

Professor Overholser - Lakeport Academy
Directed by Marie Schrader

Professor Overholser
Celia Levy - First Year Student
Rebecca Levy- Second Year Student
Katie Parrish- Second Year Student

Pre-Script: Professor Overholser came to Lakeport in 1884 and soon started an Academy. It was located in an old abandoned school building at the southwest corner of Fourth and Forbes Streets in Lakeport, the former Lakeport Grammar School, and began with four pupils. By the end of the school year, he taught accelerated subjects to the 16 pupils in attendance. From his notes, the Academy seems to have been a lively place to go to school, with a close relationship having developed between teacher and students. Each school year was inaugurated, for instance, with an overnight cruise on Clear Lake. We join the professor and students on the cruise of the second year. The time is September 1885.

(Students are standing on the deck of the boat. The first year students are reading their course list. The second year students are giving them advice.)

Professor: Welcome, welcome to all of you! We will be touring around the lake and then have some dinner. I hope you will find this to be an enjoyable experience. Please, take some time to re-acquaint yourselves! (professor goes off as if to take care of some details)

(Katie, Rebecca (both 2nd year students) and Celia (Rebecca's Sister and 1st year student) are standing on deck. Katie and Rebecca instantly recognize each other)

Rebecca (standing with Celia): Katie!! Katie! Over here!

Katie: Rebecca Levy! How good it is to see you! I trust you had a wonderful summer?

Rebecca: Indeed I We.... did! I'd like you to meet my sister, Celia.

Katie (reaching out to shake hands): It's very nice to meet you, Celia!

Celia: Very nice to meet you too!

Rebecca: How was your summer, Katie?

Katie: It was another hot one! (other girls agree)

Rebecca: Did you help your papa in his blacksmith shop?

Katie: I'm afraid so. Plus we are having a new house built and that has taken a lot of time.

Rebecca: Where is it going to be?

Katie: On the corner of First and Forbes, right here in Lakeport. My father had to go to the courthouse a few years back to re-establish the claim on the property. Can you believe they charged him \$18.50?

Celia: That's a lot of money!

Katie: It sure is! But at least it's in the process and I can't wait for it to be done! Did you go to San Francisco this summer?

Rebecca: Yes, we went and attended Synagogue a couple of times. Celia and I also had to help papa in the Pioneer Store. It was quite busy this year.

Katie: I'm sorry I didn't run into you when I was at the store. I pass by 3rd and Main Streets quite often!

Rebecca: It would have been very nice to speak with you. Did you have any success at the County Fair this summer?

Katie: I entered a piece in the Cotton Embroidery division, but didn't win anything.

Rebecca: That's too bad! I heard that Carrie Slotterbeck won \$2 with her drawing!

Celia: Yes! And Maud Downing won \$2 for best crochet!

Katie: That's a lot of money! I wish I could have won something. Celia, are you ready to start at the Academy?

Celia: I think so. I'm a little nervous. I heard that I have to learn Latin!

Rebecca: Don't worry, Celia, Katie and I will be sure to help you!

Celia: What's your favorite part about the Lakeport Academy, Katie?

Katie: Well, Professor Overholser is quite an inventor!

Celia: Really?

Katie: The Academy is fully protected with an alarm system, one that Professor Overholser built himself!

Rebecca: And he also has installed a chime system so that the students know when to go from class to class!

Celia: You don't say!

Rebecca: We are all very lucky because we get to stay at our homes during the school year. The upper rooms of the academy are for those students who live further away from Lakeport.

Katie: I think you're going to like going to school here! We have lectures quite often and the library is very large! Professor Overhouser loves the sciences and is very knowledgeable about them!

Professor Overholser: (coming from behind the girls) Ladies, I trust you have gotten to know each other?

Rebecca: Oh yes! Professor Overholser, I'd like you to meet my sister, Celia.

Professor Overholser: (extending a hand) It is a pleasure, indeed!

Celia: Thank you, Professor!

Professor Overholser: All right everyone, gather round! We are coming closer to Uncle Sam Mountain. It is a dormant volcano! We'll be studying this mountain thoroughly in our classes this year!

(Everyone freezes as if in awe while staring into the distance).

Post Script: In 1890, the Academy was incorporated. Two thousand dollars was subscribed in stock to erect a building on land donated at the north end of Lakeport on Hartley Street, immediately west of the present day High Street Shopping Center.

The Levy sisters eventually moved to San Francisco to live and marry. Katie Parrish eventually married a blacksmith, Omega Abbay and moved their family to Middletown and opened the business Abbay & Parrish.

After the Academy left Forbes Street, the original Academy was destroyed. The Clear Lake Union High School District was formed May 1, 1901. It rented the Academy from Professor Overholser who was retained as a science instructor. In a few years, new high school buildings were built on the north end of Main Street (the site of Natural High School). In 1911, the professor was given the honor of having the annual yearbook dedicated to him. The dedication plate reads: "We the students of the Clear Lake Union High School, lovingly dedicate this issue of the Cardinal and Black to our respected friend and teacher, John Overholser."