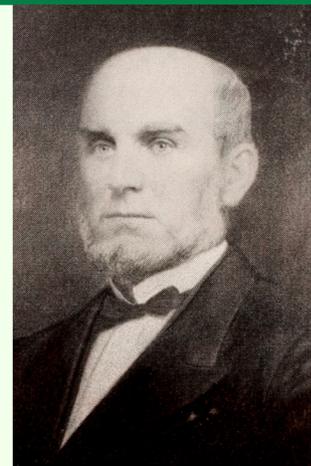


# ATHERTON'S ICONS

## Celebrating Atherton's 100th Birthday

### Faxon Dean Atherton (1815 - 1877)



**Faxon Dean Atherton  
(1815 - 1877)**



**Dominga de Goni Atherton with two of their  
seven children, Alejandra and Elena**



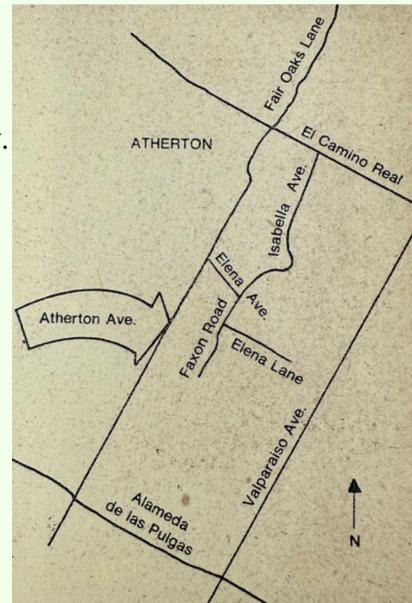
**Isabella, the artist  
(1853 - 1902)**



**Alejandra, the beauty  
(1844 - 1913)**

At age 15, Faxon Dean Atherton worked at a merchant trading company in Boston, MA, following in his ancestors' steps of merchant seamen. He soon discovered that South America was hungry for American goods, so he took all his savings, (\$500), bought cigars, shoes, cologne, and German harps to sell in Chile, South America. Faxon stayed in Chile for almost 20 years, (1839-1858), first as a merchant trader, and eventually owning the company he worked for as a 15 year-old! It was there he married Dominga de Goni, who Atherton described as *"the most beautiful woman in all of Chile."*

They had a total of 9 children, however, only 7 survived to adulthood: 4 daughters, Alejandra, Isabella, and Elena, who had streets named after them, and the youngest child, Florence who was overlooked; and 3 boys, Frank, Jorge (George), and Faxon, Jr. All, but Florence, were born in Chile and only came to California in 1860.



From the urging of Thomas Larkin, Atherton's good friend and successful business partner in the trading and lumber business among others, that the Gold Rush mania was over and there was *"education for his children and a dignity of living on landed estates down the San Francisco peninsula convenient and accessible,"* Faxon D. Atherton moved his large family to California in 1860.

Atherton acquired over 600 acres at \$10 per acre from the Arguiellos of Rancho de las Pulgas and Simon M. Mezes, naming their new property "Valparaiso Park" after his wife, Dominga's hometown in Chile. They built an "elegant, Atherton mansion." With 14-foot ceilings, light-filled rooms, verandas on three sides, a library with floor-to-ceiling bookcases and -- most amazing -- two indoor bathrooms which were a luxury in 1860.

.... Next week we will tell how our Town became named "Atherton."

Source: *Under the Oaks* by Pamela Gullard & Nancy Lund and the Atherton Heritage Association

**Save the date! Atherton's Centennial Celebration will be on  
September 24, 2023 at Town Center.**

