



Historic Bakersfield & Kern County, California
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HENRY A. JASTRO

Commodore of Kern County,
Biography, Kinships and Politics, 1848-1925

Ver 6

by Gilbert P. Gia

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In 1905 Henry Alexander Jastro described meeting President Theodore Roosevelt, "He is a big man, strong and fearless, and, I am convinced, absolutely honest in his convictions. He means what he says, and I look to see some radical changes for the betterment of the conditions of the country."¹

Bakersfield might have said the same about Jastro. He was absolutely sure he was doing the best for Kern County, and although he was lauded and maligned, he was the boss of county government for two decades. This is a study of his little-known, private life.

¹ Los Angeles Times, Jan 27, 1905, p I-11. Jastro met President Roosevelt twice in 1905.

In 1892, 44 year-old Henry A. Jastro ran for a seat on the Kern County Board of Supervisors.² In November he defeated H. F. Conduct by a margin of one vote³ and for the next 23 years was regularly reelected. In 1903 he was named general manager of J. B. Haggin's Kern County Land Company that owned 1,395,000 acres in California, New Mexico, Arizona, and Mexico. Jastro's energy and financial acumen steered Haggin's vast empire into profitability,⁴ and Jastro's name became recognized across the West.

His public life abounded with newspaper articles, but what is known about his private life came almost entirely from Sunset Magazine's interview of 1911⁵ and Wallace Morgan's authorized biography of 1914.⁶

Jastro as a public man seemed to be everywhere at the same time. He served on boards of the Western Cattlemen's Association and the California State Fair Association, and he testified before Congress on matters of agriculture and

² J. Crusoe, manager of Haggin lands in Kern County (Kern County Californian, Jun 16, 1883, p 3), was a member of the Kern County Board of Supervisors 1885-90; On July 28, 1892 the Daily Californian supported Jastro's campaign for election. Kern County Great Register of Voters, Oct 31, 1896, Precinct N1, Pt 11: Henry Alexander Jastro, 48, born in Germany, naturalized Dec 21, 1889 at Kern Co, California

³ Henry F. Conduct charged Jastro with election fraud in voting in District 5 that which took place on Nov 8, 1892. Jastro counter-charged that Conduct had received illegal votes. The record shows that illegal votes were cast for both candidates. The court granted 399 votes to Jastro and 398 to Conduct. Conduct paid court costs of \$92.25. Kern County Superior Court, Case 1484, Jan 9, 1894

⁴ Unlike Thornton and Fergusson (who preceded H.A. Jastro), Jastro's efforts made the land company profitable. Morgan, op cit, p 117

⁵ Sunset Magazine, Jun 1911, v 26, p 633; Morning Echo, Jun 3, 1911, p 8, c3-8, "Pays tribute to H.A. Jastro." Cited in William Harland Boyd notebook, v. 39, McGuire Local History Room, Beale Library, Bakersfield, California

⁶ Wallace Melvin Morgan, History of Kern County, California. Los Angeles, California. Historic Record Company, 1914

international trade.⁷ He was an Ex-Officio Regent of the University of California, and at the apex of his career Kern County Democrats nominated him for Governor of California.⁸

His many activities took him away from Bakersfield. Local newspapers noted his departures and alerted readers of his impending returns, but if Jastro could not attend Board of Supervisors meetings, voting was tabled; few county projects went forward without his blessing.

Henry Alexander Jastro,



Sunset Magazine, 1911 (by permission)

At a Board of Supervisors meeting in 1909, attorney J. R. Dorsey represented two men from nearby Midway who protested the board's denial of their application

⁷ In Dec 1904 and Jan 1905 Jastro was at Washington, DC, speaking in favor of conservation and reforestation before the Forestry Congress. While there, he presided over argumentative National Live Stock Assoc. sessions for which he received accolades for familiarity with parliamentary procedure. Jastro favored reciprocal trade relations with Europe as long as European markets accepted US beef, although he cited deplorable conditions in the US meat trade. Los Angeles Times, Jan 27, 1905, p I-11

⁸ Los Angeles Times, Mar 27, 1910; Los Angeles Times, Apr 3, 1910: " [Jastro] was endorsed for the Governorship at a recent meeting of the Kern county [sic] Democratic central committee, but he is in Europe and there is no reason to believe that this action was anything except a graceful compliment from his friends and neighbors."

for a saloon license. Dorsey argued that the ordinance was loosely worded, and his clients had no way of knowing why their application was rejected or what steps they needed to take to obtain the license. Dorsey was aware that Jastro opposed his clients, and the attorney pressed the chairman to explain the license denial. Jastro replied he had heard from "some good citizens" that one of the applicants was a gun fighter who a few days earlier had challenged another man to mortal combat in the street. The ordinance, said Jastro, was intentionally loosely worded so supervisors could easily turn down anyone they thought unfit to run a saloon. The chairman added, "The board of supervisors is given arbitrary power in many instances, and I have heard it said that a man might as well try to climb straight up the side of a seven-story building as to break one of their rulings."⁹

Jastro's Background

Accounts say Jastro was born in either Prussia or Hamburg or Berlin or Posen sometime between 1848 and 1857.¹⁰ Sources indicate that Posen¹¹ was his birthplace and that he came to California about 1863.¹²

⁹ Morning Echo, Mar 6, 1909. Jastro was Chairman of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, General Manager of the Kern County Land Company, a partner in several corporations, and on the boards of local public utilities.

¹⁰ The 1900 US Census of Kern County says Jastro was born in 1857.

¹¹ Latitude 52-24N, Longitude 16-55E

¹² The history of 19th Century Europe complicates the question. Historical Poland was variously occupied by Russia, Prussia, and Germany, and Posen (spelled Poznan in Polish) refers to either a geographical region or its capital city. From 1850 to 1918 Poznan was an independent administrative unit of Prussia.

Henry Jastro's birth name was changed in America. In the 1930s Rush Blodget wrote that Jastro's surname was originally Jastrowitz,¹³ and his claim was replicated in *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly*.¹⁴ The surname *Jastrowitz*,¹⁵ however, is uncommon among US immigrants, and the name *Jastro* does not appear at all in on-line immigration indexes. On the other hand the surname *Jastrow* is quite common among emigrants from Prussia. In fact, during Henry Alexander Jastro's lifetime the newspapers sometimes spelled his name Jastrow. Those facts aside, Jastro's sister said her maiden name was Jastrowitz.



Poznan, Poland (Wikipedia)

¹³ Rush Maxwell Blodget, *Little Dramas of Old Bakersfield*, iUniverse, USA, 2006, ISBN- 10:0-595-41499-0

¹⁴ Jan 1981. That source probably derived its information from Blodget.

¹⁵ Prussia occupied Warsaw from 1794-1806 and passed laws ordering Jews to assume fixed family names so as to expedite taxation and the conscription of Jews into the military. In 1808 Napoleon decreed a similar requirement for Jews there, and Czar Alexander continued the policy in 1845. Families sometimes created surnames by appending a suffix to a given name, such as the suffix -witch in Ivanowitch, denoting "descendant of." Family names were sometimes improvised from a family's place of origin, such as Jastrowitz. (*Family Legacies, Linking The Past With The Present and the Future*, Jewish Genealogical Society of Southern Nevada, Inc., vol. 6, no. 3, 2003. Isaac Goldberg, "Ashkenazic Family Names, Origin and Development"). jewishgen.org/jgs/jgs-southernnevada/FL/FL_6_3.PDF

The name Jastrow has a geographical connection. Jastrowie in Poland was formerly *Jastrow*¹⁶ on the northern border of the province of Poznan. It appears on a Prussian map from the mid-1800s.¹⁷

Jastro's immigration preceded a million others who came to the US between 1870 and 1900. One such immigrant to California in the 1850s was Kaspare Cohn whose diverse, later investments in Southern California included property in the San Joaquin Valley. Other Jewish settlers with connections to Kern County were the seven Jacoby brothers, one of whom, Lesser Jacoby, owned an insurance office and a clothing business in Bakersfield. Still another was Leopold H. Harris who married Henry Jastro's sister Minnik.



Jastro House, 2006

¹⁶ Latitude 53-45N, Longitude 34-29E

¹⁷ Atlas des Deutschen Reichs, Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut (1883)



Jastro's house is moved, Bakersfield Californian, July 17, 1917. See also Gilbert P. Gia, *Jastro House, 1877-2010*. www.gilbertgia.com/hist_articles/business

The Bancroft Library, University of California, Letters Collection contains a pencil-written, 1887 interview of Henry Jastro.¹⁸ Research Librarian David Kessler transcribed the document as written by Edwin W. Fowler, General Representative for historian Hubert Howe Bancroft. Kessler wrote:

"At the top is an ink scrawl, the rest is in pencil. 'Ans. 12.31.87' is noted at the bottom suggesting it was answered, or returned completed, to Kessler on December 31, 1887. The document is on stationery of 'History Co. Publishers, San Francisco, Cal.'" with the banner 'The historical works of Hubert Howe Bancroft' spread across the top and followed by "Edwin W. Fowler General representative for California." The stationery also has a space for 'Los Angeles, California., ____188__ ' but this is not filled in in any way."¹⁹

¹⁸ UC Berkeley, Bancroft BANC MSS C-D 810:219, system no. 008917691

¹⁹ Email from UC Research Librarian David Kessler to Gilbert P. Gia

'Harry A. Jastro, Bak's.' Bakersfield is clearly intended as the place, not sure what the little symbol means after it. *'J. born Germany 13 May '48 has had a very hard pioneer experience in the freighting and teaming bus. & then to K. Co., it is now worth a very large fortune. J's Co.[??] \$75,000. J. married in Bakersfield, has a handsome home,²⁰ and is enthused over the part he took in the removal of the Co. seat from Havilah to Bakersfield & has been & is prominently identified with all the improvements of Bakersfield.²¹ He is now the treasurer & sec. of the new Hotel association which is to build a new \$75,000 Hotel at Bakersfield. J. owns property in Los Angeles and SF. J. ²²*

Details in the Fowler interview mirror comments that Jastro made when he said he been a cowboy and he did "whatever I could." The "very large fortune" Fowler mentioned was at the end of Jastro's life an estate equivalent today to about \$10,500,000.

²⁰ That interview was with Henry Jastro. His son Herman Alverson Jastro, known as Harry, was then 10 years-old. About 1877 Henry Jastro had built a house at the NE corner of 19th and G, but it was set back on the lot according to email in May 2010 from Lynn Hay Rudy to Gilbert P. Gia. In 1917, in anticipation of construction of the Jastro office building on the same block (know today as the Standard Oil Building), Jastro's house was turned 180 degrees north. Its new address was 1811-20th, although it was still on the same city block. (Bakersfield Californian, Apr 2, 1966; City of Bakersfield, Cultural Resources Survey, June 1984. Prepared by Office of City Manager and Brewer's Historical Consultants)

²¹ Jastro lived in the house until 1895. The first renter was E. I. Rockell (Lynn Hay Rudy private database of Bakersfield newspapers, Sep 28, 1895). In Feb 2006 Gilbert P. Gia interviewed Glen R. Boroughs, then owner of the Jastro house. He said the Bakersfield Californian of Jul 17, 1917 said that Jastro built the house about 1877 and that its lot then extended between 19th and 20th. According to Boroughs, Jastro built the house at ground level to demonstrate his faith that Bakersfield was safe from flooding. Jastro owned five other lots on the block. Boroughs said the decorative woodwork on house was later removed and sold.

²² Harry, Jastro's son, was Herman Alverson Jastro born in 1875.

Historical accounts say Jastro immigrated to the US "with his family" or "with his father" or "with his brother-in-law." In the Fowler interview Jastro stated that his birth date was May 13, 1848. The year 1848 corresponds to the birth year of a passenger whose name appears in a *Gale Research Passenger and Immigration List*.²³ On December 12, 1859, ship *Simoda* arrived at New York from Antwerp, Belgium. Among the passengers on the Beiana Deck were three males traveling as a family group. Ludomir Jestero" age 53, "H. a." age 11, and "T. Cest..." age 7.²⁴ Eleven year-old "H.a." would have been born about 1848, and that year also corresponds with Jastro's birth year mentioned in his *Sunset Magazine* interview. The Ludomir Jestero group included two unnamed females who occupied a cabin.²⁵ Lower on the manifest is "L. Adler," age 44. Leopold Adler was important in Jastro's family history and will be treated later in this paper.

In an 1892 interview Jastro said he immigrated to the US when he was 15 and lived in Los Angeles for several years.²⁶ Jastro, 5-ft-7-in, brown-haired, brown-eyed worked as a drover and a freighter of livestock for Phineas Banning on the Los

²³ Microfilm Roll 197, List 1205, Line 9

²⁴ Perhaps a phonetic spelling of "T. Jastrow"

²⁵ Later histories show that at least two of Jastro's sisters came to the US.

²⁶ Daily Californian, Apr 9, 1892. The article contains several direct quotes suggesting that the reporter obtained his information first-hand from Jastro.

Angeles-Catalina Island route.²⁷ Jastro added in a 1902 interview that he was also a trail boss on cattle drives into the San Joaquin Valley, Arizona and Nevada.²⁸

Sometime in the late 1860s a Jastro relative died at Los Angeles, and from that estate Henry Jastro inherited livestock.²⁹ About this same time he moved to the San Joaquin Valley. Bakersfield businessman Alphonse Weill recalled meeting Jastro who in the late 1860s was working as a traveling salesman at Tehachapi. A newspaper ad from 1870 shows Jastro settled in Bakersfield and managing a brewery with Col. Thomas A. Baker.³⁰

Col. Baker, Jastro's business partner, contracted typhoid fever and died November 4, 1872. Six months later Henry A. Jastro married Baker's 17-year-old stepdaughter, Mary Whalen.³¹ Jastro then built a house on 19th Street.³²

²⁷ Voter registration information. Banning and Jastro share a connection to Maurice H. Newmark, born Jul 5, 1834 at the same location as Jastro: Loebau, West Prussia. In 1853 when Newmark was 19 he removed from Godthedorg [Gotteborg ?] Sweden to Hull, England, to New York, USA, from there to the Isthmus and from San Juan del Sur to San Francisco. In 1865 Newmark was associated with Phineas Banning in a wholesale grocery concern. Newmark was a Free Mason and member of Pentalpha Lodge, No. 42. Los Angeles Times, Apr 27, 1912

²⁸ Daily Californian, May 13, 1902, "When Jastro Bossed Gage" In 1867 Jastro was about 19 years old, and Mr. Gage some three or four years his junior and a corral boss when Jastro was superintendent of Arizona teams. "The two young fellows became well acquainted while working together, and the friendship formed at the time has continued uninterruptedly ever since." Henry T. Gage was Governor of California, 1899-1903. See also, Sunset Magazine, Jun 1911, v26, p 633

²⁹ Obituary, Henry A. Jastro. Bakersfield Californian, Apr 15, 1925, p 1, 5

³⁰ Jastro's first beer advertisement appeared in Mar 22, 1872 of the Kern County Weekly Courier. In the Sunset Magazine interview he said he came to Bakersfield in 1871 and started with Haggin & Tevis in 1874.

³¹ May 13, 1873

He was engaged in raising sheep and selling wool by 1874 when a Haggin & Carr³³ manager hired him to run sheep, but within months Jastro quit that employment and entered into a partnership, also in the sheep business, with Gustav Saenger.³⁴ Owing to Saenger's financial mismanagement the partnership dissolved within two years and resulted in a civil lawsuit.³⁵

³² "Jastro's lot was on the northeast corner of 19th & G and was quite large. His house shown on an early Sanford Fire Maps was actually more in the middle of the block, closer to the Land Company Building. After the house was moved to 20th Street he rented it to his old friend Kitty Wells, then the widow of Matt Wells. (Jastro had provided the horses to Kitty and Matt eloped.) Kitty lived with her unmarried daughter(s) and had fallen on hard times." Lynn Hay Rudy email of May, 2010

³³ "Haggin's trips to Kern county were very few and very brief. He came in his private car, was driven direct to Belle View, here he looked at the blooded racers that were bred for him there, returned to his car and was sped away. Lloyd Tevis was a banker of San Francisco, and while his financial interest in the Kern county venture dates from the beginning of operations here, his name was not connected with the firm, which for years was known locally as Haggin & Carr or Carr & Haggin and which appeared in the chief legal documents as J. B. Haggin." Morgan, op. cit., p 85

³⁴ Jastro was hired the same year that Dr. George F. Thornton started his tenure (1874 to 1883) as General Manager of the great Haggin-Tevis properties. Bakersfield Californian, Aug 24, 1893. The 1870 US Census, Aug 22, 1870, Kern County, Township 5, p 359A lists Gustave Sanger [sic], 38, stock raiser from Prussia.

³⁵ 16th Judicial court of Kern County, Case DC 398, Oct 12, 1881, Jastro vs. Saenger. The single-spaced, 75-page typed testimony quoted Jastro. He stating that on Nov 10, 1877 he formed a partnership with Saenger to buy sheep, raise them, and sell wool. Jastro also said that in summer 1878 and fall 1880 he spent several weeks "or months" in the mountains as a supervisor attending to the bands. Jastro stated that the spring of 1879 -1880 was a great year for grass, but the winter of 1879 was dry. Jastro said he did not run sheep after fall 1880, but in fall 1881 he rented a dipping operation from the Haggin people. Jastro trusted Saenger to attend to the money side of the partnership, but Jastro eventually disagreed with some book entries. The two parties settled out of court on Jan 24, 1882. Jastro's testimony indicates he had command of English and used conversational expressions, such as "...hold on," as well as more formal usage, such as "... so singular was the..."

In 1876 Jastro bought the William Baker Farm south of Bakersfield.³⁶ By 1883 the 28 year-old was a wily, independent sheep man usually several steps ahead of the Haggin ranch bosses. Manager W.B. Carr wrote in a business correspondence, "One of those smart fellows is Jastro. He always knows what I am going to do a day or two ahead of time --I got to San Emidio on Monday and he was there on Saturday. His sheep are in 10/21 --splendid feed -- If he is on our land I'll sue him!"³⁷ A few days later Carr wrote, "Jastro came to see me. Wants to sell his sheep and will run our sheep department for \$200/mo for one year. Has the name of being tricky and not perfectly reliable. If he would do as well for us as he has done for himself, he would fill the bill. Can beat any man in Kern County stealing sheep feed!"³⁸ Jastro was hired by the Haggin interests on April 27, 1883.³⁹

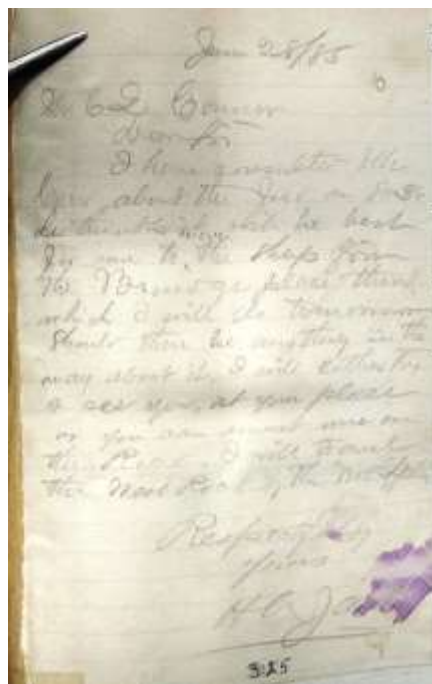
³⁶ It might have been the Haggin & Tevis that was involved in lawsuit the following year: Kern County Hall of Records, Bk 1, p 92, Feb 28, 1877. Lis Pendens [*a lawsuit*]. Kern Valley Bank vs. Henry A. Jastro et al. Named with Jastro are S.J. Lemming, C. Brower, C.C. Wible, S. Jewett, G.B. Chester, G.F. Thompson, J. Chester, J. Frank, J.T. Anderson, P.D. Jewett, J.F. Block [?], Robert Withington, C. Bayley. Suit brought to foreclose on mortgage made Apr 28, 1875 between H.A. Jastro and William Baker as noted in BK 2, of Mortgages, p 143, 144, 145. On NW 1/4 of W 1/2 of NE 1/4; and the NE 1/4 of SW 1/4 of Sec 31 in Twn 29S, R28E MDB, 280 acres and all ditches and rights.

³⁷ Conner letters, Mar 19, 1883. Beale Library Local History Vault

³⁸ Conner letters, Mar 22, 1883. Beale Library Local History Vault

³⁹ J. Stoddard Atwood. Kern County Land Company, (1966 monograph), p 8

Each Haggin & Carr business ventures in Kern County was operated as an independent entity with its own ledger. The network included the company's canal operations, machine-shops, dairy and cheese-production farms, beef and sheep rearing and butchering. Although the ranches were expected to share men and equipment,⁴⁰ competition among managers was also expected. On June 28, 1885 (below) Jastro wrote to Conner: "Mr. C.G. Conner. Dear Sir, I have consulted Mr. Carr about the feed on Sec 36. He thinks it will be best for me to move the sheep from the Brundage place, this which I will do tomorrow. Should there be anything in the way about it, I will either try and see you at your place or you can meet me on the road. I will travel the west road by the Wolf Place. Respectfully yours H.A. Jastro"⁴¹



⁴⁰ Conner letters, Jan 28, 1886. Beale Library Local History Vault

⁴¹ Conner letters, Jun 28, 1885. Beale Library Local History Vault

Jastro's cooperative relationship with Conner might have annoyed Carr. In October, Carr wrote critically of H.A. Jastro and advised Conner to keep an eye on him. In spite of Jastro's success Conner rejected him. "Jastro has his men cutting cockle burs with scythes, but I think a mower would be cheaper for our fields."⁴²

By 1890 J.B. Haggin and Lloyd Tevis were experiencing business, family, and personal-health issues,⁴³ and in September 1890 they incorporated their interests as the Kern County Land Company. Three years later William S. Tevis, youngest son of Lloyd Tevis, became vice-president, and by 1895 he had forced out William B. Carr who had consolidated Haggin & Tevis properties and managed them since 1874.⁴⁴

Jastro accomplished much in Kern County in a few short years. In 1886 and 1887 he was Worshipful Master, Free & Accepted Masons, Bakersfield Lodge 224,⁴⁵ in 1888 a member of the Southern Hotel Association Board of Directors, and the same year organized the Bloomfield Association to drain land south of Bakersfield and subdivide it.⁴⁶ When Bakersfield Building & Loan Association was organized in 1890, Jastro was

⁴² Conner Letters, Oct 18, 1885. Kern County Memorial Library, McGuire Local History Vault

⁴³ J. Stoddard Atwood, *Kern County Land Company*, Monograph, p 9, 1966, Beale Library, Local History: "Late in 1890, Haggin and Tevis, for reasons not completely revealed, but presumably heavily weighted by personal considerations, formed a corporation, Kern County Land Company."

⁴⁴ "January 17, 1874. W. B. Carr, the 'world renowned Billy Carr, political Napoleon of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company,' is here looking over the country. He owns some land in Kern county and is anxious to get more. He has plans for the complete and thorough irrigation of the valley." Morgan, op. cit., p 77

⁴⁵ *The senior officer of a Masonic Lodge is normally referred to as Worshipful Master. Jastro also served the lodge in that capacity in 1892.*

⁴⁶ The Kern County Land Company efforts to sell small parcels were unsuccessful, and land sales were discontinued. In 1887 upon recommendation of

the president.⁴⁷ Two years later he was elected to the Kern County Board of Supervisors,⁴⁸ and in 1899 he was president and principal owner of Bakersfield Gas & Electric Company at 20th and G Streets.⁴⁹ In 1901 Jastro was on the board of directors of the new, four-story Producers' Bank Building at 19th and H.⁵⁰ Lynn Hay Rudy wrote, "H. A. Jastro, with the aid of strong fraternal associates, and others, was building a powerful local political machine."⁵¹ Jastro's early business successes and personal associations laid the foundation for his appointment, in 1903, as general manager of the Kern County Land Company.

Alphonse Weill, L. Slessinger [Schlessinger?] and associates of San Francisco bought Charles Kerr's 2,700-acre ranch south of Bakersfield and on the north shore of Kern Lake. The property was renamed Bloomfield Ranch and plans were made to drain it and sell small tracts. (Kern County Californian, Jul 30, 1887, Feb 18, 1888. "H.A. Jastro, Secretary"). In 1925 Jastro was owner of a 3,000-acre ranch adjoining Greenfield Ranch, earlier called Union Avenue Colony (Bakersfield Californian, Apr 15, 1925, pp 1, 5, 14).

⁴⁷ Bakersfield Californian, Apr 15, 1925, p 1

⁴⁸ Los Angeles Times, Nov 1, 1895: "Grand Jury Report Scorches Many Present And Past County Officials. Indictments brought against some." In a closely-typed, 120 page report, Supervisor Jastro and 13 other county officials were indicted for misfeasance. See also Daily Californian Oct 31, 1895. Jastro was exonerated.

⁴⁹ Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly, Jan 1981, v13, p 171; Lynn Hay Rudy, *Granddad, Hugh A. Blodget in Early Bakersfield*. Jenner, California (1999, privately printed), p 117

⁵⁰ Los Angeles Times, Jul 19, 1901

⁵¹ J. Stoddard Atwood, Kern County Land Company. Monograph, 1966, p 10. Jastro replaced W.B. Carr, known in the state as a skillful Republican Party politician who reputedly handled all patronage in the state when Grant was president. "He [Carr] was close to the Big Four and served on the Southern Pacific Board."

Kinships

Left: Henry A. Jastro's sister Minnik Harris, about 1870.



Right: Her husband, Leopold H. Harris about 1905⁵²,

The wills of Henry A. Jastro and Leopold H. Harris, founder of Harris & Frank clothiers of Los Angeles, identify Jastro's sister as Minnik, wife of Leopold H. Harris.⁵³ Harris was born in 1836 in Prussia, emigrated in 1854, and arrived at San Francisco via the Isthmus.⁵⁴ He settled in Los Angeles in 1855. In 1869 Harris returned to Europe and married Minnik Jastrowitz.⁵⁵

In 1882 Harris and partners owned the Quincy Hall Clothing House at Temple and Spring Streets in Los Angeles. When Harris died in 1910 he left an estate equivalent

⁵² Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly, Jan 1981

⁵³ nee, Lewin Hirschkowitz

⁵⁴ Max Vorspan and Lloyd P. Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*. Jewish Publication Society of America, Los Angeles, 1970

⁵⁵ Minnik's maiden name was not in either will, but it did appear as Jastrowitz in a book printed ten years before her death, in 1916. Because the book was a subscription printing, Minnik Harris most likely approved her own biography. (Martin A. Meyer, *Western Jewry, An Account of the Achievements of the Jews and Judaism in California*. San Francisco, 1916. archive.org/stream/westernjewryacco00meyer/westernjewryacco00meyer_djvu.txt. Minnik) "Minna" Jastrowitz Harris died in Sep 1926. The following publications, among others, do not supply primary sources when they posit that Minnik's surname was Jastrowitz: James Miller Guinn, *History of California and an Extended History of Los Angeles*, v2, p 371. Historic Records Co, 1913 (Google Books, <http://books.google.com/books>); *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly*: 7:3:231, Apr 1975; 9:1:79 Oct 1976; 26:3:277 Apr 1984. (Los Angeles Public Library).

to about \$19,000,000 in 2010 dollars. Leopold Harris' wealth and influence in promoting Henry A. Jastro's business accomplishments is not known, but the growing circle of family was wealthy and influential.

The Harris children were Alfred, Rosa, and Sarah. Rosa and Sarah married their father's business partners, and Alfred joined the family firm. Alfred and his brothers-in-law became active in Los Angeles business, civic, and fraternal circles.

Harris' partner Herman W. Frank moved to Los Angeles in 1887, and in 1888 he joined the L. Harrison Company, which was the name of Harris' firm until evolving to Harris & Frank, and later to Harris & Frank Retail Clothing. Herman Frank married Sarah Harris in 1888.⁵⁶ Their daughter Martha married Alfred Stern.⁵⁷

Rosa Harris married Melville Adler. The Jastro and Adler families were close. After Jastro's wife died, his daughters boarded at Mrs. Caswell's Marlborough School in Los Angeles,⁵⁸ but May and Louise probably spent much time at the Adler home.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ In 1896 Frank was vice president of Los Angeles B'nai B'rith.

⁵⁷ Stiern, born in Germany, was in 1914 president of Wholesale Wines, formerly Charles Stern & Sons Distillers, which was his father's business.

⁵⁸ Los Angeles Times, Nov 1, 1895, p 9. In 1890 the Marlborough school was relocated to the "empty Marlborough Hotel at the corner of 23rd and Scarff Streets near the newly-established University of Southern California." ("History and Tradition," marlboroughschool.org/); Marlborough was "a select school for sixteen girls, giving the comforts of a refined home. Advanced work in English, History, Literature, Art History, Latin, etc. Native teachers in modern languages, \$500 per year. Day pupils \$100. For circulars address Mrs. G.A. Caswell, Principal." (Los Angeles Times, Aug 18, 1894); The cost was about the same as \$18,000 a year today.

⁵⁹ In summer 1894-95 Jastro and daughters vacationed on Catalina Island with other well-to-do Californians. Los Angeles Times, Aug 16, 1894, Aug 4, 1895

Residing in 1900 at the Adler home were the parents, two young sons, two servants, and a cousin named Louise A. Jastro.⁶⁰

Probates of the estates of Henry A. Jastro and Leopold Harris identified a sister of Henry Jastro by the name of Bertha who was married to H.M. Cohn.⁶¹ Cohn operated a kosher butchering business and later became a pawn broker at Los Angeles. The Jastro will of 1925 bequeathed funds to four of Bertha's children then living in Germany. The Jastro and Harris wills also identified a third Jastro sister, Louise Sonnenberg of "Lobeau, West Prussia."⁶²

"Possessed Of Rare Unselfishness"

May Emiline Jastro was 25 in 1881. Her children were Herman Alverson Jastro (known as Harry) who was then four years-old, Mary Emiline Jastro (known as May) nine months, and Carolyn Louise Jastro (known as Carolyn), one month of age.⁶³

⁶⁰ 1900 US Census of Los Angeles

⁶¹ H.M. Cohn might have been related to Kaspare Cohn who was born in "Loebau, West Prussia" and immigrated to California about 1850. (Los Angeles Times, Nov 20, 1916) In 1862 he and Leopold Harris owned K. Cohn & Company, hide and wool merchants on Main St. in Los Angeles. Henry A. Jastro's emigration date of 1859 and his appearance in California as a stock-handler corresponds to the period that Harris & Cohn engaged in the livestock business. K. Cohn was also a major stock holder in San Joaquin Light & Power, the employer of Henry Jastro's son, Harry.

⁶² The city of Lobeau does not appear on European maps of the mid-1920s, but it does in Atlas des Deutschen Reichs, Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut (1883) as Löbau (Latitude 53-45N, Longitude 17-62E) about 100 mi SE of the Baltic port of Gdansk. Löbau today is Lubawa, Poland. The German city of Posen mentioned in Jastro biographies is now Poznan near the border of Germany. After the revolutions of 1848 the region known as Poznań lost its autonomy and became part of the Prussian Province of Posen. With the unification of German States in 1871, Posen became part of the German Empire.

⁶³ Three Jastro children died in infancy: Harriet, Feb 6, 1874-Nov 16, 1874 and Edward H. Jastro, Dec 24, 1876-Apr 18, 1877. (Baker Family Album, Beale Library Microform Rm, Drawer 00). When Mrs. Jastro was 34 she had baby Edna: "Aug 28,

Skipping forward 13 years: On May 24, 1894, 19 year-old Harry was at school in Germany,⁶⁴ and Mary Emiline, 15, and Carolyn Louise, 14, were a few blocks away in school.⁶⁵ Mrs. Jastro had retired to her room to rest, but five minutes later when her husband looked in on her he found her face down on her bed, dead.⁶⁶ The next day the Californian wrote, "Possessed of rare unselfishness, abounding in tender solicitude for the welfare of others, blessed with a sunny and even temperament, she has walked through life a constant giver of blessings, a treasure to her friends, a queen in her home."⁶⁷ Eastern Star⁶⁸ conducted her funeral. Two weeks later Jastro took his daughters to spend the summer in Los Angeles and Santa Monica.⁶⁹

1893, Edna Jastro, one month, of Colitis" (*Death Book*, Kern County, Beale Library, McGuire Local History Vault)

⁶⁴ Lynn Hay Rudy private database of Bakersfield newspapers, May 25, 1894

⁶⁵ The Jastro children attended Bakersfield City Schools. Henry Jastro was a trustee in 1891 when H Street School was built near his downtown home. *Daily Californian*, Jul 27, 1891. See also Gilbert P. Gia, *Bakersfield Schools, 1863-1910, Society and Politics*. www.gilbertgia.com/hist_articles/school

⁶⁶ *Daily Californian*, May 25, 1894: "Mrs. M.E. Jastrow, 36, of parallisis" [sic].

⁶⁷ On Mar 23, 1901 Harry Jastro was appointed executor of his mother's probate. Oct 10, 1903 probate documents show her survivors as her 51-year-old husband, Henry, daughter Luisa A. Chadburn [sic], age 24 and residing at Long Beach, daughter Mrs. Mary E. Green [sic], age 22, at Los Angeles, and son Harry A., 24, of Bakersfield. Misspellings of the daughters' names suggest that Harry had limited communication with them. Kern County Probate No. 599, final, Jun 23, 1920

⁶⁸ The sororal order of Eastern Star is based on teachings from the Bible. In general, female members must be related to Masons. Lynn Hay Rudy: "She was never mentioned in social events in the Bakersfield newspapers." Email to Gilbert P. Gia, May 31, 2010

⁶⁹ *Daily Californian*, Jun 10, Jul 8, 1893

Benno Jastrowitz

In 1933, Herman W. Frank published an autobiography entitled *Scrapbook of a Western Pioneer*.⁷⁰ He wrote that about 1883 the Harris family was in Germany visiting family, and when they prepared to return to the US, Sarah Harris decided to stay behind in the household of her mother's oldest brother.⁷¹ Her uncle, unnamed in that account, was Henry Jastro's brother, but the Frank autobiography also mentioned another Jastro brother. Frank wrote that in 1887 when in charge of Leopold Harris' Los Angeles warehouse, he fired an incompetent manager, who Frank named as his wife's uncle.⁷² He added that the uncle had immigrated to America when 19 years of age.

Steerage manifest of the SS Hohenzollern dated October 28, 1874 lists Benna Jastrowitz, a 24 year-old, male, merchant clerk traveling from Bremen to New York.⁷³ A similar name appears in the 1880 US Census for Los Angeles as 27 year-old store clerk Benno Jastrowitz who boarded in the home of Minnik Harris, her husband Leopold, and their children, Sarah, Rose, Harry, and Martha. The name B. Jastrow appeared in the Los Angeles Times in a listing of unclaimed mail.⁷⁴ B. Jastrowitz was named in the Los Angeles Times of 1883 as a traveling salesman or "commercial

⁷⁰ Herman W. Frank, *Scrapbook of a Western Pioneer*, Times-Mirror Press, 1934

⁷¹ Frank said he first met Sarah about 1887.

⁷² That man also would have been Leopold Harris's brother-in-law.

⁷³ Email to Gilbert P. Gia from Linda Deneroff.
immigrantships.net/1800/hohenzollern741028.html

⁷⁴ Los Angeles Times, Jul 16, 1882, p. 3

traveler.”⁷⁵ The Los Angeles city directory of 1888-90 lists Leopold Harris and Benno Jastrowitz at 104-1/2 - 106 North Los Angeles Street, both employed with Leopold Harris & Company. The 1880 Census and the Los Angeles city directory suggest that Benno Jastrowitz was either Henry A. Jastro's brother or his cousin. He was probably the man who Frank fired.

Rabbi Mordecai Jastrow

Dr. Mordecai Marcus Jastrow was a distinguished Talmudic scholar who lived in Henry A. Jastro's time. On April 26, 1925, shortly after Jastro's death, the *Oakland Tribune* published an article entitled *Some Other Jastrows* that claimed that Henry A. Jastro "and his brother Marcus Jastrow arrived in New York 50 years ago." The statement was wrong. Fifty years before 1925 was 1875, and in that year H.A. Jastro was married and living in Bakersfield. The *Tribune* also wrote that the two Jastrows came to the US in 1866. In that year Henry A. Jastro worked as a drover in California.

The two men's personal histories do have some commonality. Dr. Jastrow was born in Ragosen, in Prussian Poland,⁷⁶ which is about 200 miles west of Jastro's birthplace of *Posen*. With regard to their ages, in 1866 Dr. Jastrow was 42 and Henry Jastro was about 18. The difference in years makes it possible they were brothers,

⁷⁵ Los Angeles Times, Mar 17, 1883, p 4: "B Jastrowitz of Los Angeles was among about 50 other passengers who passed Fresno last night will arrive in Los Angeles this morning at 7:55"

⁷⁶ Probably *Ragösen* at Latitude 51-58N, Longitude 12-16E; Washington Post, Oct 14, 1903. Dr. Jastrow was born in 1829.

but unlikely. Rabbi Jastrow's sons, Maurice and Joseph Jastrow, seem to have no connection with Henry A. Jastro.



Jastro's son, Harry

Harry Jastro

Harry attended Bakersfield schools until he was about 14, but between 1889 and 1894 he was in Europe studying business and engineering. After his European education Harry worked in Kern County and then spent two years at San Francisco as a consulting engineer for both the Power Development Company and the San Francisco Gas & Electric Company.⁷⁷ For the next three years he was a consultant with the Edison Electric Light Company of Los Angeles that constructed the eight-mile powerhouse tunnel in Kern Canyon. In 1906-07 Harry worked for the engineering and business departments of the Colorado Power Company at Boulder, Colorado. Harry was 35 in 1910 when he married Edna M. Crooks of Boston. The US

⁷⁷ Harry Alverson Jastro, 20, Civil Engineer, is in the Kern County Great Register of Voters, Oct 31, 1896, Precinct N1, Pt 11.

Census that year shows they lived at Taft where Harry managed the electric company.⁷⁸ In 1912 they lived in Bakersfield at 2318 20th Street.⁷⁹

In the early 1920s Harry suffered his first heart attack, and in April 1922 he was admitted to St. Luke's hospital at San Francisco. He died a month later with his father and sisters by his side. Harry and Edna Jastro had no children.⁸⁰

Henry Jastro's daughters have longer stories. In early 1900 William Hugh Greer built a fine house on Figueroa Street in Los Angeles,⁸¹ and in spring he married Henry Jastro's daughter May in a private ceremony at Los Angeles at the home of May's cousin Sarah Harris Frank. The union was deemed of "unusual importance in Jewish circles."⁸² By 1903 Mr. and Mrs. Greer resided at Deming, New Mexico, where Greer directed the local phone company and managed Victoria Land and Cattle Company of Patagonia, Arizona.⁸³ In 1905 the Greers sold their home in Deming and resettled at Los Angeles.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ This was probably the Power Transit & Light Company of Bakersfield, of which Henry A. Jastro was a major stockholder.

⁷⁹ Morning Echo, Nov 13, 1912. Mrs. Lyman W. Lowell owned the house in 1917. (Bakersfield Californian, Jul 11, 1917)

⁸⁰ Bakersfield Californian, May 31, 1922

⁸¹ Los Angeles Times, Feb 9, 1900

⁸² Los Angeles Times, May 14, 1900

⁸³ The Kern County Land Company owned Victoria Land and Cattle. Henry A. Jastro was a director of that operation, but he had other Arizona responsibilities. Polk Arizona and New Mexico Pictorial State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1912-1913, p 163, shows that Henry A. Jastro of Bakersfield, California, was general manager of the Boquillas Land and Cattle Company of Fairbanks, Arizona.

⁸⁴ Chuck Hornung, *Fullerton's Rangers: a history of the New Mexico Territorial Mounted Police*, (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2005), p 31; "Mrs. May Greer has returned from S.F. restored to health." (Bakersfield Californian, Jun 17, 1909)

In January 1910 Henry Jastro and May Greer visited relatives in Germany. Jastro returned to Bakersfield in June, but his daughter stayed in Berlin and in summer toured Italy.⁸⁵ In late September 1910, William Greer, 38, died in Southern California.⁸⁶ About the same time, May Greer had returned to Bakersfield and was residing with her father at 2229-19th Street.⁸⁷ The Bakersfield Californian of September 29, 1910 did not note William Greer's death, but it did write that a Mrs. Samuel T. A. Loftis [*Loftus*] of Chicago had been staying for the last several weeks on "West Nineteenth" street with Mrs. May Greer.⁸⁸ A week later the Californian wrote, "Mrs. May Greer has gone to San Francisco for a week's visit with friends."⁸⁹ Again there was no mention of Mr. Greer. The sequences of events suggest that Mr. and Mrs. Greer were estranged after 1905.

⁸⁵ Los Angeles Times, Mar 5, 1910; "Jastro Going to Europe," Bakersfield Californian, May 30, 1910

⁸⁶ Chuck Hornung, *Fullerton's Rangers: a history of the New Mexico Territorial Mounted Police*, (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2005), p 31. This author's search of ProQuest's Los Angeles Times historical database returned no reference to Greer's death. On Sep 11, 1910 Henry Jastro was at the Van Nuys Hotel at Los Angeles. (Los Angeles Times, Sep 12, 1910)

⁸⁷ Bakersfield City directories of 1913-23 show Henry Jastro at 2229-19th Street.

⁸⁸ Bakersfield Californian, Sep 29, 1910. Gilbert P. Gia is unable to verify the date of Greer's death.

⁸⁹ Bakersfield Californian, Oct 10, 1910. Samuel Loftus of Loftus Brothers of Chicago was a long-time friend of Henry Jastro. Loftus had telegraphed Jastro in September instructing him to secure the best possible counsel for the defense of J.C. Loftus, a recently-hired Kern County Land Company employee who was jailed on charges of murdering Joseph Lafferty (Chicago Daily Tribune, Sep 8, 1910). Mrs. Loftus was probably in Bakersfield monitoring the trial.

May Jastro Greer

Henry Jastro's daughter May was in Bakersfield in 1911,⁹⁰ but in January 1912 she prepared for an ocean voyage. The Californian wrote, "Mrs. May Greer is planning to leave on February sixth for New York, where she will join a party of eastern friends and make a tour of the world. Their journeys will extend over about four or six months and will include Italy, Greece, Egypt, and a tour of the Orient. Mrs. Greer is anticipating a delightful trip."⁹¹

May was in San Francisco in summer 1913, but in fall she was back in Bakersfield.⁹² H.A. Jastro and Alfred Harrell, owner of the Bakersfield Californian, might have talked about the young May Jastro and what she did in San Francisco, but if Harrell knew personal information about May, he would not have printed it.⁹³ Three months later, on Sunday, January 4, 1914 at the Jastro home at Nineteenth and B Street, May Greer and Max I. Koshland were married. The Californian said the bridegroom was a wealthy San Francisco broker and son of California wool merchant

⁹⁰ "HA Jastro lives here with his widowed daughter, Mrs. May Greer." Wallace Melvin Morgan. History of Kern County, California. Los Angeles, CA: Historic Record Company, 1914

⁹¹ Bakersfield Californian, Jan 26, 1912. Jastro accompanied May to San Francisco. She departed Feb 6. Bakersfield Californian, Feb 2, 1912

⁹² Bakersfield Californian, Sep 22, 1913

⁹³ "The Californian has passed into the hands of the democracy and will be its organ. E.M. Roberts to furnish capital, Alfred Harrell will be majordomo, and Mr. Jastro will have an eye out for business." Morning Echo, Sep 4, 1896, as cited in the Morning Echo of Sep 4, 1910. Wallace Melvin Morgan, History of Kern County, California, p 240. The 1896 Morning Echo is not extant.

Marcus Simon Koshland.⁹⁴ "It was a simple ceremony," wrote the newspaper, "performed by Superior Judge Howard A. Peairs, Mr. Jastro giving his daughter away. The bride and groom were unattended, only relatives witnessing the wedding. The newly married couple left on an early afternoon train for a wedding trip, and after spending a fortnight at Del Monte and other coast points, they will make San Francisco their home."⁹⁵ The next day Jastro departed for the National Cattle Raisers meeting at Tucson, Arizona.⁹⁶

The Koshlands became notable in San Francisco social and business circles. In 1922 Mr. and Mrs. Koshland, who resided at the opulent Palace Hotel,⁹⁷ were founding members of the San Francisco Opera, and in 1928 Max Koshland was Chairman of the San Francisco Stock Exchange. That October the Koshlands made a one day, round-trip airplane flight to a new airfield at Taft, California.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Bakersfield Californian, Jan 5, 1914; Kern County Marriages, p 116, Jan 5 [sic], 1914

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Los Angeles Times, Jan 6, 1914

⁹⁷ *Who's Who among the Women of California*, p 487 (1922). The Palace Hotel built in 1875 was considered the largest, most luxurious and costly hotel in the world and was the American manifestation of grand hotels of Europe. The Palace burned during the San Francisco earthquake of April 18, 1906. It re-opened in 1909.

⁹⁸ Bakersfield Californian, Oct 13, 1928. The Koshlands had oil investments in Kern County. In 1933 they stayed at the Padre Hotel in Bakersfield. Bakersfield Californian, Feb 11, 1933. As described later, her sister's son was in the airplane business.

In summer 1937, 66 year-old Max I. Koshland suffered a heart attack while at Santa Barbara. His wife was at his bedside when death came.⁹⁹ Over the next several months May visited her sister, Carolyn Louise Chadbourne, at Montecito.¹⁰⁰

Carolyn Louise Jastro Chadbourne

The story of Carolyn Louise and her children is a longer one. On October 16, 1900 Henry Jastro took the night train from Bakersfield to Los Angeles¹⁰¹ and the next day attended a private, afternoon wedding at the home of his sister's daughter Sarah Harris Frank. There, Reverend Warren F. Day solemnized the union of Carolyn Jastro and Merriam Otis Chadbourne.¹⁰² A notice in the Daily Californian mistakenly identified Chadbourne as "Melvin Chadwin" of Los Angeles, but the rest of the story was correct. Chadbourne was a long-time Southern California resident and a "wealthy mining man with large interests in New Mexico and Arizona."¹⁰³

By December 1915 Carolyn Louise and Merriam O. Chadbourne were divorced. But in 1909 while they lived in New Mexico they had a daughter they named Carolyn. She did not marry and lived most of her life at Montecito, California with her mother, Carolyn Louise Jastro Chadbourne, at her home on Arroyico Lane. The mother died at Montecito in 1954.¹⁰⁴ The daughter died at Santa Barbara in 1994.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ Bakersfield Californian, Jun 23, 1937. Max Koshland was buried at Santa Barbara.

¹⁰⁰ May Koshland, 81, died on July 11, 1963 after an extended illness at Santa Barbara. Private services were held at Bakersfield, and interment was at the Jastro family mausoleum in Union Cemetery. Bakersfield Californian, Jul 13, 1963

¹⁰¹ Bakersfield Californian, Oct 16, 1900

¹⁰² Los Angeles Times, Oct 18, 1900, p I-5

¹⁰³ Not mentioned was Chadbourne's father F.S. Chadbourne, who owned F.S. Chadbourne & Company Furniture and Bedding of San Francisco.

¹⁰⁴ She died Dec 29, 1954 at age 74

Henry Jastro's grandson Jack Chadbourne



Jack Chadbourne and his plane.

Jack

On May 27, 1907 at Albuquerque, New Mexico, Carolyn Louise Jastro Chadbourne had a son who was named Henry Alexander Jastro Chadbourne. Jack, as he came to be known, attended Columbia and Princeton Universities, although he might not have graduated from either institution.¹⁰⁶

In 1927 Jack married the daughter of Israel Putnam of Putnam Publishing Company, New York.¹⁰⁷ Jack and Eunice Putnam Chadbourne had a son, born in 1928 at Santa Barbara.¹⁰⁸ That year, 21 year-old Jack Chadbourne founded a California flying service at Carpinteria airfield and by 1933 was president of Aircraft Sales Company and a co-partner in Donze Air Space Services.¹⁰⁹ His financial adviser

¹⁰⁵ Daughter Carolyn died Feb 9, 1994 at age 84

¹⁰⁶ Los Angeles Times, Jan 12, 1933

¹⁰⁷ Married Jan 18, 1927

¹⁰⁸ Born Feb 10, 1928

¹⁰⁹ *Pied Cow*, Summer 1997, ISSN 0741-0360, Vol. 14, No. 2, Issue 29, a publication of the Chadbourne Association, HCR 77, Box 8350, Chadbourne's Ridge, **www.gilbertgia.com pg 28 of 49**

was his aunt's husband, Max I. Koshland.¹¹⁰ Jack and Eunice Chadbourne divorced in July 1929. Eunice was awarded custody of their son, and she and the boy moved east.

In late June 1940 Captain A.J. [*sic*] Chadbourne identified as a "Santa Barbara sportsman" was at his home around midnight when he came down with a "nervous condition" that a newspaper said was brought on by an air crash two years earlier while he was flying for the Chinese Government in Asia. According to the Bakersfield Californian, Jack was paid \$1,500 a month flying for the Chinese air force, and that he also had piloted warplanes for the Loyalists in Spain.¹¹¹ The same account noted that in a subsequent auto accident he had injured his back and could no longer fly.

In June 1940 after Jack was taken to hospital, a fire broke out upstairs at his home. A firefighter looking under a bed found the body of Jack's 25-year-old wife, Patricia. She had been smoking, and a jar of sleeping pills lay nearby.¹¹² In 1942 Jack became a \$21-a-month private in the US Army. He said that year, "I fought in

North Waterborough, MN 04061. <http://chadbourne.org/piedcows> . In 1933 Jack married Margaret Reeve Morrow of New York. The marriage lasted a few months. A year later he married Patricia C. Cram, also of New York. None of those unions resulted in children.

¹¹⁰ Los Angeles Times, Sep 30, 1928

¹¹¹ Bakersfield Californian, Jan 6, 1937: "San Francisco, Jan. 6. Enlistment of 100 fighting men to join the Spanish loyalist forces in their battle against insurgent armies was under way in San Francisco today. ... The group will join 500 volunteers in New York, known as the Debs Brigade. These in turn will join the International Brigade in Spain..."

¹¹² Los Angeles Times, Jun 29, 1940

the other wars for money, but I'm fighting in this one simply because I want to see the American way of life continued."¹¹³

In 1950 Los Angeles Times columnist Braven Dyer called Jack, who was then 43 and identified as a "sportsman" in Santa Barbara, and asked him to identify the best quarterback in professional football.¹¹⁴ Jack's name did not appear again in newspapers until his mother died in 1954.¹¹⁵ Nine years later an account noting May Koshland's death mentioned Jack.¹¹⁶

His name dropped out of US newspapers for six years, but in 1969 he wrote to a Spanish magazine about the Vietnam War and prefaced his comments with these words, "Some years ago I wrote a letter to the magazine stating that the Americans would lose their war in Indochina, and that was in an era when the press regularly announced the prompt 'liquidation' of the Viet Cong. I based my prediction on my long residence in Asia before and after WWII, on my knowledge of the terrain of Indochina, on the nature of the F.N.L., and on my personal experience with the US military. I had in fact been an officer on MacArthur's general staff in Korea and had seen Vo Nguyen Giap in 1954, a little before Dien Bien Fu."¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Salt Lake City Tribune, Apr 30, 1942 (by AP wire from Merced, California Apr 29, 1942)

¹¹⁴ Los Angeles Times, Nov 7, 1950

¹¹⁵ Dec 29, 1954. According to an obituary of Carolyn Louise Chadbourne, her son and daughter, Jack and Carolyn, had been living with her at her home in Montecito. Jack's name did not appear in the probate of his sister's estate (Letter to Gilbert P. Gia from Helen Rydell, Santa Barbara County Genealogical Society).

¹¹⁶ Bakersfield Californian, Jul 13, 1963

¹¹⁷ Blanco y Negro (Madrid, Spain) Sep 13, 1969. See Appendix for text in Spanish.

In 2015 Imogene Brower wrote, "After Louise J. Chadbourne died, Jack went to Spain and eventually met Manuele Benitez, whom he married. Her influence is credited with ending his drinking. Carleton and I visited them once at their apartment in Madrid during the 1970s. He was now called Enreque. Jack was happy, sober, and later became baptized to please his wife. Jack's family was not religious. Neither May Koshland, Louise J. Chadbourne nor Carolyn had any religions affiliations or customs."¹¹⁸

Henry Jastro's Great-Grandsons

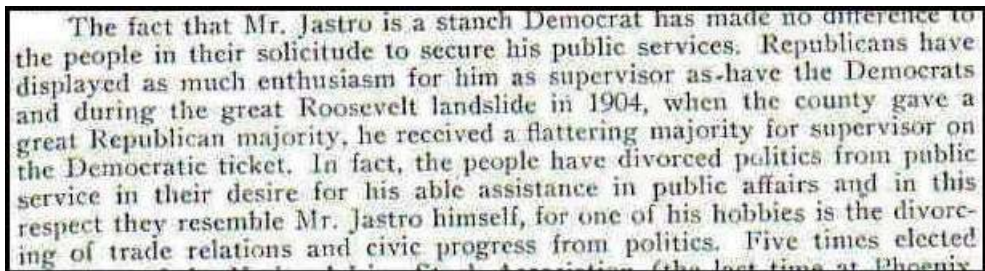
As mention above, Jack and Eunice divorced in 1929, went their separate ways, and the mother and son moved east. A researcher with the Chadbourne Family Association found the name "H.A. Chadborn," 2 years, in the 1930 US Census for Manhattan. Listed in the household with the child was a Frank Putnam. After the divorce Eunice married twice again. Her second husband (1937) was Alfred Valentine Leaman III and her third, in 1939, was Harry Van Faust Brower.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Letter of Aug 6, 2015 to Gilbert P. Gia from Jack's daughter-in-law Imogene Brower (Mrs. Carleton Chadbourne Brower) of Sarasota, Florida

¹¹⁹ East Hampton (New York) Star, Mar 30, 1939

The 1954 probate of Carolyn Jastro Chadbourne's estate named the son of her brother Jack, but the boy's surname was then Brower. Probate also mentioned that Jack's son had two sons of his own.¹²⁰

Jastro and the Reform Movement



The fact that Mr. Jastro is a staunch Democrat has made no difference to the people in their solicitude to secure his public services. Republicans have displayed as much enthusiasm for him as supervisor as have the Democrats and during the great Roosevelt landslide in 1904, when the county gave a great Republican majority, he received a flattering majority for supervisor on the Democratic ticket. In fact, the people have divorced politics from public service in their desire for his able assistance in public affairs and in this respect they resemble Mr. Jastro himself, for one of his hobbies is the divorcing of trade relations and civic progress from politics. Five times elected

Wallace Melvin Morgan, History of Kern County, California, 1914

By 1912 Jastro's influence over Kern County government was in decline.¹²¹ In summer 1912, a Democratic aspirant for the Board of Supervisors named J.A. Waltman assailed the Kern County Land Company for its long-time domination of Kern County politics, and Windy, as the *Californian* named Waltman, accused Supervisor Jastro of being "the Czar and the equalizer of Land Company taxes for the last 20 years." But Jastro had his supporter, a group of which harangued Windy on the public sidewalk "and sent him packing."¹²²

¹²⁰ Letter to Gilbert P. Gia from Santa Barbara Genealogical Society. Henry Jastro's grandson, Carlton Brower, joined the US Foreign Service in 1956. Carlton had two sons. One received a PhD in Chemistry from the University of North Carolina, and the other received a PhD in Physics from Harvard University. (Letter of Aug 6, 2015 to Gilbert P. Gia from Jack's daughter-in-law Imogene Brower (Mrs. Carleton Chadbourne Brower) of Sarasota, Florida)

¹²¹ In 1912 an oil portrait of Jastro was hung in the new Kern County courthouse. Morning Echo, Feb 28, 1912, p 34

¹²² Morning Echo, Jul 31, 1912, p 1, col 3

Another public challenge arose at the end of summer when an H.A. Ingalls accused Jastro of using his "... great and almost unlimited power of wealth and official position to prevent the development of this county." Ingalls described his angry run-in with the chairman: "Nearly a year ago I went to the Board of Supervisors. Their representative, Mr. Jastro, was not present, and the rest of the board advised me to see him first. I approached his 'majesty' as he entered the courthouse, told him the desire of the suffering settlers for a road, and, reminding him of several former petitions having failed, the time had come when the road was a necessity, etc. He turned upon me with that wise, patronizing manner of his, stating that he knew all about the matter, and the settlers would get a road when he got ready to let them have it, or when it suited the interests of the Land Company."

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H.A. Jastro, about 1918

Agitation continued, but Jastro was reelected to the Board of Supervisors. A year later in response to criticism of Jastro and the Old Guard, his friend Alfred Harrell wrote,

¹²³ Morning Echo, Aug 21, 1912, p 4, col 3-4

“But as Mr. Jastro well says, the work of the county government is appreciated by the major number of citizens. That is attested by popular approval whenever the people have opportunity to express themselves at the polls, and despite daily misrepresentation, we have not the slightest doubt that the petty partisans will this year find that they have appealed in vain to a partisan spirit that does not exist.”¹²⁴

In 1915 the Board of Supervisors moved to reelect Jastro as Chairman of the Board, but before the vote was called, Jastro, who was then 55, said,

“I want to say that my health now is not the best. As you know, I have been prevented from attending a number of meetings in the past, and my ill health may interfere in the future. However, if you think that I can serve you under these conditions, I shall interpose no objection.”¹²⁵

After he was reelected Jastro responded,

“I want to thank you very sincerely. Not many men have been honored with an office for as many terms as I have held the chairmanship of this board. This, I believe, is my twenty-first year as chairman of the board of supervisors of this county. I have tried to be absolutely fair. Many unjust assaults have been made against this board, but the pendulum is swinging back now, and people are coming to see that these attacks have not been made in good faith. As to the future, I promise that I shall do the best in my power for the interests of the county. Any mistakes that I may make will be of the head and not the heart.”¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Bakersfield Californian, Dec 6, 1913

¹²⁵ Bakersfield Californian, Jan 4, 1915, p 8; City directories of 1913-23 show that Henry A. Jastro resided at 2229-19th Street, which is three blocks west of the Masonic Temple.

¹²⁶ Bakersfield Californian, Jan 4, 1915, p 8

Jastro became ill five months later while out of the county, but he was back by June¹²⁷ and in July attended a board of supervisors' meeting to sort out allegations against J.W. Jamison for extorting money from saloon men at Fellows. Ever-practical Jastro said in regard to recourse to the law, "You gentlemen of the board can do what you please with this application. I don't want to put these men in a position where they might have to do crooked work to pay the levee upon them..."

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On the evening of March 4, 1916 the Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce and Kern County Board of Trade honored the Board of Supervisors and in particular honored Henry A. Jastro. At the high point of the evening, Col. E. M. Roberts rose to toast his friend. The Californian wrote, "As Mr. Jastro stood ... the banquetters [*sic*] rose en masse and cheered and cheered again, nor would the applause be stilled as the official sought to make himself heard. And when later [*Jastro*] said, 'They may criticize us, but no man can point to a dollar that your Board has expended in your behalf for which you have not received 100 cents value,' the applause broke forth again, and when the chairman of 20 years had finished and resumed his seat, once again the banquetters rose en-mass and gave voice to their approval in prolonged applause."¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Bakersfield Californian, Jun 7, 1915

¹²⁸ Bakersfield Californian, Jul 9, 1915

¹²⁹ Bakersfield Californian, Mar 3, 1916



H.A. Jastro, center, about 1924¹³⁰

Historian Lynn Hay Rudy wrote, "The Old Guard led by H.A. Jastro, Col. Roberts, and Alfred Harrell's Daily Californian finally became so corrupt it was overthrown by a reform faction of opposition Republicans. The Old Guard was done in by the new city charter of 1915." ¹³¹

In 1915 the state attempted to disqualify the entire Kern County Grand Jury, and by the end of the year Superior Court Judge Farmer had been replaced by Judge William H. Langdon of Stanislaus County. Citizens argued for removal of Sheriff Dan Boone Newell to prevent him from seating a replacement Grand Jury. Reason? Because they said Newell would choose those "... recipients of favors from the Board of Supervisors, employees of the Kern County Land Company whose manager is H.A.

¹³⁰ Image courtesy of Sidney Allen, grandson of A.J. Crites

¹³¹ Lynn Hay Rudy, *Granddad*, p 89

Jastro, chairman of the board." Another complaint was that 30 percent of the names on Newell's list were saloon keepers and other Old Guard men. ¹³²

Jastro's declining health and increasing criticism of back-room politics caused him to step down in 1916 as chairman of the Kern County Board of Supervisors, ¹³³ although for the next seven years he continued as general chairman of the Kern County Land Company. The position, however, did not shield him from Kern County courts.

In the time he chaired the Board of Supervisors, it authorized \$12,000 in county highway funds to buy road equipment that was subsequently employed for Southern Pacific railroad work. A year after Jastro left the board, charges were brought against him for illegally benefiting the Southern Pacific Railroad, but after the Grand Jury took up allegation and examined witnesses, it found Jastro not guilty. ¹³⁴

After the US entered WWI, Jastro's prominence coupled with growing antipathy toward German-Americans brought him nearer to that group, but Jastro's history in politics, his connections with influential business groups, and his service on war-time boards erased questions about his loyalty. ¹³⁵

¹³² Bakersfield Californian, Nov 8, 1915, p 6

¹³³ Bakersfield Californian, Dec 30, 1916, p 1, col 2-4

¹³⁴ Kern County Superior Court, Jan 1917. Criminal Case 1737

¹³⁵ Petroleum consultant Charles F. von Petersdorff, with whom Jastro traveled at the turn of the century (Bakersfield Californian, May 11, 1897 as cited by Bakersfield Californian, May 11, 1937) admitted he accepted money from a German agent to investigate oil deposits in Mexico (Bakersfield Californian, Jan 14, 1918); In 1908 Jastro was a member of the singing group *Germania Maennerchor* organized by Franz Buckreus. Their program of Dec 29, 1908 is in the scrapbook entitled *Antique Bakersfield*, which is in the Jack Maguire Local History Room vault, Kern County Library, Bakersfield; In 1918 Buckreus was accused of sedition (see Gilbert P. Gia, *Sedition in Bakersfield, 1918*, www.scribd.com, gilbertgia.com/articlePages/civRights1.html).

Jastro's commitment to the US war effort was above reproach. In 1917 he accepted appointment as Kern County representative to the California Association of Practical Farmers, a group created to stabilize the nation's food supply.¹³⁶ In honoring his pledge to the State Council of Defense to "do what was in his power" to aid agriculture, Jastro extended access to Land Company water for farmers along the Calloway and Beardsley canals. That action alone added 20,000 tons of corn to the nation's food supply.¹³⁷

All was not positive. In 1918 Jastro testified in a case brought against him by Matthew S. Platz who demanded that Jastro pay back \$351.55, the amount based on 161 shares of stock that Jastro allegedly owned in Kern Valley Bank when it closed its doors in May 1911. Jastro denied he owned the shares and denied he had anything to do with closing the bank. The court ordered Jastro to pay.¹³⁸

He remained active in Bakersfield business and social communities. In 1918 he erected a two-story brick building at 1800-19th Street, today known as the Old Standard Oil building.¹³⁹ In 1920 Roland E. Dye who was Scout Executive of the Boy Scouts of America, thanked Jastro for making possible a week-end camp at the base

¹³⁶ Bakersfield Californian, Jun 11, 1917

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Kern County Superior Court, Civil Division. Oct 22, 1918, Folder No. 8766

¹³⁹ Bakersfield Californian, Jul 10, 1917

of China Grade Bluffs.¹⁴⁰ In 1921 Jastro was elected president of the California State Agriculture Board.¹⁴¹

Later that year he suffered what was probably a heart attack. For several months he convalesced at San Francisco, but by April 1923 he was present at Bakersfield for the dedication of the new, \$240,000 Masonic building on 19th Street.¹⁴² Days later he had another heart attack and was taken to Mercy Hospital,¹⁴³ but four months later the 71 year-old met the challenge of his old friend California Governor Friend Richardson's to meet him at the Sacramento Street Fair for a horseshoe-pitching contest.¹⁴⁴

Jastro retired from the Kern County Land Company in early 1924,¹⁴⁵ but he did not rest. In January he was a judge at Kern County Union High School of a debate between Bakersfield Junior College and the University of Southern California.¹⁴⁶ In February, a long-forgotten event in Jastro's life surfaced when he spoke before the Kern County Realty Board and told of signing a contract for Haggin & Carr in 1887 to

¹⁴⁰ Bakersfield Californian, Jan 10, 1920, p 4. See "A History of Kern County Boy Scouting," gilbertgia.com/hist_articles/community

¹⁴¹ It was a post he had held twice in the past, the first time in 1907. Bakersfield Californian, Feb 11, 1921, pp 1, 3

¹⁴² He spoke on the history of Masonry in Kern County. Bakersfield Californian, Apr 14, 1923.

¹⁴³ Bakersfield Californian, Apr 19, 1923

¹⁴⁴ Jastro and Gage became acquainted in the late 1860s when they worked for Phineas Banning at Los Angeles. Bakersfield Californian, Aug 28, 1923, p 7, c 2.

¹⁴⁵ Los Angeles Times, Feb 17, 1924, E15. Frank G. Munzer succeeded Jastro.

¹⁴⁶ Bakersfield Californian, Jan 30, 1924. The topic: "Resolved that Congress should have the power to nullify a decision of the Supreme Court by reenacting a law declared unconstitutional."

supply Oakland mills with 5,900 bales of cotton. In order to fill that contract, Jastro illegally hired African-American contract laborers from the South. Jastro recalled that he was fined \$5,000 and sentenced to six months in jail. "I still owe my country that six months. We found out we could raise good cotton, but labor conditions made the plan a failure."¹⁴⁷

Henry Alexander Jastro's Last Day

On January 26, 1925, Jastro enjoyed his last day of good health walking and riding at his Bloomfield Ranch, and the next day "an old but disregarded ailment of the heart muscles manifested itself and from then on, though seemingly improved on occasions, recurring attacks so undermined his strength and sapped his vitality that within the last few days his family and close friends came to the realization that he could not recover."¹⁴⁸ In late February he was moved to San Francisco to be near specialists and convalesce at the Palace Hotel.¹⁴⁹ His daughter May was with him when he died on April 15.

¹⁴⁷ Bakersfield Californian, Feb 15, 1925. Jastro's story recalled a time of slowing economic growth and increasing resistance against Chinese labor. In 1884 Haggin & Carr planted 1,000 acres to cotton, and in a cost-saving move in November, Jastro sent F. M. Ownbey to South Carolina to hire black workers. (Jastro said that untrained Chinese cotton-pickers, spoiled harvests.) The white labor force felt threatened by the new arrivals. After three trains of African-Americans showed up, 130 families in all, "the White Citizens Committee convinced the Negroes that their wages were too low," and all but 12 families left the employee of Haggin & Carr to seek work elsewhere (*Inside Historic Kern*, Kern Co Historical Society, 1982, p 123; Morgan, *History of Kern County*, p 93). "When he [*Jastro*] got up against government red tape on account of this imported labor, he solved his problems by setting fire to the cotton crop and burning it in the field (*Historic Kern*, Journal of the Kern Co Historical Society, Sep 1976, as cited in *Inside Historic Kern*, 1982)

¹⁴⁸ Los Angeles Times, Apr 17, 1925, citing Bakersfield Californian, Apr 16, 1925

¹⁴⁹ Bakersfield Californian, Feb 11, 1921



H. A. Jastro, about 1922

What follows are some of his accomplishments: Mayor of Bakersfield, 1892-93;¹⁵⁰ trustee of Bakersfield Schools, 1893; chairman, Kern County Board of Supervisors, 1892-1916; member, Kern County Fair Grounds Association, 1892; member, state Democratic Central Committee; delegate, National Democratic Convention, 1900 and 1908; General Manager, Kern County Land Company, 1903-1924; director, Independent Oil Producers Agency, 1904; board member, McKittrick Extension Oil Company, 1905;¹⁵¹ Bakersfield theater owner, 1904-05; controlling director, Southern Hotel Association, 1909; President, California State Board of Agriculture, 1908-1910; President, National Live Stock Association, 1908-1910 and 1912-4;¹⁵² director and secretary, Bakersfield Sandstone Brick;¹⁵³ Regent Ex-officio, University

¹⁵⁰ Bakersfield Californian, Apr 15, 1925, p 1, 5. Daily Californian, Oct 7, 1892 and Jan 23, 1893. (Obituaries)

¹⁵¹ Bakersfield Californian, Oct 15, 1905.

¹⁵² Today the National Cattlemen's Beef Association beefusa.org/

¹⁵³ Bakersfield Californian, Nov 28, 1966, p 4a

of California, 1909-10, 1921-1925; President, Security Trust Bank; chairman, Finance Building Committee for new Masonic Temple, 1922; President, California State Fair; majority owner of Street Railway and Electric Lighting Company, Albuquerque, New Mexico; chairman, California Wood Industry, US War Industries Board, 1918; President, T.J. West Company, Kern County Cotton Compress, 1924.¹⁵⁴

His funeral was held on Saturday April 18, 1925 at the Bakersfield Masonic Temple auditorium. Flowers had arrived from California Governor Friend W. Richardson, Captain and Mrs. William H. McKittrick of Santa Monica, federal employee John P. McLaughlin,¹⁵⁵ the Board of Regents of the University of California, the National Live Stock Association, the California Cattlemen's Association, Pacific Southwest Trust and Savings Bank, Standard Oil Company, First National Bank of Los Angeles, Security Trust Company of Bakersfield, and Bakersfield and Taft Rotary and Kiwanis.

Pallbearers were leaders in Kern County business and government: banker Arthur S. Crites, merchant J.A. Hughes, Bakersfield Californian owner Alfred Harrell, businessman L.P. St Clair, investor William A. Howell, and contractor William J. Schultz. Honorary Pallbearers included General Manager of Kern County Land Company F.G. Munzer, Boy Scouts Chairman Charles Paine, F.H. Hillman of the State Board of Agriculture, Vice President of Standard Oil Robert Easton, Kern County investor and land owner Louis V. Olcese, oil investor H.I. Tupman, agriculture and oil investor Charles A. Barlow,¹⁵⁶ land-title expert and attorney A.T. Lightner,

¹⁵⁴ Bakersfield Californian, Sep 9, 1924, p 11

¹⁵⁵ Collector of US Internal Revenue, San Francisco

¹⁵⁶ Barlow succeeded Jastro as president of Bakersfield Cotton Compress Co. (Los Angeles Times, Apr 26, 1925)

businessman Alphonse Weill, pipeline contractor H.J. Brandt, oilfield owner William W. Colm, and pharmacist Edward A. Baer.

City streets were virtually empty as Dr. Willis G. White of the Presbyterian Church delivered the eulogy. Arthur S. Crites then spoke about Jastro's philanthropy: "His manifold deeds of kindness that are not generally known to the world are well-known to most of the lawyers in Bakersfield who had charge of probating wills of many unfortunate widows and orphans in this community."¹⁵⁷ Principal of Kern County Union High School Herman A. Spindt remarked that Jastro "always took a sincere interest in the high school activities and manifested a special interest in our agricultural and vocational departments." Leigh H. Irvine, Secretary of the Kern County Chamber of Commerce, noted that Jastro "... did all in his power to suppress factionalism," and that he had a "willingness to forgive former foes."¹⁵⁸ Grand Master David J. Reese of Ventura conducted the Masonic ritual,¹⁵⁹ and because Jastro also was a member of the Elks, their group also performed ritual.

The cortège to Union Cemetery was the most extensive in Bakersfield memory.¹⁶⁰ Jastro's remains were laid to rest next to the grave of his wife, Mary Whalen Baker

¹⁵⁷ Bakersfield Californian, Apr 16, 1925. In 1898 H.A. Jastro and E.M. Roberts "started out to canvas the town to secure assistance" for the widow and orphans of the Baum family that had been burned out of its home. (Daily Californian, Apr 12, 1898)

¹⁵⁸ Bakersfield Californian, Apr 16, 1925. The public might have recalled an event of 20 years earlier when Jastro pardoned Harry Burns, an employee of the KCLC who stole a horse and tack and led a posse of vaqueros on a 65-mile chase. Jastro visited Burns in his cell, learned he was 17, and concluded that Burns' life would be ruined if he was prosecuted. Burns, from an "honorable and prosperous family," got a second chance. Los Angeles Times, May 2, 1905, by special correspondence from Bakersfield, May 1

¹⁵⁹ Los Angeles Times, Apr 19, 1925, p 12

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

Jastro. Twelve uniformed officers of Frank S. Reynolds Post, American Legion, fired the final salute, and for the next 10 days town flags flew at half-mast.¹⁶¹

An academic survey of Kern County completed five years after Jastro's death said, "Since then, no political boss has been apparent. He was good for the community for 25 years. He was an iron man, but his long, personal statement about water in the 1923 newspaper shows a man who knew how to make a good case to the public and who was aware of how to set aside his distractors."¹⁶² A contemporary, Guy Hughes, expressed much the same. "On my rare visits to Bakersfield during the later years of his power, I would sometimes meet him. I was of no political significance, just a young cow man, with a few cows, striving to get ahead. H.A. Jastro would greet me by name, know my neighbors, asked as to their welfare, and how their cattle were doing. To the very last, he was a cow man, heart and soul."¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ Los Angeles Times, Apr 17, 1925, citing Bakersfield Californian, Apr 16, 1925

¹⁶² Bettie Daingerfield Anderson, *Survey of Kern County, California*. Columbia U., NY, 1932 [Beale Memorial Library]

¹⁶³ H. Guy Hughes, *Lynn's Valley Tales and Others*. Hall Letter Shop, Bakersfield, California, 1976.



Jastro Bandstand, Jastro Park, Bakersfield (2006 photo, Gilbert P. Gia)

In accordance with Jastro's will, in 1927 his daughters erected a bandstand at Jastro City Park between Truxtun and 18th Streets.¹⁶⁴ Above the bandstand's facade are the words "From Henry A. Jastro to the People of Bakersfield." His generous gift was acknowledged for years, but over time Bakersfield's memory faded.

In 1965 the estate of May Jastro Koshland endowed \$7,600,000 to the University of California to benefit worthy students. It is named the Henry A. Jastro Scholarship in Agriculture. Ever-practical Henry Alexander Jastro would have approved of that gift to posterity.

¹⁶⁴ Bakersfield Californian, Apr 23, 1927. The bandstand, designed by Charles H. Biggar and built by Henry Eissler, is faced with Indiana limestone. Speakers at the dedication of May 1 were Mayor L.K. Stoner and Alfred Harrell, who characterized himself as "a life-long friend of Jastro." The Kern Co Land Company, through Jastro, offered the land to the city for a park in 1902, but it was not developed until several years later (Los Angeles Times, May 2, 1905).



How Jewish was Jastro?

Newspapers offer no convincing answer to that question. Although he was in Bakersfield by about 1868, his name never appeared in connection with Jewish religious life. A few observations: Jastro's parents were Jews. He married May Emiline Whalen Baker who was a gentile. Jastro's sister Minnik married Leopold Harris and maintained a Jewish household in Los Angeles. In summer 1887 Henry Jastro and Alphonse Weill (who was Jewish) traveled together to San Francisco.¹⁶⁵ In the 1890s Jastro and daughters vacationed at Catalina with a party made up of both Jews and gentiles from Bakersfield.¹⁶⁶ Bakersfield Jews had gathered to worship by at least 1893,¹⁶⁷ but it was not until 1920 that Bakersfield had a synagogue or

¹⁶⁵ Kern County Californian, Jul 23, 1887

¹⁶⁶ Los Angeles Times, Aug 16, 1894, Aug 4, 1895

¹⁶⁷ Bakersfield Californian, Sep 12, 1893

meeting hall for Jews.¹⁶⁸ When Carolyn Louise Jastro attended the Marlborough School in mid-1890s she was a frequent visitor in the Jewish household of her cousin Rosa Adler. Carolyn Louise married a Christian, Merriam Chadbourne. In 1900 Jastro's other daughter, May, married William Greer, and in her second marriage, of 1914, she married Max Koshland. Both men were Jews. Jastro wrote in 1925, "I herewith subscribe \$250 for the support of St. Paul's Church¹⁶⁹ and to meet the obligations of the parish for the year 1925." Jastro's will bequeathed \$5,000 to the Catholic Mercy Hospital of Bakersfield and \$1,000 each to three San Francisco orphan asylums --Catholic, Russian Orthodox, and Hebrew.¹⁷⁰ Newspaper articles mentioning him said nothing about his religious affiliation. Perhaps his observance was private.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ Bakersfield Californian, Sep 23, 1920, "Woman's Club Building Sold, People of Jewish Faith to Establish Community Home Here."

¹⁶⁹ Episcopal Church, Bakersfield. This note is in the Jastro probate file, Kern County Courthouse. From the Lynn Hay Rudy private, Bakersfield newspaper database: "June 2, 1892: Bondsmen for the new Methodist Episcopal Church south are Jastro, Blodget, B. A. Hayden and O. O. Mattson."

¹⁷⁰ In Judaism *tzedakah* [צדקה] refers to the religious obligation to do what is right and just, unlike philanthropy, which is voluntary. Tzedakah is performed regardless of one's financial standing.

¹⁷¹ A surprise card party for Mrs. Alphonse Weill in 1898 brought together Mr. and Mrs. L.M. Dinkelspiel, Mr. and Mrs. A. Alexander, Mr. and Mrs. Levy, Mrs. Rosenfeld, Misses Williams, Gorham, McDougal, Messrs. E.R. Cole, Lucien Beer, Louis Strauss and H.A. Jastro. "The booby prize was awarded to Commodore Jastro." Daily Californian, Mar 18, 1898

APPENDIX

Jack Chadbourne's letter to the editor, Blanco y Negro (Madrid, Spain)
September 13, 1969

"Hace algunos anos escribi una carta a esta revista diciendo que los norteamericanos iban a perder su guerra en Indochina, esto en las epoca cuando los comunicados anunciaban regularmente las pronta "liquidacion" del Viet Cong. Basaba mi prediccion en una larga residencia an Asia, antes de las II Guerra Mundial y despues de ella, en mis conocimientos del terreno de Indochina y de la naturaleza del F.N.L. y en mi experiencia personal con el aparato militar estadounidense. En efecto, ya habia sido oficial en el Estado Mayor de Mac Arthur en Corea y habia encontrado a Vo Nguyen Giap en 1954, un poc antes de la baa de Dien Bien Fu."

("In 1954, General Giap led the Viet Minh army in the decisive battle at Dien Bien Phu, crushing French colonial forces and bringing an end to the Franco-Vietnamese War. After the war, Giap remained commander in chief of the People's Army of Vietnam.") Wikipedia

My thanks to Lynn Hay Rudy and Jerry Ludeke for their help with this work. Errors that remain are my own.--Gilbert Gia

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