Chapter Two

The Origin of UCSF

An Illustrated Retrospective

By Robert S Sherins, M.D.
Chancellor John B. de C.M. Saunders, M.D. wrote a congratulatory message that was published in our senior Yearbook. His message noted that our Class of 1963 was the 100th graduating class of the UCSF School of Medicine. I did not remember that fact and it prompted me to further investigate our school history. The matter of researching the old documents from years past was certainly a challenge, but I found the scholarly outcome to be fascinating.

Dr. Hugh H. Toland, who established the Toland Medical College in downtown San Francisco in 1864, actually gave his property and college to the Regents of the University of California in 1873. Therefore, at this specific year of our 50th Class Reunion (2013), the UCSF School of Medicine is celebrating its 140th anniversary. The School was first known as the University of California Medical Department at the Toland Medical College. As we will read in the ensuing chapter, Toland Medical College was not the first School of Medicine in San Francisco. That honor was bestowed upon the Cooper College of Medicine, which was established in 1854 by Elias Samuel Cooper, MD and his nephew, Levy Cooper Lane, MD.

Doctors Cooper, Lane and Toland were among the pioneer physicians of California following both the “Gold Rush” in 1849 and California Statehood on September 9, 1850. The doctors did not make good miners, but they certainly forged great paths through California history by establishing their medical schools.

For the time, San Francisco Bay was a well-situated and protected port, through which goods were received and trans-shipped to the minefields in the Sierras as well as the rest of California. It only was a brief period of time before San Francisco became a thriving center of banking and commerce as the wealth from the discovery of both the silver and gold poured into the city. From this wealth was derived the great business centers that were required in the surging commercial atmosphere of California. In the century and one-half since statehood, we tend to forget many of the details of our own history.

San Francisco was first known as “Yerba Buena” and was part of the Spanish Colony of Alta (Upper) California. Yerba Buena became part of Mexico after the War of Independence from Spain was won in 1821. During the Mexican-American War 1846-1848 that followed, U.S. Navy Commodore John D. Sloat sailed into the Bay and claimed the region for the United States. On January 30, 1847, U.S. Navy Lt. Bartlett proclaimed the name change to San Francisco, which legally became an American territory in 1848 after the signing of the

1 Good Herbs.
Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ending the Mexican-American War. California statehood was declared on September 9, 1850.

Soon after statehood, Congress authorized $50,000 to construct the U.S. Marine Hospital in San Francisco. It was completed in 1853 and provided medical services for 500-beds. Within 2-years (1855) the facility was transformed into the San Francisco City and County Hospital located at Stockton and Francisco Streets. Fees collected from health inspections of vessels in the San Francisco Port were used to support the medical services at the City and County Hospital.
In 1854, Irish nuns, Sisters of Mercy, arrived and established hospital care for the poor in San Francisco. This facility eventually became St. Mary’s Hospital. By
1867, there was a severe need of additional beds at the City and County Hospital, so the city created an 80-acre site on city-owned property on the western side of Twin Peaks and established the first Alms House. Also established was a 24-bed facility to house tuberculous patients and the site was named Laguna Honda, after the lagoon that was situated on the property.

Map of Laguna Honda Land and Almshouse on City Property
David Rumsey Map Collection, San Francisco, 1876

\(^2\) Note the absence of Parnassus Avenue and UCSF Campus, which were not yet developed.
The name of Laguna Honda was derived from a spring, which fed a lagoon on the property (see Rumsey map of 1876). The Alms House grew its own food and raised its own livestock. The first structure of the wooden house had 24-beds and served as an isolation facility for smallpox victims in 1868. In 1870, it became a home (asylum) for the poor. Other buildings were built to house victims from the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. A larger pavilion was built, Clarendon Hall, in 1910, which was demolished finally in 2008 for new Hospital facilities. Finally, Spanish-style buildings were completed in 1924.

Original Laguna Honda Relief Home

Laguna Honda Hospital, Circa 1924

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4 Ibid.
Dr. Elias Samuel Cooper was among the first physicians in San Francisco after statehood. The Coopers were a Quaker family from South Carolina who fled to Ohio to escape from slavery. Two of their sons, Elias and Esaias became physicians. They first studied in Indiana (1835-1838), but completed their medical
degrees at the St. Louis University in 1851 and 1850 respectively. I noted with great interest the posting of the university requirements for the MD degrees. The prerequisites included:

- Candidate must be 21-years and of good moral character, engaged in study of medicine for 3-years.
- Completed 2-full courses of lectures (4 ½ months).
- Completed a thesis on a medical topic in English, Latin, French or German.
- Undergone the university examination and have engaged in reputable clinical practice for at least 2-years.
- Paid the university fees of $105, matriculations fee $5, Hospital ticket $10, and graduation fee $20.

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5 Lane Library, Stanford University: elane.stanford.edu.
Dr. Elias Samuel Cooper and his nephew Dr. Levi Cooper Lane formed the first medical school on the West Coast in 1859. In order to provide for the medical degrees, they received their charter from the College of the Pacific – a Methodist- Episcopal college founded in Santa Clara in 1851. Their name has since been changed to the University of the Pacific. The original name was California Wesleyan College, which was moved to San Jose and has since been renamed the University of the Pacific, relocated in Stockton, California in 1923. The Cooper school was named, The Medical Department of the College of the Pacific.
Soon after the death of founder Dr. Elias Samuel Cooper, in 1862, the Medical College was closed and the students and faculty including Dr. Levi Cooper Lane merged with the Toland Medical College staff nearby. By 1864, Toland Medical College supported both faculties and students. They were situated across the
street from the San Francisco City and County Hospital, where instruction and admission of their patients were conveniently located.
By 1870, several of the faculty members of the original Cooper Medical College, including Dr. Levi Cooper Lane, resigned from the Toland School and opened their own school on Stockton Street south of Geary Avenue. The new school affiliated with the University City College as the Medical College of the Pacific. About a decade later (1882), Dr. Lane formed another school, Cooper Medical College in honor of his deceased uncle, Elias Samuel Cooper. The newly constructed facilities were located at Sacramento and Webster Streets.

The property and building were deeded to the College of the Pacific in 1882. The facilities were dedicated as an institution of medical education. Public lectures were given and were known as the “Lane Popular Lectures.” Dr. Lane also inaugurated professional medical lectures given by prominent scientists and physicians. By 1901, discussions had begun to consider uniting the Cooper Medical College with Stanford University.

After the death of Dr. Lane in February and his widow in August 1902, the executors gave one-third of the Lane estate to Cooper Medical College in order to establish the Lane Medical Library. In 1906, the directors of the College established Lane Library. In 1908, Cooper Medical College was accepted by Stanford University and in 1912 Stanford University dedicated the new Lane Library.

In 1912, Cooper Medical College and Lane Hospital were transferred to the authority of the Trustees of Stanford University. Stanford developed the site and Stanford Hospital was completed on Clay Street in 1917.

It was during the year of our freshman class at UCSF (1959) that Stanford completed a new medical campus in Palo Alto, California. I remember when the Stanford medical/surgical services at the San Francisco General Hospital were vacated and moved to Palo Alto. At the same time, the Lane Library was moved to Palo Alto and the building at Sacramento and Webster streets also was vacated.

More recently, Pacific Medical Center had its name changed to Pacific Presbyterian Medical Center (1983). Currently, California Pacific Medical Center incorporates Pacific Presbyterian Hospital, Children’s Hospital of San Francisco and the Davies Medical Center.

Following the demise of the original Cooper Medical College in 1864, the demand for medical services and hospital beds continued to accelerate in San Francisco. The city and county hospital that had been opened in the North
Beach schoolhouse in 1857, soon served Dr. Hugh Toland who admitted patients and provided medical instruction at the hospital. However, in 1872, Toland decided to give his property and medical college to the regents of the University of California. The “University of California Medical Department” operated at Toland after 1873.

U.C Medical Department, 1877

6 www.medicalantiques.com
Negotiations between Dr. Hugh Toland and the Regents of the University of California began in 1870 regarding transfer of the Toland Medical College to the University. By 1872, with the added persuasion of Dean Cole and University President Gilman, an agreement was reached. Toland agreed to remove the requirement that the University of California School of Medicine use his name, Toland Medical College. The property value of $75,000 was agreed upon in 1872.

Coincidentally, The Regents of the University of California resolved to create a State Board of Examiners and would appoint members of the Board annually. While the Regents awarded medical degrees, the Board of Medical Examiners approved the credentials and developed broad control over medical education in the State of California.

On April 1, 1873, The Regents accepted the gift of the Toland College and property. The Medical Department of the University was established, which included a Board of Medical Examiners. The first Professors of the faculty were elected:\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{10} www.elane.stanford.edu –chapter 21.
On April 18, 1906, the worst earthquake in its recorded history devastated the city of San Francisco. Many of the structures were burned and ruined. Somehow, the wooden San Francisco City and County Hospital escaped with minor mishaps. During the next year, the hospital added a children’s ward and a contagious pavilion. In 1908, a plague epidemic struck the city. Rats with fleas were discovered in the hospital and it was ordered to be immediately vacated and burned to the ground. Emergency facilities were opened in the Mission District and a small city-owned site on Potrero Avenue. Finally in 1915, the San Francisco General Hospital was opened where our class trained from 1961-62. In 1959, UCSF signed its first contract to pay 1% of the operating expenses of SFGH. Stanford University had utilized SFGH facilities until 1959, when Stanford med-surgical services moved to the new facilities in Palo Alto.

From the UCSF archives11:

“From its origins following the California Gold Rush, UCSF established itself along Parnassus Avenue in 1896 on land donated by San Francisco Mayor Adolph Sutro. At the time, Parnassus Heights was in the remote western part of San Francisco, but its medical facilities suddenly became a central player in saving lives when the 1906 earthquake and fire struck. With much of San Francisco — even its hospitals — destroyed in the disaster, a tent city arose in Golden Gate Park, housing 40,000 people near the growing health sciences institution.”

11 www.ucsf.edu
“...In 1914, the prestigious Hooper Foundation for Medical Research selected Parnassus as the site for its research work, creating the first medical research foundation in the United States incorporated into a university. Hooper investigators contributed to an expanding research enterprise on Parnassus that led to a 1949 vote by the UC Board of Regents designating the campus, rather than UC Berkeley, as the main site for all medical science...”
UCSF School of Medicine 1900:
https://digital.library.ucsf.edu/archive

UCSF Anatomy Laboratory, Circa 1900
https://digital.library.ucsf.edu/archive #d3c6b57ceb
UCSF Hospital Men’s Ward, 1915
https://digital.library.ucsf.edu/archive #32e1dceac7

UCSF Campus of Affiliated College, Circa 1916
(Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry and Pharmacy)
https://digital library.ucsf.edu/archive
UCSF Campus on Parnassus, 1917:  
https://digital.library.ucsf.edu/archive #008f4979fa

UCSF Hospital Lobby, 1918
UCSF Hospital Operating Room, 1924
https://digital.library.ucsf.edu/archive #d2358370a6

UCSF New Campus, 1928:
https://digital.library.ucsf.edu/archive
UC Medical & Dental Clinic
https://digital.library.ucsf.edu/archive #bad9654f6

UCSF Gross Anatomy Laboratory, 1959
https://digital.library.ucsf.edu/archive #6b9321fac5
UCSF Digital Library – Millberry Union 1960:
https://digital.library.ucsf.edu/archive #d5231732001

UCSF Campus 1960
https://digital.library.ucsf.edu/archive #a04b87f86f
In the course of researching material for this manuscript, I came upon documents about the earliest graduating classes at UCSF. It was the story of Lucy Maria Field Wanzer that first captured my attention. She not only graduated from the first class of UCSF School of Medicine, but also she was the first female graduate.

First woman graduate, UCSF

As a child in 1840s Wisconsin, Lucy Maria Field Wanzer played nurse to her mother, who was ill with lung fever (tuberculosis). It was then that she realized she wanted to be a physician.

But, it was many years before Wanzer's dream was realized. Her parents prized education and she received excellent schooling. When her family moved to California in 1858, Wanzer supported the entire family as a dressmaker, teacher and postmaster. In 1865, at the age of 23, she married county clerk James Wanzer. But she divorced him three years later, determined to take steps toward fulfilling her plan to become a doctor. For the next six years she prepared financially by teaching and saving pennies to pay for medical school. At the same time she prepared mentally by studying Latin, French, algebra and literature.

Finally, at the age of 33, Wanzer applied to Toland Medical College, which had just come under the administration of the new University of California. She was rejected because of her gender. But, she appealed and after four months won admission because the Regents could find no reason to bar her entrance, as the law creating the state university provided for the education of both sexes.

The dean, opposed to her admission, encouraged the male students to haze Wanzer. One professor told her that a woman had no business studying medicine. “If she does, she ought to have her ovaries removed.” Wanzer quietly replied, “If that is true, the men students ought also to have their testicles removed.”

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12 From Michael Eccles, UCSF Director of Alumni Relations; Gary Bernard, UCSF Director of Alumni Development/School Programs; and Polina Ilieva, UCSF Library Senior Archivist.

13 From, Medical Alumni Magazine, vol 50, No. 2, Fall 2009, printed with permission.
removed!" Impressed by the young woman, the famed physician Beverly Cole, MD, offered to be her mentor.

When Wanzer graduated in 1876, Cole presented her name for membership in the San Francisco County Medical Society. A blackball was threatened, but when he did not withdraw her name, she was accepted as the first woman member. She opened her first medical office in gynecology and obstetrics on Geary Street. Wanzer also specialized in pediatrics and was one of the founders and original directors of UCSF Children’s Hospital.

Fortunately the Constitution and By-Laws of the Alumni Association of the Medical Department of the University of California were discovered in the UCSF archives. A copy of the 1885 iteration has been preserved at UCSF in the Lucy Wanzer’ files. Dr. Wanzer was an astute woman and way ahead of time. Dr. Wanzer’s election to the San Francisco Medical Society in 1876 was followed a decade later when she was elected to the Office of the Vice-President of the Alumni Association in 1885-86. It was no surprise to see her name listed among the officers as Vice-President of the Alumni Association in 1885-1886. Lucy Wanzer was a respected physician and obstetrical surgeon in San Francisco, but she did not have the right to vote until August 18, 1919, after the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified by Congress.

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The following illustrations are copied from the scanned original documents at the UCSF Kalmanovitz Library archives.
Constitution and By-Laws of the Alumni Association
MEDICAL DEPARTMENT
University California

Organized, 1873
Reorganized, Nov., 1885

Office of the Secretary, 305 Kearny Street

SAN FRANCISCO:
A. L. BOWEN & Co., Printers
1885

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

President:
A. T. Whipple, M. D.

First Vice-President:
L. M. L. Whipple, M. D.

Second Vice-President:
W. E. Anderson, M. D.

Secretary:
D. T. Colman, M. D.

Treasurer:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. P. Whipple, M. D., Secretary.
R. M. L. Whipple, M. D.
W. E. Anderson, M. D.
D. T. Colman, M. D.
John H. Hay, M. D.
W. E. Anderson, M. D.

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The following illustration from the Constitution of the Alumni Association, page 4 (Article III, Section 2), confirms the merging of all the medical students from “... the Medical Department, University of California or of the late Toland Medical College.”

Proof of the acceptance of female physicians as full members of the Alumni Association was confirmed in the By-Laws, Article I, Section 3.
History Of The Palace Hotel

We are the 100th graduation class of the UCSF School of Medicine. As you have read, the origin of UCSF School of Medicine began in 1873 having taken over the role of the Toland Medical College. It is precisely the 140th anniversary of our medical school, because the date of origin was April 1, 1873. The 50th Reunion gala of our Class of 1963 was held at the famous Palace Hotel of San Francisco on April 27, 2013. As a result of my research, I learned how famous the hotel had been in our medical school history. Archival documents from the University of California Department of Medicine were uncovered that revealed the long-forgotten secret that the first school banquet of the graduating Class of 1896 also was held at the Palace Hotel in 1896. The venue was that of the original Palace Hotel, which was destroyed by fire after the great earthquake of 1906. So far, only two records have been discovered regarding that occasion: a photo of the graduation class of 1886 and the elaborate menu from the Palace
Hotel banquet of the graduation Class of 1896. However, there are some fascinating historical records about the hotel that I wish to share.\textsuperscript{14}

From Gray Brechin, “Historical Essays”:
“…William Ralson’s Palace Hotel was to be the opulent capstone of his career and ego. When completed in 1875, it was quite literally the grandest hotel in the world.” It was said that the Palace Hotel compared to the finest hotels of Europe and much of California’s business had been conducted from the hotel’s grand bar. The following illustration of Market Street in 1865 shows the location of the future hotel.

By the time that the Palace Hotel was completed and ready for occupancy in 1875, horse-drawn carriages still were the mode of conveyance of the hotel’s guests. As such, they created a carriage entrance and unpaved lane through the hotel. The carriage lane corresponds to the present lengthy carpeted concourse that one traverses. In its heyday, the carriage lane brought the finely adorned ladies to the protected hotel entrance where the famous garden restaurant is presently located under the elegant glass ceiling. The following illustration depicts the “trolley” rails on Market Street, which was still unpaved. The “trolleys” were horse-drawn.

\textsuperscript{14} Victorian San Francisco Essay: Gray Brechin. Illustrations from the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California.
Palace Hotel, Market Street
San Francisco, 1876
Palace Hotel Carriage Entrance, Circa 1880s. The trolleys on Market Street were motorized with electric engines.

The original Palace Hotel was destroyed by fire following the San Francisco earthquake in 1906. It was rebuilt and opened for occupancy on April 20, 1909.
Sadly, the remaining bricks and debris was transported to the Marina and used to fill-in the bay for further development.

Palace Hotel Ruins, 1906
From the limited number of archival records available, the photo illustrated above was obtained of the celebration at the Palace Hotel in 1896. Shown are 4 female doctors at the 10th Reunion of the Class of 1886. No other records were found listing their names or medical specialties of this elegant group of men and women physicians. The graduating class was the guest of the University of California Alumni Association.

Not only did the graduating doctors know how to dress in the most fashionable attire, but also they were gourmands and knew how to dine with sophistication. They feasted at this sumptuous banquet upon caviar, hors d’oeuvres, Coquille and Cresta Blanca wine. There were bass, lamb, veal and chicken entrées with
a Claret wine served with all the trimmings. Desert included fresh fruit, petit fours, biscuit tortoni and black coffee. In keeping with the elegance of the occasion, the menu was printed in French. The only item missing from the menu were Havana’s best cigars. I hope that those fine gentlemen offered the ladies a cigar… Trés chic!
BANQUET GIVEN TO THE
Graduating Class of 1896.
BY THE
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
WITH THE COOPERATION OF THE
FACULTY OF THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

M É N U
Aîtières de Californie sur Coquille
Windsor à l'Anglaise.
Amandes Salées.
CRESTA BLANCA.
Granadine de Pois Rayée. Normande.
Pommes de Terre à la West End
Quartier d'Agneau Renaissance.
Croutade de Ris de Veau à l'Impérial.
Punch Parfait Amour
EVERETT RANCH CLARET.
Poulet Roli- eu Jus
Salade Romaine aux Tomates Mayonnaise
Pois Nouveaux Choufleur au Gratin Florentine.
Biscuit Tortoni
Petits Fours
Dessert
Prüf
Café Noir.

Palace Hotel.
Monday, 16 May 1896.
Palace Hotel, San Francisco 2012

Market Street Entrance, Palace Hotel
Garden Room Dining, Palace Hotel

Robert Sherins, MD Enjoying an Opulent Experience At the Palace Hotel Lobby