

John Tait, Who First Catered to Cafe Society, Dies at Age of 90

John Tait, San Francisco's legendary restaurateur, died yesterday at the San Jose home of his daughter Emma T. Bates, 671 Willow Glen way.

Known and loved by generations of gourmets, Mr. Tait was almost the last of the exponents of the haute cuisine, and to his various restaurants early in the century came the great and near-great from all parts of the world.

A native of England, Mr. Tait came to San Francisco in 1893 and took over the stewardship of the University Club, then at 722 Sutter street. After that he opened the restaurant and bar at the Olympic Club and then became steward and assistant manager of the Pacific Union Club.

There he remained until 1904 when his good friends at that Nob Hill club backed him in his first independent enterprise—San Francisco's first big downtown restaurant in the basement of the Flood Building.

This was Tait's Downtown, and then came a second restaurant, Tait-Zinkand, at Market and Mason. And then came the earthquake and fire of 1906.

It wasn't long after the catastrophe that another Tait's opened, this one called the Garden City Restaurant at Van Ness avenue and Eddy street and in 1910, when downtown San Francisco began to recover, the enterprising Mr. Tait opened a new restaurant at O'Far-

rell and Powell streets. Five years later he added a third story that became the famous Pavo Real, rendezvous of theatrical stars, millionaires, newspapermen, authors, doctors, lawyers—and all the city's "characters." It was the headquarters for what has come to be known as "Cafe Society."

It was to this colorful spot that Anna Held came for frog legs, sautee and mushroom soup. It was here that Eva Tanguay came for boned squab.

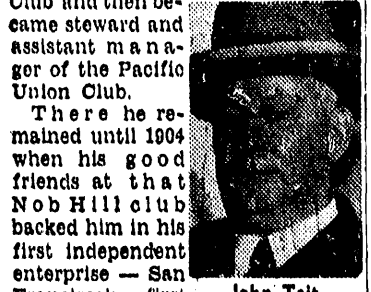
DIAMOND JIM Diamond Jim Brady was a favorite guest, and so were Herman Goehrs, Downey Harvey, Gentleman Jim Corbett and Charles Clark.

Mr. Tait presented a lot of top-flight entertainment in those days. A youngster named Harry Richmond sang for \$25 a week. A young dancer named Rudolph Valentino appeared. Paul Whiteman was in the orchestra and was fired for being untidy in his appearance. Big hit of the Pavo Real was the dance team of Fanchon and Marjorie.

Those years were kind to Mr. Tait, and he, in turn, was kind to them. Then came prohibition. Tait's famous restaurant was sold in 1922 to a Los Angeles syndicate and was never the same again.

But the indestructible Mr. Tait turned his eyes toward the sea and leased the old Alexander Russell home at the beach.

He kept the lovely old mansion, with its fabulous Japanese gardens intact and suddenly the city's fabled Mystery House became Tait's-at-the-Beach. And here, too, "Cafe Society" foregathered until 1931 when the double burden of prohibition and an unprecedented depression forced Mr. Tait to close its doors.



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CHRONICLE ACTION ADS Fifth and Mission Streets

McGrath Rites Will Be Held On Monday

Funeral services will be conducted Monday for James J. McGrath, former Sheriff of San Mateo county, who died of a heart attack Thursday night at his home, 519 Eaton avenue, Redwood City. He was 60.

Mr. McGrath served as chief law enforcement officer of San Mateo county from 1927 to 1930. The years he held office spanned the years of the county's great industrial and population growth that changed the region from an almost rural community to an urban area.

As the county's chief law enforcement officer, Sheriff McGrath was inclined to temper justice with mercy and was loyal to his friends. Among them was Emilio (Gambino) Georgetti, whom he met when they labored side by side in a South San Francisco steel mill and who later became known as the San Mateo county gambling czar.

Sheriff McGrath was criticized for his continued association with Georgetti. His refusal to turn back on his old friend finally led to his defeat in 1930 by youthful Earl Whitmore.

In tribute to the memory of the former Sheriff, flags on all San Mateo county buildings flew at half-staff yesterday. The county's three Superior Courts adjourned in his memory and a brief memorial service was held in the court of Judge A. R. Cotton.

Mr. McGrath was past president of the California Peace Officers Association and the California Sheriffs Association. He also was past grand knight of the San Mateo Council of the Knights of Columbus, and past exalted ruler of the San Mateo lodge of Elks.

A native of New York city, Sheriff McGrath was brought to the Bay Area by his parents when he was 2 years old. His father, John J. McGrath, 90, survives him.

He was educated in the public schools of the Peninsula and attended Santa Clara University. After a series of odd jobs, he became a postal worker. In 1927 he began his political career by seeking the office of county auditor. He was defeated by a margin of eight votes. Later when Sheriff Thomas G. McGovern died, he was appointed to the office and re-elected each four years until 1930.

After his defeat in 1930, he lived in semiretirement. Only recently he was questioned by the California Crime Commission as part of its investigation into the dynamite death of Tom Keen, San Mateo sportsman and pari-mutuel betting machine manufacturer.

During recent months, he had been ill and returned to his home only a week ago after a month's stay in the hospital.

He complained of feeling ill Thursday evening and summoned his family physician, Dr. Henry Mason. As he was leaving with the doctor to be admitted to Sequoia Hospital, he suffered the fatal attack.

The funeral services were arranged by the Snider & Sullivan Mortuary, 15 North Ellisworth avenue, San Mateo.

After a Mass at St. Matthew's Church, San Mateo, at 9:30 a. m. Monday, burial will be at St. John's Cemetery in San Mateo.

Besides his father, he is survived by his brother, Michael McGrath of Redwood City, and a sister, Mrs. John Gerdtis of San Mateo.

Beatrice L. Dinkelspiel Dead at 77

Beatrice L. Dinkelspiel, 77, widow of Samuel L. Dinkelspiel, pioneer San Francisco dry goods merchant, died yesterday at her home at 2612 Scott street.

Mrs. Dinkelspiel was the mother of Lloyd W. Dinkelspiel, San Francisco attorney, and Mrs. James Schwabacher.

Her husband, who died in 1930, was one of the founders of the firm of L. Dinkelspiel & Co., wholesale dry goods dealers. He retired a short time before his death to devote his time to civic and religious work. At the time of his death he was president of Congregational Emanu-El.

Mrs. Dinkelspiel had continued her husband's religious and charitable work and was prominent in San Francisco philanthropic circles.

San Mateo County Budget May Be Smaller

A recommended budget lower by \$41,000 than last year's was submitted to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors yesterday by County Manager E. R. Stallings.

If cuts made by Stallings in setting the \$12,946,959 budget are not restored by the Supervisors, it will be the first reduction in county operating costs in ten years.

Stallings trimmed nearly \$800,000 from department requests. He said it would be impossible to estimate the 1952-53 tax rate because of an increase of about 50 percent in property assessments.

But taxes, he said, will probably be higher than last year despite the increased county budget because of increased requests from special districts that are included in the tax rate.

New Job for General

WASHINGTON, May 9 (AP)—The Army today announced the transfer from Tokyo to Washington of Major General William F. Marquat. He is the only senior officer who left Corridor with General Douglas MacArthur ten years ago still on active duty.

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Hedda Hopper Says: Tom Ewell in 'Up Front' Sequel

Tom Ewell writes from Tokyo, Japan: "I'm here doing exteriors for a sequel to 'Up Front,' with Harvey Lembeck. We've taken time out to see the sights. Went to the popular Kabuki style of theater, which I hear: Josh Logan is bringing to Broadway in 1953. It's absolutely sensational. Also saw a modern Japanese musical comedy, which features 'Come On My House' sung in Japanese. Staying here at the hotel are Helen Traubel, Gene Krupa, and John D. Rockefeller III. How's that for a trio? This is a beautiful country, but California will look mighty good to us."

Carroll Case, son of the late Frank, will co-produce a series of TV films with Hal Roach Jr. based on the Algonquin Hotel. They'll be called "Tales of a Wayward Inn," the same title as Frank's book. In one of the films, Doug Fairbanks Jr., will portray Doug Sr., who lived in the hotel for many years.

Stage Door

CLAY Filmmaker in "LAUGHTER IN PARADISE" Friday—Daniela Delorme in "MINE, THE CURIOUS BRIDE"

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ORPHEUM MARKET & 8TH STREET POWELL POWELL STREET NEAR MARKET