

Pioneer

**D. S. Faulkner
Recalls City's
Early History**

Few of the city's pioneers recall the early history of the City of Torrance as vividly as D. S. Faulkner, vice-president of National Supply Company, who began working for the Union Tool Company, the present company's predecessor, on the day that the first issue of The Torrance Herald was published.

"Speaking at the 'Salute to Industry' dinner given by the Torrance Chamber of Commerce on March 24, 1947, Mr. Faulkner traced the early history of the city for the assemblage.

"I have made a search of the early minutes of the directors' meetings of Union Tool Company, which as most of you know was the predecessor of the National Supply Company.

"I find that on June 5, 1911, a letter was written Union Tool Company stating that the Dominguez Land Company had purchased from the Dominguez Estate a certain portion of the Dominguez Ranch and Dominguez Water Company, and were interested in developing this property as an industrial and residential community.

"Union Tool Company, then located in one of the congested districts of Los Angeles and looking for a plant site where future expansion would be possible, were given the privilege of purchasing 25 per cent of the stock of Dominguez Land Company upon the condition that they move their Los Angeles plant to the Dominguez Land



CELEBRATION OF 1913—This is one of the few times that Mr. Jared Sidney Torrance, second from right, was ever photographed. The occasion, according to the caption on this old photograph, was to celebrate the announcement, on Feb. 22, 1913, that the Llewellyn Iron Works was coming to Torrance. Other pioneer

citizens in the picture are, left to right: Harry Paige, George W. Neill, Fay L. Parks, Charles Long, George A. Proctor, Harum E. Reeve, Jack Isen (smiling), C. A. Paxman (in back), Burr Peck (bow tie), B. M. Knutson (back, white collar), Vern Zuver (cap), A. H. Bartlett, Mr. Torrance and Charles Walker.

Company's new tract and have it in operation within 18 months from July 1, 1911.

"It is our understanding that a similar proposition was made to the Llewellyn Iron Works, whose principal place of business was also located in Los Angeles at that time.

"At a later meeting of the Union Tool Company board in September, 1911, the proposition was accepted subject to certain qualifications, one of which was that the Pacific Electric Railway would eventually locate its repair shops in Torrance, would provide all necessary trackage for freight service to and from industries located in Torrance, and lay a standard gauge track in place of the narrow gauge electric lines then running between Los Angeles and San Pedro. The directors of Union Tool Company also authorized a bond issue of \$500,000 in order to provide monies for erection of the plant, buildings, machinery, etc., at their new site.

"It is interesting to note that at this time the community had not as yet been named, and in order for Union Tool Company to transfer its

principal place of business from Oleum, Calif., to its new manufacturing site, it was necessary that they list its principal place of business as 'Dominguez, on the 279-acre tract of the A. J. McGuire tract of the Rancho San Pedro, Los Angeles county, Calif.'

"Skipping over the many difficulties encountered in building complete manufacturing facilities in the middle of a large ranch with no municipal facilities available, the plant was eventually completed and manufacturing operations started in December, 1912.

"Practically the entire personnel employed in the Los Angeles works transferred its activities to Torrance, and it gives me a great deal of pleasure and pride to state that a number of those boys who made the move with us in 1912 are still employed by the company and are with us to this night.

"If you will pardon me, I would ask the boys whom I have just mentioned and who are seated at table 37, to stand up for just a moment so that you may all see what a Torrance pioneer really looks like. The length of service of these boys extends up to 45 year period.

"They are Reese James, Walter Moll, Fred George, Thomas Lewis, Edward Timbs, Ben Hannebrink and R. R. Smith.

"Approximately 280 employees made the move at that time, and a great many of them were desirous of making their home in the new community, which then was given the name of Torrance" after Mr. J. S. Torrance, prominent Los Angeles financier and one of the organizers of the Dominguez Land company.

"During 1912 the townsite was being laid out with miles of streets, sidewalks, curbs and sewers, and also three large rooming houses with space for retail business establishments on the ground floor as well as a depot.

To give a typical example of the fact that history repeats itself, the housing situation presented the same difficulties then as we are faced with today. Many of the employees had selected homesites, but the building of the homes was made in the building of the manufacturing facilities.

In fact, dissatisfaction had reached such a critical stage that a special meeting of the board of directors of the Union Tool Company was called for the sole purpose of presenting the situation to the Dominguez

Land Company in a relatively uncomplimentary manner.

"When manufacturing did get under way, only three or four homes had been completed—all of them being occupied by the following employees of the Union Tool Company in the order of their moving in: Messrs L. Garretson, John B. Smith, Dick Smith and Clinton Nofthrup, Dick Smith, whom most of you know, is with us tonight at table 18.

"Needless to say, many of the problems always faced by pioneers in any new venture had to be overcome. Organization of the fire department was one of the first civic activities and a perusal of recent issues of the Torrance Herald indicates the fire department problem is still with us—especially as it pertains to the proper housing of same. However, in those days it is my understanding that employees of the department paid for the privilege of belonging instead of being on city payroll.

"The westerly winds which in summertime generally keep the temperature of Torrance from 5 to 10 degrees below that of our neighboring City of Los Angeles, were a great nuisance in those early days, as they carried large quantities of sand from unoccupied plots of lands directly into our machine tools, necessitating an unusual amount of maintenance work, but on the other hand those vacant fields provided some of the best crops of mushrooms anywhere obtainable and harvesting this crop provided the principal noon-hour diversion.

"It wasn't long afterward that Torrance started hitting its stride, and numerous corporations, including Llewellyn Iron Works and Pacific Electric Railway, saw the advisability of locating in the new industrial area with its convenient harbor facilities and other lines of transportation.

"Shortly after the Torrance plant was completed, Union Tool Company in direct contrast with the present-day trend, expanded its activities to a plant in West Chicago, Ill., and a little later to another one at Carnegie, Pa., a suburb of Pittsburgh. Today the trend is the other way and our eastern friends are approaching the advisability of extending their activities from the east to the west.

"We sometimes have to marvel at the foresight displayed by our directors back in 1911 when they decided to go in debt and build a new plant where they did.

**Jack Isen and
Harry H. Dolley
No. 1 Merchants**

Jack Isen and Harry H. Dolley, whose advertisements appear in the first issue of the Torrance Herald, are credited with being the first merchants on the new city townsite.

Isen directed his ad to the attention of Union Tool Company workers, since his establishment was then across the street. Dolley established the city's first drug store, called the Rexall Store, and his first ad featured "Hot Drinks for Cold Weather." He came to Torrance March 10, 1913, and the Dolley Drug Store was at Sartori avenue and El Prado.

Torrance was incorporated as a sixth class city on May 12, 1921, and became a chartered city by vote of its citizens on Aug. 20, 1947.

Population of Torrance by the 1940 government census was 9550 persons; estimated population now is approximately 19,000.

**A NEW INDUSTRY
for TORRANCE**

CORROSION AND HIGH TEMPERATURE APPLICATION
VALVES — AIRCRAFT FITTINGS
FITTINGS — BOLTS AND NUTS
MACHINE PRODUCTS

**Precision Equipment
Co., Inc.**

1835 W. 220th STREET TORRANCE, CALIF.
PHONE TORRANCE 1805



— for your information

ALL OF THE
PAINTING

— inside and out
of the Beautiful

TORRANCE
HERALD
BUILDING

— was done by

**A. W.
STRAND
AND SON**
PAINT CONTRACTOR

NO JOB TOO LARGE—NO JOB TOO SMALL

1639 220th Street
Torrance

Phones T. 2854—TE 3-1107

Phone 60-W Res: 47-M

TORRANCE PLUMBING CO.
F. L. Parks, Proprietor
"Everything in Plumbing"

Agents for
COLE GAS FURNACES
Keep Your Home At Summer Heat The Year "Round"
Inexpensive and Efficient Cost — Approximately
\$35.00 Installed
Estimates Gladly Given On Your Work
OPPOSITE BANK "SHEET METAL WORK" TORRANCE

RE-PRINT FROM
AN EARLY ISSUE
OF THE TORRANCE
HERALD!

for 31 YEARS

— The Torrance Plumbing Company has been a regular advertiser in the Torrance Herald . . . telling the people of its fine service and its excellent products. Together with the Torrance Herald . . . we have helped build the city . . . together we will march forward to greater things to come.

CONGRATULATIONS TO GROVER WHYTE AND ED BROWN

TORRANCE PLUMBING CO.

F. L. Parks
1418 Marcelina

Parke Montague
Torrance

The American Rock Wool Corp.

Manufacturers of **THERMAL INSULATION**

for **HOME AND INDUSTRIAL USES**

**THE TORRANCE PLANT SERVES THE WEST COAST
AS OUR SIX PLANTS SERVE THE NATION**