

NOTICIAS del PUERTO de MONTEREY

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From left to right Miss Anna M. Wells, Mrs. Edward Williams and Mrs. Joseph Boston, Sr., mother of Joseph Boston, prominent Monterey merchant of the 1850's. Photo given to Mrs. Kneass by Mrs. Anna Burge, Santa Cruz, the granddaughter of Mrs. Boston, Sr.

Photo courtesy of Mrs. William E. Kneass

THROUGH A WOMAN'S EYES - MONTEREY 1854-1855

The footsteps of the devoted Father Junipero Serra and the Founding Fathers of California have literally been followed pace by pace by the most eminent historians, and the place of the Jesuit explorers and Franciscan builders is firmly established in the history of the state. There is, however, relatively little written on the planting in California of other religious creeds. In the three following letters, presented as they appear in *The Protestant Churchman* of New York, there is a rare opportunity not only to witness the efforts to bring the services of the Protestant Episcopal Church to Monterey, but to have the whole local scene presented to us through the eyes of a woman sensitive to beauty. The identity of the author has remained a mystery until now, but through the research of Mrs.

William E. Kneass, curator of the Pacific Building State Historical Monument, we are confident that the *A. M. W.* of the letters is Miss Anna M. Wells, aunt of Joseph Boston, Jr., whose merchandise store then occupied the present Casa de Oro State Historical Monument.

The Boston family was well established in Monterey. Not only her nephew Joseph had come to the port but her two sisters, Mrs. Joseph (Alice Cecilia Wells) Boston, Sr., and Mrs. Edward (Helen Mary Wells) Williams with her son Edward. Joseph's two sisters, Mrs. Aime (Alice) Donzel and Josephine Boston, were also members of the community. The old Boston home, whose lumber was brought around the Horn, stood on Van Buren Street and was later purchased by David Jacks. It has long since been torn down.

Anna Wells never married but devoted herself to church work and her family. Her yearnings for religious services so dear to her were not long denied, for her arrival in Monterey in May, 1854, only shortly preceded the coming of the Right Rev. William Ingraham Kip, first Episcopal bishop of California, on July 30.

In his memoirs, Bishop Kip recalls his first visit to Monterey and the drowsy, deserted appearance of the town. He and Mrs. Kip had come at the request of the Boston family, and were guests for a week in the Boston home. The services so gratefully recorded in the letters were the first Episcopal services ever celebrated in Monterey. Previous Protestant services had been held by the Reverend Walter Colton, a Congregationalist, and the Reverend S. H. Willey, a Presbyterian minister and chaplain to the American garrison, but for some years there had been no Protestant services of any kind.

Miss Wells and the Boston family moved to Santa Cruz sometime before 1858. There the family continued to be prominent benefactors of the Episcopal Church and gave land for the first church building.

The letters are reproduced through the courtesy of the Bancroft Library of the University of California.

—D. M. C.

~~Correspondence of the Protestant Clergyman.~~

Monterey, August 8th, 1854.

MY DEAR EDITORS,

It will have appeared to you that I never meant to make good my promise of corresponding; but lack of interesting matter wherewith to fill a page, and of energy to make much out of little, has deterred me from writing. Monterey possesses few charms for one used to the privileges of New-York, and other great cities:—perhaps its very destitution ought to make it interesting to the Christian. I left New-York on the 5th of April, in "The Company's" steamer of that date. We were crowded with passengers, a motley set, and there were also troops on board, bound for Benicia, with their proper officers. The transit of the isthmus has been too often commented upon for me to attempt it. Bitter tears swelled my heart and rose to my eyes when I remembered that it was Easter Sunday I was about to desecrate. Rude jests, profane oaths, with cruel blows inflicted upon the poor patient animals that carried us from Obispo, the terminus, were worthy the motley set mentioned above. Never to my dying day can I forget that dreadful Easter Sunday. After two days and two nights, without the luxury of a bed, or toilette, except such as I could make

with a tumbler of water and a pocket handkerchief, my bed, after crossing the isthmus, was the floor covered with oil cloth, my pillow a carpet bag. After these refreshments we went on board the Pacific steamer. I suffered much on board this ship: it was very small, and we numbered one thousand souls. Strange to relate, only two deaths occurred: an old woman, and a young child who had been saved from the wreck of the San Francisco! On the 7th of May we arrived at the town of Monterey, often confounded by our New-York friends with Monterey of Mexico. Monterey, of Upper California, covers a considerable extent of land: straggling, I should call it, over much ground. It is irregularly built, the houses remarkable for nothing but their ugliness: some of them are of adobe, or unburnt bricks, others of wood, and one just before my eyes is of red brick, looking very much out of its place. The house that I live in was brought from Monte Video. Its population is as varied as its current money, which comprises Federal, Columbian, Mexican, Spanish, English, French, Danish and Dutch, both gold and silver. There are hotels and boarding-houses, fondas and restaurants, and many drinking-houses under the names of "Gem," &c. We have a Court-house, originally intended for a public school, called Colton Hall, from Walter Colton, who

built it,—a very fine building, though much out of repair; a post-office, and many good stores. There is no Protestant Church of any denomination. The Roman Catholic Church of San Carlos de Nuestra Senora I have not yet visited.

On Saturday evening the church-bell is rung to tell the people that the next day will be the Sabbath. How well it is observed you may imagine. The Californians always go to church, and then to their amusements. The Americans, who with some few exceptions, are not a creditable specimen of our country people, partake of all Sunday amusements, balls, &c., without the church attendance. Until the last month there was a convent, and boarding-school, taught by some sisters of the Order of Dominicans. These sisters were excellent women, and did much good among the young señoritas. I am sorry to learn that the institution has been removed to Benicia. ¹

On the seventh Sunday after Trinity, the 30th of July, we were favored by a visit from our bishop. He arrived, here, however, on Friday morning previous, in one of our coast steamers, the Sea Bird. The bishop appeared much enfeebled on his arrival; he had been seriously ill, but the rest and quiet, with the purer air of Monterey, did much to restore him, and he left us looking very much less delicate than when he came. We had the use of the court-room for divine service, which commenced at eleven o'clock A. M. After the sermon four persons partook of the communion. The bishop gave notice that there would be service in the afternoon, and at its proper season baptism for such children as should be brought forward; and that after evening prayer, the rite of confirmation would be administered. Six children were baptised, one ² person confirmed. The bishop then delivered an excellent explanation of the rite just administered. There were about fifty persons present in the morning; in the afternoon there were added a few Californians, who came to see the christening,—not to hear, for they do not understand

English. The whole day's services were very affecting to us, the more touching from the want of any of those externals familiar at home.

No sounding organ, no carpeted step for the communicant to kneel upon, no font for the baptism. The bread and wine were presented from proper vessels, for the bishop brought a small private service with him. "A fair linen cloth" covered the inky pine table, used on court days by the recorder of the court. The communicant knelt upon the tobacco-stained floor, swept and made as clean as time and circumstances admitted. The bishop urged upon us the duty of recommencing the Sunday school, once pretty well attended, before the removal of the troops, this

removal having carried away nearly all the Protestant children. On the 6th August we commenced with eight boys and a promise of some girls for the next Sunday.

On the Sunday that the bishop officiated, and while we were in church, a wretched Indian was murdered in the streets by another miserable drunken Indian. The sale of liquor to the Alonguile is prohibited, the effects are so fearful. This will give you some idea how we need a church.

To-day, the 8th of August, is a beautiful and bright sunny day, the heat tempered by a fresh breeze. For more than a week we have scarcely seen the sun's rays for fogs. A thin blue mist hangs over Mount Toro to-day, softening his rugged features, and harmonising the almost too bold outline of the coast. A. M. W.

—*responsibilities of the Protestant Churches.*

Monterey, Cal., May 22, 1855.

EDRORS:—In my last communication I had but little rain had fallen. Since then had a number of rain storms, enough to satisfy the farmers. We florists would like a few more for our gardens' sake. Owing to the long drought the wild flowers are not so abundant as usual, and I was a little disappointed to find so few. In addition to the dry season, our neighbors have taken to rearing pigs, and said pigs run at large over the green hills, turning up the sod and destroying the flowers for miles. Pigs are ruthless gardeners. During the winter I spent a few days at "Salinas," an embryo town on the Salinas river, which stream, despite its name, is fresh. After the rains, it is a broad and very rapid river, but in the dry season may be forded dry shod. A few miles beyond the town that is to be, lie vast plains, called the "Plains of Salinas." They are interspersed with small fresh water lakes, which, at the season I speak of, were covered with countless waterfowl. The plains too in places were completely covered. When they rose at the approach of the carriage the air was darkened with them. Some vast flocks were of spotless white, others grey, and some mixed or pied, grey and white, and black and white. I was very much interested in these lonely plains—no tree nor shrub grows upon them. I kept thinking, while riding over them, of the plains of Mamre, for large herds of cattle graze upon them, and droves of untamed horses throw up their heels and scamper off when any one passes them. Our Sunday-school rather increases. If all the children attended we should have upwards of twenty; as it is we average fourteen. I have four or five girls. They are the

¹ The famous convent in which Concepcion Arguello took her vows moved to Benicia in April, 1854.

² Bishop Kip and Saint James Church records state five baptisms. One of those baptized was David Aime Donzel, born in Monterey October 28, 1853. His mother, Mrs. Alice Anna Donzel, the niece of Miss Anna M. Wells, was the person confirmed.



James Madison Alden was a member of the Northwest Boundary Survey when he painted this watercolor of Monterey in 1855. He had a reputation for accurate observation, and this sketch looking up Alvarado Street and Calle Principal from the Custom House gives an excellent picture of the sleepy old town. The original painting was presented to the Monterey Public Library by the artist's daughter, Sarah Alden Dorsey of Maryland. Courtesy Monterey Public Library

most unmusical children I ever taught; we have been laboring for eight months at the very simple tune of "Granby," and as yet, not one child can sing it. Some German children came last Sunday, and ~~as~~ they know how to sing, I hope they may ~~teach~~ the others. We also number *three* teachers now. An elderly lady, who was pining for New-York and its privileges, was persuaded to come and help me, and is now quite interested and hopeful. Three or four Sundays before Easter, on going at the usual hour to the court-room, I found it cleanly swept, and arranged for church. I was astonished, but could not learn more than that there would be service of some kind at 10 1-2 o'clock. I sent home the children that the parents might be notified in time. It turn-

ed out to be a Methodist preacher, sent by the Methodist Church at "San Jose"—a good man, but of no force, and no preacher. He very *naïvely* invited the teachers and children of the Sunday-school to meet him the next Sunday morning at 9 o'clock, for (if necessary) a reorganization of the

school, and he said he hoped and expected to see forty children. I could not but smile, for I *knew* I had every Protestant child's name down on my list. He preached from "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" and told us among other things, that he had not been long in the ministry. He spent a few weeks here and then left us. I think I heard that the Methodist society of San Francisco had appointed a Mr. Allen for this place. Ah Messrs. Editors! why are *we* behindhand? Once in twelve-months have I had the happiness to listen to the ritual I love so well.

A few days after the arrival of Mr. —, the gentleman above named, an awful tragedy was enacted in the town, and were it not for *inter-*vening houses, within sight of us. Two men shot each other—*yes*, through the *heart* of each a ball passed, and they both fell dead at the same moment. One was the husband of a rich Spanish widow—an American. Singularly, he was her *third husband*, and all three died violent deaths. The other man was Irish, and married to one of the widow's daughters. 3

³ The duelists were Dr. Sanford, a lawyer and husband of the famous Concha Sanchez, and Jeremiah McMahon, brother-in-law of Sheriff William Roach. This was but one scene in the bloody Roach-Belcher feud that grew out of the scramble for the huge Sanchez estates. At least ten men lost their lives in this strife.

The root of all evil, the love of money, was the moving cause of this most dreadful double murder. All men stood aghast. I heard the reports of the two pistols, but thought it was some sportsmen discharging their guns. Since then all has been peace-able.

A. M. W.

Correspondence of the Protestant Churchman.

CALIFORNIA—

MONTEREY, June 24, 1855.

GENTLEMEN:—We have a newspaper!—"The Monterey Sentinel"—a weekly gazette. Not, perhaps, a very high-toned periodical, but interesting to us Montereyans. By this mail I forward you three numbers. The court is now sitting, and as there are many important causes before it, there are some of the ablest members of the bar here from San Francisco and down the coast. This somewhat varies the monotony of our life, there being literally no American society in the place. The family of the French consul and one or two good Californian families constitute "society" in Monterey. The country is fast losing its beauty; day by day I can see the dull brown hue creep over the once green hills. The

flowers are becoming scarce, and in a few weeks all herbage will be scorched and sere. This state of the season affects me painfully, for with you, when the change comes on the weather becomes cooler, and winter, too, has its charms. Here we look forward to five or six months of dryness, dust, and a most unpleasant concomitant—a host of fleas. By continual watering we keep our garden alive, but there has another enemy (that is more to be feared than drought) just made its appearance for the season; this is a little burrowing animal, called by the Americans "gopher," and by Californians "topo," or mole. This creature gnaws the roots of shrubs and plants, destroying in one night the labor of months. The creature is not a mole, for it has bright eyes, a head like a squirrel, and a rat-like tail. At this moment I see some of my finest stocks hanging their beautiful heads, after the inroad of this powerful little enemy. If I were sanguinary I should set a trap for him; but I firmly believe that all God's creatures have their mission; and *he*, the gopher, doubtless does some good beneath the surface of the earth unseen by me. Just now my little garden is very lovely, splendid in color and fragrant in perfume. It is my only luxury, and although but twenty-five feet square, I can all the year round furnish my friends with bouquets; for roses, stocks, mignonette, wall flower, and pansies are ever blooming.

These latter attain a great perfection in size and color. All kinds of vegetables will grow in the rainy season, indeed, in any season with irrigation, but ~~the fruit we have comparatively none, owing,~~

perhaps, to our proximity to the sea; and also from the exposed situation of Monterey we are liable to furious winds, which blow off the blossoms; and then if the fruit should form, the fogs that prevail in the summer months are sure to blight it. A few blackberries, so sparse that none but Indian patience could persevere in picking them, and some pears of inferior quality are all we can count upon. The blackberries are of fine flavor, and are sold at about fifty cents the quart. Butter is reduced in price from one dollar the pound to sixty-two and a half cents. Eggs formerly sold at one dollar a dozen; now they are but fifty cents. These are facts interesting to house-keepers. The arrival of your paper (which reaches me pretty regularly) and my Sunday-school are the only things which convince me I am in Christendom. The school does not decrease. I was very happy to observe that a few Sundays ago a young man of about eighteen joined Mr. ——'s class of boys. He lives six miles off in the country. I hope before the summer is over our Bishop will favor us with another visit. The English and American Catholics here do so hunger after preaching in their own language that they would be sure to attend were we to have service again. The "padre" now in Monterey is very unpopular. He certainly is very ignorant, and not at all prepossessing in manner or appearance. My little German children attend the school very assiduously. I have been nearly a year trying for them. The father told me, at my first visit, that he did not want his children "brought up to religion;" he would bring them "up to virtue."

A. M. W.

30-

⁴ The French consul was M. Moerenhaut, Monterey 1846-1859.

RECORDS OF THE CUSTOM HOUSE

(Continued from the June issue)

Custom House Monterey
Sept 1st 1853

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th Ultio. To your several interrogatories I would answer as follows, to wit,

The Dist. of Monterey includes all the Territory, Bays, Harbors, Rivers, and shores, embraced within the Counties of Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Luis Obispo, lying between the parrallels of 35 & 37°12' N.L. The extent of coast being about 140 miles- There are four ports in the District to wit, Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo and San Simeon. Monterey is the sole port of Entry and there are no ports of Delivery in the District.

I am of the opinion that the extent and boundaries of the District should remain as constituted by an Act of Congress passed Sept 28th 1850 creating additional Collection Districts in the State of California. The harbor of Monterey is safe, commodious & accessible at all seasons for the largest class vessels.- It is the only safe harbor between San Francisco and San Diego (San Luis Obispo & Santa Barbara being but open roadsteads & San Pedro the seaport for Los Angeles offering but little if any better refuge for vessels) It is the port most likely to be made by vessels coming from the East, in distress & bound to San Francisco. (There are now three large vessels lying in this port which were driven in by stress of weather being unable to get into San Francisco) It is close proximity with the central portion of the State, being about 95 miles from the mining Districts on the river San Joaquin.

These reasons should in my opinion recommend its remaining the sole port of Entry for the District. The Territory embraced within the District of Monterey is rapidly increasing in wealth and population, but I am of the opinion that it is not necessary at present to make Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo or San Simeon ports of Delivery.

Hon James Guthrie
Sec Treasury
Washington City
D. C.

Very Respectfully
Your Most Ob. St
Isaac B. Wall
Collector of the
Customs Dist of Monterey
Custom House Monterey
Sept. 2d 1853

My Dear Sir

I transmit herewith a communication from the Comptroller of the Treasury directing you to deliver to me "All the public property in your possession, together with the forms, books of Entry, and instructions relating to the duties of the office with which you as Collector & Inspector" were furnished by the Department.

I will thank you to furnish me with such other books and papers as are in your possession, which properly belong to this office. In the absence of all books and vouchers it is impossible to furnish such information as had been required of me on several occasions. I must beg your early attention to this matter.

Col. Wm H. Russell
San Francisco
Cal

Your Mo. obt. St.
Isaac B. Wall
Collector Dist Monterey

Col. Wm. H. Russell, predecessor of Wall as Collector, is colorfully described in "The Year of Decision 1846" by Bernard DeVoto. "Owl" Russell, native of Kentucky, friend of Henry Clay, appointee of Fremont, had been the original wagon master of the great train that left Indian Creek in 1846.

Custom House Monterey
Sept 1st 1853

Sir.

I am in receipt of your letter of the 27th Ulto. requesting me to furnish you with a "statement of the receipts and expenditures" of this office "for the fiscal years ending 30th June 1852 & 1853." It would give me much pleasure to furnish you with the information desired, were it possible, but I regret that it is utterly out of my power.

There are no books, vouchers, or accounts Current, in this office from which I could make such statement. I have made application to the late Collector for such books & vouchers as are in his possession, which properly belong to this office. When they are received I may be able to furnish you the statement required.

Very Respectfully
Your Obt Svt
Isaac B. Wall
Collector

Sam J. Bridge Esq.
Appraiser Genl.
San Francisco

Custom House Monterey
Oct 1st 1853

Sir

I have the honor to transmit herewith my returns for the month ending 30th Sept. 1853.

The Chilean Bark "Libertad" arrived in this port on the 1st of July in distress, her Cargo was landed and stored under Custom House Inspection. It was found that he could not reload the Cargo & I allowed an entry to be made according to the manifest as the cargo was perishing. No Invoices were produced. I required a deposit of \$500 dolls, for the production of the Invoices with the Consular certificate.

The Cargo as weighed and appraised fell short of the number of sacks in the original entry, inasmuch as a portion of the cargo was thrown overboard previous to the arrival of the vessel, and another portion consisting of 400 sacks was thrown overboard under Custom House Inspection in this harbor, after it was condemned as *putrid* by the appraisers.

Very Respectfully
Yo Mo Ob Svt
Isaac B. Wall
Collector Dist Monterey

First Auditor
Washington City
D. C.

Custom House
Monterey Sep 30 1853

Sir

I have the honor to transmit herewith the following Abstracts to wit.
Abstract of Licenses granted to Enrolled Vessels for carrying on the Coasting trade- in the quarter ending 30 Sept 1853 - Abstract of Enrollments issued in the Dist of Monterey in the quarter Ending 30 Sep 1853 - Abstract of Temporary Registers issued and Registers surrendered in the quarter Ending 30 Sep 1853, together with Copy of Temporary Register granted to Steamship McKim, Copy of license granted to Schooner James L. Whiting, & the Register of Bark Columbia surrendered on the 20th Inst.

Very Respectfully
Your Ob Svt
Isaac B. Wall
Collector Dist of Monty.

Register of the
Treasy Dept
Washington City

THE EDITORS
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COSAS DE INTERES PARA LOS SOCIOS

Two important events have been sponsored by the association since our last quarterly.

In July the American flag with twenty-eight stars was raised over the Old Custom House in Monterey, commemorating the eventful day of July 7, 1846, when Commodore John Drake Sloat landed at Monterey.

In a re-enactment of the original ceremony, Rear Admiral Earl E. Stone, Superintendent of the U. S. Naval Post Graduate School, read the orders Commodore Sloat had received, and the proclamation Sloat issued on that day.

Among the several thousand present at the ceremony were officers and men from several nations, whose ships lay anchored in the bay. Two Spanish ships, S. N. S. Almirante Fernandez and S. N. S. Lepanto; the Canadian ship H. M. C. S. Sioux; and the U. S. S. St. Paul fired their guns in salute to the flag rose.

Chairman for the day was our Board member, Allen Knight, and the arrangements were sponsored by our association and the Monterey Peninsula Navy League.

The second event was held on August 30th when nine of the fine old adobe homes of Monterey were opened for the annual tour. Under the able chairmanship of Mrs. William O'Donnell, this year's tour was the most successful to date.

Visitors flocked to Monterey from many parts of the state and were delighted with the opportunity to visit the lovely homes.

We are grateful to the owners of the homes for their gracious hospitality, and to the many members and friends of the association who acted as assistant hostesses.

Several books and pamphlets have been added to the Local History collection of the Monterey Public Library, which will be of interest to members of the Association. One is a small book published in 1886, entitled "History of the Joint Anniversary Celebration in Monterey," describing the joint celebration of the 110th anniversary of American independence and the 40th anniversary of the flag-raising in Monterey. Another, "Voyage of the Venus," published by Glen Dawson in 1956, consists of excerpts from the official report of the voyage which relate to Monterey and the coast of California in 1837. A pamphlet by W. F. Chamberlain, entitled "Footprints of the Padres as seen in a Trip over the Santa Fe Trail" and published in 1907, contains reflections on early California and Monterey history as well as a "bit of history of Robert Louis Stevenson." Another pamphlet, "The Conquest of California," was printed from the original unpublished manuscripts of Midshipman Alonzo C. Jackson which describe the seizure of Monterey in 1842 and the final conquest of 1846.