but even to men whose duty is to sweep out saloons each day and drivers of brewery wagons. A retail cigar dealer is not eligible for membership, but a manufacturer who sells to the saloon trade can become a member...also parties engaged for the promotion and welfare of the order. The last clause will be noticed to be particularly elastic and capable of broad construction.

Members are under obligation to stand by each other in matters affecting their mutual interests. Candidates must be of good moral character, believing in a Divine Being, the Creator, and must not be "habitual drunkards or persons of a doubtful reputation."

Newspaper articles from the week of April 8, 1910:

ED BORBECK A SUICIDE

WELL-KNOWN BUSINESS MAN WANTS TO DIE AND TELLS PHYSICIANS

Edward Hugo Borbeck, one of the most prominent of our younger business men died on Friday morning at 11:30 'clock, from an overdose of chloroform, self-administered.

When the unfortunate fellow was first observed suffering from the deadly potion, two physicians were hastily summoned and commenced working over him. He was still conscious and said: ""If you bring me out of this, I'll do the same thing again at once.""

The deceased was aged 42, and leaves a wife and one son at their home in this city.

Ed Borbeck, had for the past seventeen years conducted a wholesale and retail liquor business at 405 Market Street. Deceased took chloroform last evening at 7:30. Doctors worked over the unfortunate man during the entire night, up to 11:30 o'clock today when the spark of life fled. The cause of the rash act cannot be definitely learned, but it is known that business reverses and other troubles weighed heavily on his mind.

Early Thursday evening Mr. Borbeck went into the Powell's Pharmacy and purchased four ounces of chloroform, declaring he wanted it for cleaning purposes. He repaired to his saloon and swallowed the fatal draught. At an inquest held this afternoon the verdict was in accordance with the above facts.

ED BORBECK LEFT A SAD FAREWELL NOTE

On Friday night, upon going through his dead father's papers, a farewell note was found by the son of Edward Borbeck, the well-known Redding business man, who took his life on Friday morning.

The missive from the grave sadly reads: ""The fault is all my own; nobody to blame but myself. A goodbye to all my friends and enemies as well."" (Signed E. B.)

FUNERAL OF ED H. BORBECK

On Sunday afternoon, the body of Edward Hugo Borbeck was laid away in the Redding cemetery under the auspices of Shasta Aerie of Eagles, and the large number of friends and members of the Eagles, Redmen and Knights of the Royal Arch were in the cortege.

At the late home of the deceased Rev. A. S. Mason of the Presbyterian Church held a brief service, and at the graveside the Eagles officiated. President Joseph E. Barber, of Shasta Aerie, delivered the ritualistic address over the bier of the dead brother and Brother Al Meyers, acting as chaplain, read the fraternal prayer.

The bearers of the pall were: George Gronwoldt, Gus Gronwoldt, Emil Zeis, August Albrecht, John P. Brass and Antone Jaegel.

TELEPHONE 86 405 MARKET ST.
E. BORBECK
WINE AND LIQUOR MERCHANT
AGENT FOR
PABST BREWING CO., Milwaukee, Wis.
CROWN DISTILLERIES CO., San Francisco, Cal.
GUCKENHEIMER'S FAMOUS RYE
REDDING. - - CAL.

Continued.....

Another, much rarer, Borbeck token I was able to purchase from the estate of Ron Lerch, a prolific token collector, who passed in 2019:



A newspaper clipping I rediscovered after writing the article (originally found in 2009)

Sunday, August 27, 1933:



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CAREER OF KIDNAPPER ON MISSION STREET

A former Redding boy, Edward H. Borbeck, now a police inspector on the San Francisco force, was the hero of the gun battle at Mission and Seventh streets in which a kidnapper lost his life.

Inspector Borbeck is the son of the late Edward Borbeck Sr., who operated a saloon at the site on Market street now occupied by the Baker grocery in pre-prohibition days. Edward Jr. was born and reared here.

Held Four Days

The story was told yesterday in a San Francisco newspaper, as follows:

A weird kidnapping, in which the Baker grocery in pre-prohibition days. Edward Jr. was born and reared here.

Held Four Days

The story was told yesterday in a San Francisco newspaper, as follows:

A weird kidnapping, in which the victim was forced at gunpoint to pay his own ransom, came to a grim climax in a down town Market street hotel yesterday in a double gun duel, in which the kidnapper was killed, a policeman fatally wounded, a woman shot and the kidnap victim escaped his captor.

The dead:

Howard Meek, alias Ed Jen-
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fatally wounded, a woman shot
and the kidnap victim escaped his
captor.

The dead:
Howard Meek, alias Ed Jen-
nings, 34; former Northwestern
Pacific ticket taker at Sausalito,
the alleged kidnapper.

Policeman Michael McDonald,
40, 852 Clayton street; father of
four children; shot four times in
stomach; condition serious.

The wounded:
Mrs. Ella Bowers, 554 Natoma
street, wounded in arm.
Meek was shot and killed by
Police Inspectors John McConville
and Edward H. Borbeck at Sev-
enth and Mission streets after he
had shot Policeman McDonald in

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the Crystal Palace market at
1175 Market street.

Seized in Own Home
McDonald was shot by Meek
after William Foristal Wood, 45,
retired Sausalito capitalist and
cousin to the late President Taft,
had pointed Meek out to the of-
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The wounding of the policeman,
the attempted escape of Meek
and the gun duel with the inspect-
ors which cost him his life, cli-
maxed a sensational kidnapping
of Wood in his own home by the
former ticket taker last Monday.

Meek held Wood prisoner four
days, both in his Sausalito home

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Meek held Wood prisoner four
days, both in his Sausalito home
and in hotels and lodging houses
in this city, with his hands bound
with wire. Wood's escape came
after he had watched patiently
for an attempt to make a get-
away.

That opportunity came as the
two men walked through the
market to shop for supplies.

Mrs. Bertha Stevenson and

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7-21-09

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