

NOTICIAS del PUERTO de MONTEREY

A Quarterly Bulletin of Historic Monterey Issued by
The Monterey History and Art Association

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SEPTEMBER, 1961

Our Association Gains A Distinguished Honor

From August 29th to September 1st, 1961, the American Association for State and Local History held its twenty-first annual meeting for the first time in California. The Sheraton-Palace Hotel in San Francisco, itself a landmark in the history of the Far West, was thronged with historians and delegates from historical societies from all over the United States. Although the headquarters of the American Association for State and Local History is in Madison, Wisconsin, its western convention was made possible by the sponsorship of the Conference of California Historical Societies, (of which we are a member), the California Historical Society, the Society of California Pioneers, the Historical Society of Southern California and the State Division of Beaches and Parks.

In 1959 the California Historical Society had singled out the Monterey History and Art Association for its first Award of Merit for outstanding community service, and at the same time had honored Miss Margaret Jacks, our honorary director, with an individual Award of Merit for her contributions in aid of California's history. Immediately thereafter, Claude Faw, then vice-president of the association, set to work to follow in colored photographs the restoration work on the Casa Serrano with the intention of presenting this evidence of the association's work to a national historical group. Only a few booklets of the photos and the accompanying explanatory text and information concerning the past efforts of the association to preserve the historical heritage of Monterey were printed, however.

When word came to Mayo O'Donnell that the California Historical Society and other organizations were interested in recommending the Monterey History and Art Association for a special Award of Merit from the national association, only Mrs. W. R. Holman's copy of Mr. Faw's invaluable brochure could be found at hand. Hastily including with this booklet a copy of our illustrated tour pamphlet *Old Monterey*, a clipping of the recent Monterey Herald editorial citing the civic value of the preservation program and copies of the two issues of our *Noticias del Puerto de Monterey* which trace the history of the Serrano Adobe and the successful campaign to purchase and save the Fremont Adobe from destruction, the package was rushed off to San Francisco by our Secretary.

Apparently, the Awards Committee was impressed with the visual evidence and the recommendations of the key California historical societies, and at the Awards Luncheon on September 1st, this special citation was voted: "The American Association for State and Local History presents an Award of Merit to the Monterey History and Art Association for arousing civic consciousness for retaining the spirit and color of Old Monterey and for preserving and marking existing adobe structures." The formal certificate, which is being prepared, will soon take its proud place next to the California Historical Society's coveted Award of Merit on the wall of the meeting room at the Casa Serrano.

This signal honor from a distinguished national historical association is a testimony to the active interest that the 817 members of the Monterey History and Art Association take in the heritage of the peninsula. Of all the towns in California, Monterey has been the most successful in preserving and restoring to usefulness the adobe buildings that represent the historical legacy of pioneer days. For this reason Monterey has become a place of pilgrimage by all interested in the romance of pre-American California.

In a real sense, the members of our association can take pride in the fact that through their interest, the work of their society is recognized and appreciated not only in its native state, but throughout the United States.

Officers, members and directors: We salute you!

The Editors

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Carried Off In Chains: JAMES MEADOWS' STORY

(concluded in this issue)

Since the publication of the memoirs of James Meadows of the Carmel Valley began with our December, '60 issue, continued in March, '61, *Noticias* but missed the June issue, it might be well to give a short summary of the tale together with an abbreviated cast of characters.

James Meadows, an English sailor, jumped ship in Monterey in 1837 and started to work as a lumberman cutting redwoods up the Carmel Valley. Although he had been a member of the foreign riflemen who helped Juan Bautista Alvarado seize the governorship of California in 1836-37, he was by nature a quiet, non-political farmer. To his great surprise, however, in 1840, Alvarado and the Mexican officials, fearful that the restless foreigners might turn against them, rounded up him and about one hundred other non-citizens and deported them. After being crammed into jail in Monterey and given a sketchy interrogation, most of the captives were released, but Meadows and about forty companions were chained together and loaded aboard a ship bound for Mexico.

James Meadows' account of his troubles is fairly bitter, but for exuberance of ill-feeling and a pen dipped in gall and wormwood, we must consider Thomas Jefferson Farnham, a sensational journalist who happened to be in Monterey when the exiles were singled out. Outraged that Mexicans would dare to arrest Americans, no matter what the cause, he threw himself into the position of their defender, followed them all the way to Mexico, and by publishing the account in *Travels in California*... in 1844, added to the fuse that finally exploded the Mexican War of 1846. (As a matter of fact, only seven of the deported acknow-

ledged that they were Americans; the rest were mostly British deserters from whalers).

The chief villain of the affair, according to Farnham and the exiles, was Captain Jose Casto, later the General Castro who opposed Fremont and Commodore Stockton in 1846. Although he was a rough customer, Bancroft, the great historian of California, says, "No Californian has been so thoroughly abused as he is in what passes for history. It should be stated at the outset that nine-tenths of all that has been said against him by American writers has no foundation in truth . . . He did not maltreat the exiles of 1840, as charged by Farnham and others." It should be kept in mind that it was Bancroft who sent his stenographer to take down James Meadows' account in 1877 together with those of dozens of other pioneers and that he had an unparalleled opportunity to form a valid judgment.

For James Meadows the affair was an incident, probably the most unforgettable, in a long life. After he returned from exile in 1841, he married a Carmel Mission Indian girl, ranched in the Carmel Valley and stayed out of politics for the rest of his days.

And now, to conclude the recollections of a pioneer:

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Capt. Paty's Brig, on which Farnham was, had followed us from Monterey to Sta Barba & from thence to San Diego, but did not come in there, as soon as they learned that we were to be landed at some port in Mexico, she started for Mazatlan, and gave the news to three foreign men of war that were lying there (French, English & American). These vessels came to look for us, but missed us, probably in the night. The French & the American men of war came as far as Monterey, but Gov.r Alvarado had disappeared from Monterey.

Jose Castro wanted to scuttle the ship close to the shore, drown all the prisoners, & himself, his officers & soldiers, & the ship's officers & men take to the boats and go ashore. Capt Snooks, & his mate refused to enter into any such scheme. The mate told us of this on the passage the afternoon that we were on deck. That mate was a friend of mine, & as I & others were sitting around the head smoking our cigars, he turned to a Kanaka sailor, and told him this loud enough so that we could hear it - he intended that we should know what was going on, & to appraise us that they (meaning he & the Captain) would not permit it.

Castro had promised also to pay Aguirre for the value of the ship if he would agree to her being sunk, but he would not listen to any thing of the kind.

I understand that Capt Snooks testified this before Mr. Barron, the British Consul in Tepic.

We were kept in the castle of San Blas three nights & two days without anything to eat or drink, except what we could buy by selling our shirts from our backs. When I got to Tepic, I had no shirt on, but my coat tightly buttoned on.

Whilst we were in the castle, we could at any time have gone to the beach, the Californian soldiers being all suffering from the effects of seasickness — in fact, they did not pretend to guard us then. One afternoon an American ship-master came there to see us — told us to go to the beach & he would carry us all off to Mazatlan or any where else that we wanted to go to & turn us over to a man of war. He gave us a doubloon of 16\$ to be divided among us. Capt Isaac Graham took his share of that money. altho' he had 1000\$ lying on the table in sight of everybody. We did not accept the Am. Capt's offer to run away, as we had determined to pursue Farnham's advice.

Farnham had left Paty at Mazatlan, & hired a schooner on which he followed us to San Blas. The day he left Mazatlan he saw us, hut our ship sailed much faster

than his schooner. When we came to an anchor, he came right under our stern & waving his hat, again advised us to keep up a stiff upper lip - he would see us to the end of our journey. Castro then wanted to know who that fellow was, and was told it was the man that landed in Monterey & opposed the shooting of Morris. Castro then said "¿Que tiene ese hijo de puta que seguivenos?" (sic) Castro then ordered the boat to be lowered so as to get on shore before Farnham, but the latter got there a little before him. Then Castro ordered Farnham to consider himself under arrest not to leave town before 8 o'clock the next morning. Farnham told him he had nothing to do with him - some other angry words passed between them - Castro drew his two-edged sword & threatened to run Farnham thro', but did not do it. Farnham turned around, hired a horse & guide & was in Tepic the next morning, where he informed the Brit. Consul Barron of all the transactions. Then they went down together to the Gov.r of Tepic & told him all the circumstances of our case. That afternoon Castro & his officers arrived in Tepic, presented themselves at the Governor's house.

In going into the governor's presence Captain Castro formed at the foot of the line & Serg.t Man.l Rudecindo Castro appeared at the head - so that the Gov.r took the latter to be the senior officer, until Jose Castro appraised him that he was in command.

These things as well as others were told afterwards by Mr. Alex.r Forbes who used to come see us every day.

Capt Castro asked for lodgings for himself & his men - the Gov.r went in wrote a note & handed it to his orderly, telling Castro & his officers &c to follow the orderly, On arriving at the cuartel the orderly delivered the note to the officer of the day, and Capt Castro & his crowd were all put under arrest. This information we obtained from the sergeant who was on duty at the cuartel on that day. I don't remember his name now, but I saw him afterwards in Calif.a when he came with Gen.l Micheltoarena.

We had to walk from San Blas to Tepic, which occupied us three days. Got nothing to eat when we started - the 1st day we got nothing - had plenty of water - that night they drove us all into a corral that had no back to it, & put a sentry over us at the front - next day, we traveled on - the Consul had requested the Alcalde to give us all necessary supplies - we got all we wanted, & that afternoon started on again - that night camped at a sugar-mill. Joaquin de la Torre bought a crate of panocha & gave us two apiece. That night the soldiers did not stand guard over us - all went to sleep with us. From the time we were taken prisoners we had no blankets, but slept with no other covering than our wearing apparel.

The next morning continued on our journey & arrived in Tepic that afternoon. All the people came out to meet us bringing fruits, provisions, water, drinks &c, which they distributed amongst us prisoners. Vicente Gomez was in the crowd. They refused to give anything to the officers or soldiers. Whatever they got they had to pay for. The people had already learned of the outrageous manner we had been treated & manifested their sympathy for us.

When we got to the Alcalde (who was assisting us for Mr. Barron) he took charge of all prisoners, and allowed la Torre to have nothing to say to us while we were in his town. Then Wm Anderson & myself being sick & footsore wanted to stop, but Torre would not let us - the Alcalde refused to deliver us up to him unless he furnished donkeys to convey us, as we could not walk any more. Torre gave us donkeys. and when we arrived in Tepic, the people surrounded the prisoners and left me with the outside crowd on the Donkey. We waited abt 2 or 3 hours at one corner of the town as we entered into it for an escort - none coming, Vicente Gomez took Torre's arm & escorted him to the old house that was used

as a cuartel for us. I followed on my donkey, & when all had walked into the cuartel, I got off & was going in when the sentry refused to let me enter, calling me a fool for not having gone off with the crowd - he never allowed me to go in until he had called the officer of the day & informed him that I said I belonged to the crowd of prisoners.

While there Consul Barron took charge of us & provided for needs. He allowed 1½ reals a day to each for provisions & hired a man to cook for us.

We were summoned to give our testimony about our case. Serg.t Man.l Rudecindo Castro, & two of the soldiers (one of whom had been the man that threw the breech-clout into the bean pot) testified in our behalf & corroborated all we had said about the treatm.t that had been extended to us - and abt the revolution we had been accused of plotting - the soldiers were examined separately, and allowed no communication with one another until all had been examined. That soldier told us what he had testified, and we would not believe him, but Mr. Forbes esured us that he had spoken the truth to us.

We were prisoners 9 or 10 months in Tepic, & then the Consul advanced us 250\$ apiece - at least to all that wanted to leave - the rest that stopped got 300\$ from him, & he hired a vessel & sent them back to California.

46 went down together, & 20 came back to California. We gave Mr. Barron a paper for the money he paid us. He promised to send us the money recovered from the Mex.n Gov.t for us, but I never got my share of such money, outside of the 250\$.

I know that six of the prisoners went to New York. They got 12000\$ apiece & paid their lawyers one half of the sum. One of them came back since to California, named Joseph Bolles (or Bows) and told me all abt it. Others at Sta Cruz sold their rights to lawyers who collected the money. I don't know how much they recovered.

Isaac Graham got 35000 or 36000\$ as I was told.

When I came back to Calif.a I never had anything to do with the politics of the country either before or after the annexation, except that being an American citizen I poll my vote at elections.

Rancho Palo Escrito, Monterey County
(7½ miles South of Monterey town)

May 14, 1877

(signed) J. Meadows

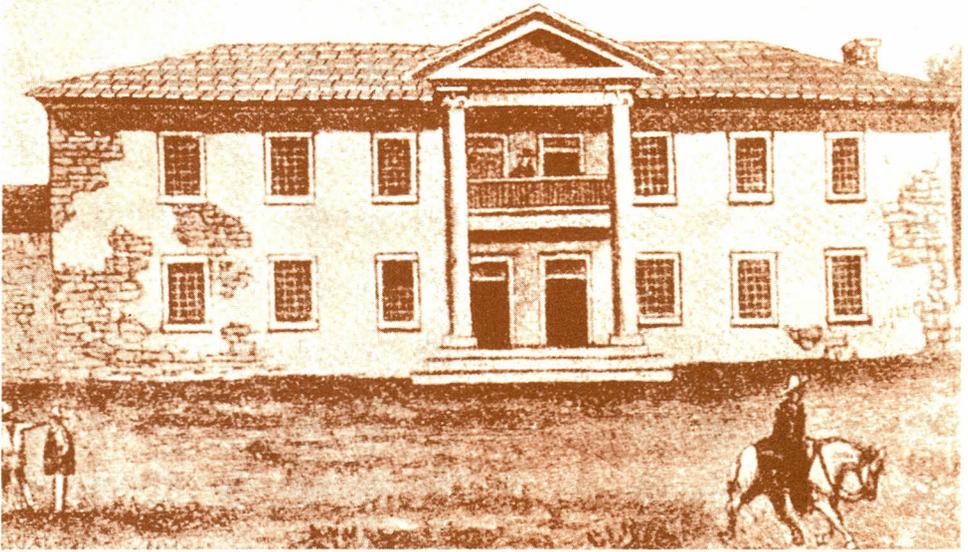
(Editors note: Bancroft had the most serious doubts that anyone got more than \$300 in damages, although several exiles had huge suits filed against Mexico. There is no record whatever that either the U.S. or Mexico ever paid a cent on the claims. As a matter of fact, although he comments favorably on Meadows, Bancroft is rather of the opinion that*most of those deported were shiftless neer-do-wells, especially Graham, who was continually in trouble with natives and respectable foreigners alike. See History of California, Vol. IV, pages 2 - 41.)

D. M. C.

Colton Hall Was Lost For Debts

The City fathers of Monterey in 1851 contracted for services and goods beyond their ability to pay and as a result they lost the town's public property, Colton Hall, and the jail property at Pearl, Tyler and Munras. (The stone jail now adjoining Colton Hall had not then been built.)

On September 24, 1851 one Andrew Randall filed a complaint against the City of Monterey stating that the City was indebted to him for the following amounts:



Courtesy Monterey Public Library

Old Print of Colton Hall, before stairs were added to structure

1. An order for the City Treasurer to pay to Gilbert Murdock for one months services as Mayor of Monterey the sum of \$100, which order has been duly endorsed to J. C. Magee and by said Magee to the plaintiff,
2. An order to the City Treasurer to pay to A. Randall the sum of \$10.30 for 103 lbs of bread furnished the defendant.
3. An order on the City Treasurer to pay to James Nooney \$500 for services in making a typographical survey for the City of Monterey which order has been endorsed to Randall.
4. An order to pay Patrick Morrissey \$1,000 for services due him on street contract as appropriated by ordinance.

The diverse sums came to \$1,610.30 plus interest in the complaint prepared by R. T. Peckham, attorney for Randall. A summons was filed as being served September 26th, and on October 4th J. A. McDowell, member of the City Council, and acting as its legal representative submitted a demurer.

The trial continued to December 2nd when Randall was allowed to strike out all his complaint relative to the first three items. But the \$1,000 for the street contract still stood, and so on December 2nd the District Court gave judgment for \$1,093.07 principal and interest, \$51.00 damages and \$35.00 costs. The record of this judgment was written and signed by P. K. Woodside, Clerk to the District Court.

As a result of this judgment, and because there were no city funds with which it could be paid, the public property of Monterey was sold at auction and passed into the ownership of Andrew Randall.

Randall sold the jail property to Jose Abrego on October 17, 1853, and that deed states that that tract of land was "the same on which is situated the Buildings known as the Mayor's office and Calabouse of the City of Monterey".

Colton Hall was sold to the County of Monterey October 15, 1852, and became the County Court House until 1872.

The sale of the property at Pearl was for \$590.00 and the sale of Colton Hall was for \$5,000.00, quite a profit for a two year period from the original bill against the City for \$1,000.00 on a street contract.

A. Kneass

Sources:

Civil Case No. 66, County Clerk's office.

Deeds: Vol A, page 394; Vol A, page 420; Vol B, page 83, County Recorders office.

COSAS DE INTERES PARA LOS SOCIOS

NEW MEMBERS

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Mrs. Hazel Freitas | Roy Ferguson Philps | Mrs. A. H. Powers |
| Mrs. Julia V. Jacobs | Dr. and Mrs. Frederick Perske | Misses Isabel and Katie Blythe |
| Mr. and Mrs. Thomas De Lay | Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Kier | George N. Keyston |
| Col. and Mrs. Howard E. Helliessen | Mrs. K. Petterson | Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Church, of Salinas |
| | Miss E. Charles Fortune | |

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Fletcher

Mrs. Jimmy Hatlo

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LIFE MEMBERS

Mrs. Gordon Olmstead Nelson and two daughters, Eugenia and Stephine.

x x x

JUNIOR MEMBERS

Jimmie Hatlo II, John Cooper Votau, Carol Anne Votau, Alfred C., John Terrance and John Johnson Hackney; Thomas Delay Jr., Miss Patricia Moran.

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GIFTS

Colonel and Mrs. William McC. Chapman have given a large and beautiful Kirman rug which now covers a great part of the floor in the large rear room of Casa Serrano. Dr. and Mrs. Herbert M. Tolfree of Carmel presented the Association with a large framed steel engraving "The Wounded Hound" and 14 old books, including the Spectator (in seven volumes, printed in London -1729) and six other old volumes of later date. Mrs. W. E. van Loben Sels has given a white silk Spanish shawl embroidered in red roses and with a 14 inch fringe. Miss Florence Baker of Salinas sent a number of photographs taken in Monterey and Pacific Grove before 1900. Thornton Harby, an artist of Pacific Grove, presented a large mural of the landing of Commodore John Drake Sloat's men at the Custom House and the raising of the American Flag there on July 7, 1846. The picture is now hanging over the mantel in the Custom House. The museum at Colton Hall has another of the old school benches to add to those already there. Mrs. William M. O'Donnell presented it to the Association and it is on loan to Colton Hall, a nice addition to the other furnishings there which are also on loan from the Association. A \$3,000 gift to the Association from a Carmel member has been added to the fund for the purchase and restoration of the Fremont Adobe. We are most grateful to all these donors for their interest and valuable gifts.

Howard Reed, our treasurer, has received and deposited a check for \$5,000 willed to us by the late Miss Hilda van Sicklin, who for many years resided in the Forest Hill Hotel and Manor in Pacific Grove. She was a member of one of California's old families, and had been deeply interested in the work of the Monterey History and Art Association over a period of many years. Her name will appear in our Book of Memory.

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Our Association would like very much to have Casa Serrano open to visitors at least one afternoon each week with a member or two acting as hostesses. Would those members who would enjoy taking part in this hospitality to tourists and other members, please advise Mrs. W. M. O'Donnell either by telephone or a note to 336 Pacific Street, Monterey. Maybe the volunteers would only be asked once a year or maybe once a month, if we get a generous response to invitation to serve the Association in this interesting manner.

(Continued on page eight)

THE EDITORS
MONTEREY HISTORY
AND ART ASSOCIATION

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COSAS DE INTERES PARA LOS SOCIOS

(Continued from page seven)

Volunteers are also needed to fill and tie lavender sachets which are sold at Colton Hall for the Association. Lavender comes from Friendly Plaza and in the past the sachets have been eagerly purchased by those who visit Colton Hall.

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THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

The Monterey History and Art Association's Book of Remembrance has been started with the names of a half dozen persons who during their life time contributed much to the life and welfare of the Association. The large bright-red, leather-covered book, was presented to the Association as a memorial to Laura Bride Powers, the originator of the idea to form our Association to preserve the heritage of Old Monterey, by her daughter, Mrs. George Applegarth of Carmel and San Francisco.

Like the Book of Remembrance used by the California Historical Society, the History and Art Association book is destined to become more and more frequently used for monetary gifts presented by members and friends in memory of deceased members or others interested in California history.

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In Memorium: Rear Admiral C. D. Edgar, Theo Farrington, Carrie Morey Ewing.

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ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

In the month of July, the directors received reports on two of their principal activities for the summer: the Merienda, the Sloat Landing and the Adobe House Tour. All were extremely successful projects, for the Merienda account ended up well on the black side of the ledger and the Adobe House Tour, our principal money-raising activity, brought the net income from these two sources to \$2,211.

Mrs. W. M. O'Donnell reported that Miss Rosemary M. Harding had put the Association over the top in its drive to purchase the Fremont Adobe. Her gift of \$3,000 was received with great appreciation and rejoicing and a Committee on Reconstruction of the Fremont Adobe immediately appointed to carry out the necessary work. President Allen Griffin appointed Henry Jones as chairman, with Allen Knight as vice-chairman and Robert McKeever and Myron Oliver, members. Will Shaw, architect, will check the plans.