



Campbell Historic Downtown Walking Tour: Tour 1

In May 1846, at the age of nineteen, Benjamin Campbell and his father, William, made the journey to California overland from Missouri. They arrived in the Santa Clara Valley six months later. After helping establish the first sawmill in the county, Benjamin bought 160 acres from Juan C. Galindo and settled in an area known as the Hamilton District. Benjamin built his home in the center of the property, in the core of what is today Historic Downtown Campbell.

This walking tour is compliments of the Campbell Historic Preservation Board and the City of Campbell. For more information, call 408-866-2140.

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Sources:
Campbell Historical Museums
Campbell Historic Resources Inventory
Campbell: The Orchard City, by Jeanette Watson

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In November of 1882, Benjamin Campbell had Charles Herriman survey his property for the Town of Campbell. By 1887, the town had a railroad depot, a post office, and a town hall. The first residential lot was sold in 1888. By 1895, Campbell was a thriving village. By the late 1880's, Campbell was known as the Orchard City.

Welcome to the Campbell Historic Downtown Walking Tour. The properties in this self-guided tour are located within the beauty of Downtown Campbell.

Our tour begins at the site of what was, in 1887, one of the largest fruit packing operations in the area....



**1. Hyde Cannery/
Sunsweet
Corporation
(currently Water
Tower Plaza)
300 Orchard City
Drive**

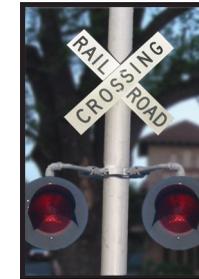
This fruit packing operation was established by the Flemming brothers and was built adjacent to the railroad tracks south of the depot. The new business was one of two drying establishments in the area started by the brothers. During the drying season of 1887, the Flemmings had 700 employees and shipped 1,800 tons of apricots and over 2,500 tons of other fruit. That summer 120 carloads of dried fruit were shipped out of Campbell to the east coast. In 1892 orchardists established a farmer's cooperative and the Campbell Fruit Growers Union was organized and took over this facility, which included 16 acres of fruit drying yards. In 1909 George E. Hyde bought the fruit growers' acreage and converted it to a cannery, using some acreage for drying yards. Sunsweet Growers, Inc. took over in 1937 and was here until 1971. At one time this was one of the largest drying yards in the world.



**2. Farmer's Union
Packing House
(currently Water
Tower Plaza II)
307 Orchard City
Drive**

The Campbell Farmers Union Packing Company was formed in 1909 to surmount haphazard and inefficient marketing by local growers, and to address problems in drying, packing, and production. Farmers Union Packing Company affiliated with the California Prune and Apricot Growers, Inc., and around 1937 was integrated with Sunsweet Growers, Inc. During World War II the building was part of a dryer plant producing

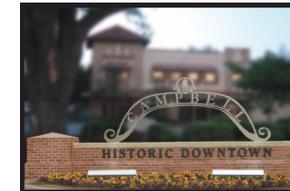
dried fruit for the military. The plant closed in the 1960's and was converted to commercial space in the 1970's.



**3. South Pacific Coast/
Union Pacific Railroad
East Campbell Avenue
near Harrison**

The South Pacific Coast Railroad was built with the private money of James Fair of Comstock silver fame. This was a three-foot narrow gauge that ran from Alameda

to the San Francisco Embarcadero. This line began operating in 1877 after a right of way was granted through the property of Benjamin Campbell. In 1886 Benjamin deeded an acre of land to the SPC to establish a depot and they opened a small six-by-eighteen foot telegraph office, located where Orchard City Drive now crosses the tracks. In the late 1880s Leland Stanford leased the railroad for fifty years making it part of his Southern Pacific Railroad. The SP ran passenger and freight service to Santa Cruz and Capitola until the mid-1930's. In 1903, when Theodore Roosevelt visited Campbell, his presidential car was brought for an overnight stop on this siding.



**4. Ainsley Park
East Campbell
Avenue at Harrison**

This small park commemorates the site of the first cannery established

in Campbell in 1891 by J.C. Ainsley. Ainsley came to Campbell in 1886. He first worked at the Flemming brothers drying yards. In 1887 he was conducting experiments with canning on his ranch on the corner of Campbell Avenue and Winchester Blvd. By 1891 his "wash boiler cannery" produced a thousand cases of fruit under the Mikado label. In 1892 Mr. Ainsley moved his operation to this location on Harrison Avenue at Campbell Avenue, adjacent to the railroad tracks. This park is also the location of a black walnut tree that was planted in 1885 by the granddaughters and son-in-law of Benjamin Campbell.



5. Ainsley Corporation Headquarters
43 North Harrison Avenue

In 1933, when canning industry pioneer J.C. Ainsley leased his cannery to the Drew Canning Co., the board of the Ainsley Packing Company reorganized and transferred all assets to the Ainsley Corporation. This brick building, built in 1938, served as corporate headquarters for this new corporation. Descendants of the Ainsley family still own and use the building.



6. B.O. Curry Building
401-415 East Campbell Avenue

This California Mission Revival style structure was built by B.O. Curry in 1913 to house his insurance and real estate business. Mr. Curry came to California in March of 1874. He became a miner and acquired quartz gold mines as well as timberlands in the high Sierra. In 1891 he purchased land on East Parr Avenue, now Dell Avenue, planted an orchard and started in the real estate business. Between 1914 and 1920 the Curry building housed the Campbell post office. In 1920 it served as the temporary office of the Grower's National Bank.



7. Downing Building
383-393 East Campbell Avenue

This California Mission Revival style building, constructed in 1905, is the second oldest commercial structure in Campbell. It is typical of the stores built in small towns in the 1900's, with an upper floor used as living quarters and stores at street level. At one time the upper floor was used as the law office of Richard Wallace Morton,

the first mayor of Campbell. The lower floor housed a bakery and ice cream parlor.



8. Grower's National Bank (currently Gaslighter Theatre)
400 East Campbell Avenue

This Neoclassical building was constructed by B.O. Curry in 1920 as part of a "business block" development which consisted of five buildings in a row. This prominent Campbell structure became the home of the Grower's National Bank. The Grower's Bank was formed in late 1919 by Curry. Ralph H. Hyde and Frank C. Nelson were some of the original investors. A sign on the front indicates that at one time this was the Mercantile Trust Bank. The building housed three different banks in the 1920's and then became a movie theater for a short time. Since the 1960's the Gaslighter Theatre has performed vaudeville and melodramatic plays in this building. The space to the left of the Gaslighter was once an American Trust Bank, and before that a silent movie theater with just chairs, a projector, and a local woman as piano player.



9. First Bank of Campbell/Farley Building
365 East Campbell Avenue

This Renaissance Revival style brick building, constructed in 1895, is the oldest commercial building in Campbell. By 1895 the town of Campbell was well established. The Ainsley Cannery and the Fruit Grower's Union employed hundreds of workers, and a local bank was needed. Campbell's first bank was incorporated in 1896 by the town's leading citizens. In 1911 business was booming and a larger bank building was needed. The lot across the street was purchased and the bank moved to a newly constructed building in 1911. From 1923 to 1966 Guy Farley had his real estate and insurance business in

the old bank building. Farley served on the city of Campbell's first planning commission and served as deputy assessor from 1929-1943. Locals refer to this structure as the Farley building.



10. First Bank of Campbell (currently Alie's Corner Cafe)
360 East Campbell Avenue

This Italian Renaissance Revival style building was constructed in 1911 to house the expanding demands of the Bank of Campbell. While here the bank merged with Garden City Bank of San Jose and later with the American Trust Company. Since it ceased being a bank some of its tenants have included the Campbell Water Company, the Ford Motor Company Showroom, and Jeffer's Clothing. It is now a local eatery.



11. The Courtyard
295-329 East Campbell Avenue

These Spanish Colonial Revival style units were constructed in 1947. The two story house located at the rear of the courtyard was once a barn, built around 1915. The Courtyard is locally known as downtown's first strip mall. Small businesses now occupy the units.



12. Country Woman's Club Building
274 East Campbell Avenue

This Spanish Colonial Revival building was constructed in 1923 for the Campbell Country Woman's Club. The Woman's Club was founded in 1905 to lend support to cultural programs in the community and in particular, to assist with the operation and maintenance of a library

for the town of Campbell. In 1907 the club provided a library for the town in a small wooden building. In 1923 the Woman's Club raised the funds they needed to build this structure. The building housed the library and public meeting rooms until the 1960s. In 1964 the Woman's Club started the Campbell Historical Museum, and it was located here. The building was sold in 1972.



13. Water Company Tower and Pump House Building
94 South First Street

In 1892, Benjamin Campbell, along with members of his family, neighbors and friends, formed the Campbell Water Company, Campbell's first utility company. The Water Company started with one small tank. This was later replaced by two tanks with a total capacity of 60,000 gallons. In 1906, the earthquake sent these wooden tanks crashing to the ground. Four new 20,000 gallon tanks were installed. In 1927, the Water Company tore down its pump and tool house and hired contractor Andrew Johnson to build a new pump house. The Water Company tower and its pumping station were built in 1928. The 75,000-gallon steel elevated tank is from the Pittsburgh-Des Moines Steel Company. This one hundred and thirty foot high tower has become a symbol for Historic Downtown Campbell.



14. Firehouse (currently Campbell Historical Museum)
51 North Central Avenue

This firehouse was built in 1951 and was the first municipal owned building. In addition to the fire department it housed the first city hall and police department, and occasionally served as city council chambers. The building opened as the Campbell Historical Museum in 1983.