

R. V. DODGE

(250 Federal Building)

Coming to San Diego in November, 1879, nearly 50 years ago, to get away from railroading. I found the ideal place, as there was not a rail south of Santa Ana. When I learned that the California Southern railway was to be built out of San Diego, I found I was not entirely weaned, and put in an application for the first engine. The first engine, however, came over the Union and Central Pacific roads to San Francisco on its own wheels, and by sailing vessel to San Diego. A man came with her and I had to wait for No. 2, which came around Cape Horn in the hold of the James A. Wright, a three-masted ship. At that time rails were laid as far as Old Town. I stayed with the road on construction until 1883 when the road was completed to San Bernardino, when I had a regular run between National City and San Bernardino. The big flood of March, 1884, almost washed the road out of existence, and I was marooned near De Luz at the mouth of Temecula canyon. In order to get home I was obliged to walk 56 miles, and that ended my railroad career. At that time rails weighed 50 lbs. to the yard; now they weigh 120 lbs. or more. Steam pressure on boilers was 125 lbs.; now it is 250. After all of these years, a locomotive has a fascination for me, and I often go to the station to have a look at them.

PERCY BENBOUGH

(725 Date Street)