

# NOTICIAS del PUERTO de MONTEREY

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

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## Lucia School - From Letters To Henry

Our last issue presented to our readers a number of letters to Henry—written about the life of a small boy in the Redwood School near Lucia on the southern Monterey County coast. The actual writer was Miss Maude Flint who taught in the school in 1899, and used the memories of her experiences there as source material for the letters written to cheer a sick neighbor boy.

We found an interesting article in the Overland Monthly of November 1892 written by another teacher who taught in the Lucia school — Miss Mary L. White. She describes the school as follows:

"Even in this wild isolation there is the district school, a little terminal capillary in the great circulatory system of education, evidently in vital relation with the main currents, for a live county superintendent visits it once a year with enthusiasm and groans, — groans for the trip; for he is a heavy man, and not an accomplished horseman.

"There are sixteen children enrolled, but where they come from would sadly puzzle the beholder of these unkempt mountains. If you ask one of the children where he lives, he will probably answer you, if he can muster sufficient English, 'Oh, right down there,' pointing indefinitely down the mountain side, — by which he means a distance of perhaps three miles, which will seem six, if you walk it.

"The limited experience of the children of this community is astonishing. None of them ever saw a negro, a chinaman, or a circus, or had a picture taken, and very few of them ever saw a church or a train. Several of them as old as fifteen years have never been away from the place, and have as much difficulty in imagining what a plain is like as did Walter Tell in Schiller's play. One little American boy of twelve begged his father to take him over the mountains to see a wagon."

The clerk of the local school board in 1899 was a Mr. Smith — or Herr Schmidt. Miss White, the teacher in 1892 described him thusly — "Over the ridge is the log-built home of an old German, where at windy times you hear all day the lonesome creaking of a certain tall redwood leaning against another, and catch glimpses through the pines of white-caps dancing upon the dark blue of the ocean. Here he lives by himself in one room, his potatoes and onions in a straggling heap in one corner, his dog and his flour under the bed, and his fine-cut tobacco poured

for convenience in an open tea box by the stove. He himself is a great stooped clown, in dirty blue ducking, his colorless hair flying about in loose tags, his small, pale blue eyes half-blind and glassy with cataracts, with a scraggly blond beard, and a great grinning mouth stretched over large white teeth. He is a great reader of stories and of the press, although he must put the print within one inch of his best eye in order to see. Oddly incongruous with himself is his scholarly knowledge of German. He detects your slightest error, and can untwist many a puzzling construction of Goethe and Schiller."

Herr Schmidt as he was in 1899 is described in one of the letters to Henry. "We went high up into the mountains to visit an old man named Schmidt - Smith for short. He is the clerk of the school board. The poor man is blind in one eye and can hardly see out of the other and he lives all alone. Sometimes children go to his home and play mean tricks on him. Teacher says it's a shame so we went up to see if we couldn't help him a little. We cleared up his place a little for him and he was very thankful. He has very hard work to cook anything because he is so high up. He told us that a lady told him to put a little soda into his beans so that they would cook tender. Thinking that if a little was good, a lot would be better he put in a heaping teaspoonful and of course they tasted awful bad. He couldn't eat them. Mr. Smith asked us to come again soon. He's a funny old man. I think he's a little crazy. We saw lots of beautiful plants and flowers and interesting things on our way, and the view of the ocean as we were coming down was wonderful."

In this issue we make no attempt to print the remainder of the letters in their entirety due to limitation in space. We have taken excerpts from the letters which present the daily life of the school, and the efforts of the teacher to stimulate the children - to interest them in the beauty of the world around them, in their own health, and thoughtfulness for others as the episode of Herr Schmidt illustrates.

Dear Henry:—

Back to the overland trail. I left off in a very exciting place last time and of coarse (?) you are dying to know what happened. Well we saw, we saw — bear tracks! Miss Blank said she wasn't surprised. She expected to meet bears, and lyons (?) and everything after the things she had heard. She said she was only sorry the old boy neglected to show himself. Everybody was saying she was very brave because she never dismounted once all the way over the trail. They said she was the first teacher, man or woman that hadn't to get down and rest. Some people are afraid to look down the deep canon. But we wern't. .... A few wild cats, coyotes, coons and things were all we saw and they didn't seem a bit anxious to make our acquaintance.

My! but that was a beautiful ride as long as we could see. Down in the canon were the most beautiful evergreen trees — redwoods and others and all kinds of ferns and shrubbery.

All of a sudden as we came around a turn we saw — the moon! Maybe that doesn't sound exciting to you but it was quite an event for Miss Blank and me.

It really did look beautiful all around when the moon came up and the water was all sparkly. It seemed sort of airy-like. It wasn't very long before we came to the end of our journey. We all stopped at the Lopez house where teacher was going to live because it is handier for her to go to school. Uncle George was there to meet me and the Lopez family had us eat with them because I was too hungry to wait. Aunt Betty and my cousins seemed very glad to see me. It did seem kind of lonesome after the excitement was over and I was sorry teacher couldn't live with us. But it's fine now and I don't get lonesome any more.



More news! We went on an exploring expedition yesterday afternoon. We went down to the old Lime Kill(?) I bet that isn't right. It don't look right. But that's what you get by living in the back woods where the only dictionary is at the school.

Well, that old Lime K. used to be a very busy place but it is as dead as a doornail now. They had to give it up because they couldn't land on account of the roughness of the ocean and it was too difficult and expensive to get the material in and out any other way. They had several wrecks before they gave it up. The old shacks were left and they are all falling in ruins. O, but it's beautiful there! There is a wonderful waterfall and we named it the "Bridal Vail(?)" because teacher says it looks just like the falls by that name in the Yosemite Valley, only it is much smaller. It has a lovely grove there and the ground was covered with beautiful ferns and wild flowers. We found some nice wild berries to eat. We heard some wild cats screeching in a canon not far away. Besides the waterfall there was a big rapids falling over great bowlders. We walked out over the stepping stones and Miss Blank slipped and fell into the water. She held to a rock and we helped her out. It was getting pretty cold to be so wet and far from home but she got along all right. It spoiled our fun a little but she said not to mind.

Teacher has us do our exercise out of doors and our singing too. She says if she had her way we would do most of our work out in God's glorious sunshine. I'll tell you she makes us stand up straight! She says it's a shame the way some of these children especially a few of the boys, hump over. They look like little old men who haven't anything to live for, she says. They get into the habit by leaning over so much in climbing the mountains. The exercises make us feel fine and like standing up straight always. Then we march around the school grounds a lot just like soldiers. When we go back into the school we feel more like studying our lessons. We have breathing exercises too.

We sing first thing in the morning. Have we a piano? I'll say we haven't nor any other instrument. But teacher starts us with a tuning fork.

—o—

What do you think Pedro Lopez told Teacher the other day? She was asking him if he didn't think it was fine to live in a place where you could watch the many changes in nature all around him. And he said that there were never any changes. Everything was just as the Lord had first made them. And he is twenty years old. He thinks he is too old to go to school. Miss Blank told him he had better keep a watch out when he was going back and forth over the mountains and all around here and he would see changes going on all the time. I wonder if he would think anything had changed if a few bowlders should fall on his head some fine day?

I am getting used to hearing the wolves and wildcats and coyotes crying in the night. The people here have to keep watch dogs to drive the wild animals from their animals and other animals.

What do you think? Old Mr. and Mrs. Lopez don't speak any English and it's lots of fun motioning to them and getting off our few words in Spanish to make them understand what we mean. They laugh and think it's lots of fun.

These children are regular Indians when it comes to scenting trails. They know the hoof mark of every animal miles around and are always tracing all kinds of tracks. It's quite an exciting and interesting game. I am going to learn so that I will be a regular Sherlock Holmes when I get back to the world again.

Teacher took us to an old Indian Mound today. I never saw one before. I guess there were millions and millions of old shells there and we found some arrow-heads. We dug around a little trying to find some other things but lots of people had been taking relics before us so we didn't get much but it was very interesting to see. It

is a very long mound and is high up on the mountain.

Today there was a big fog down at our house, but when we got up to school we were far above it and it was like looking down on a lot of clouds while we were surrounded by sunshine. It's great only I wouldn't like to fall into the fog and not even have a chance to see where I was going. The whole ocean was covered with fog.

At noon today - we went to the woods and gathered wood and kindling for our fire. Some of it we piled outside in the hot sun to dry. It's all sunny around the school.

—o—

Crimminy crickets! but it rained last night! — and did it thunder and lighten? I'll say it did — and then some. It sounded as if a lot of people up in the sky were moving their furniture. Swish would go the lightning and then crash-bang would go the thunder. Then it would echo-ker-bang and you would think that was the end of that one. But it would strike against the mountains farther away some more times. And then it would begin again and rumble and roll and tumble about and I'm sure it struck somewhere once or twice. And the hail sounded like cobble stones falling on the roof. We thought all the time that they would break through. The wind was blowing terrible hard and the waves made an awful sound against the rocks. I hope it won't storm so hard here very often. We didn't go to bed all night. Teacher says they all staid up all night at her house too. We slept a little towards morning but we sat in our chairs and laid down dressed.

This morning it was perfectly beautiful. The trails are so rocky and sandy that they dry very soon. Our trail was fine to go on to school. But teacher's trail was washed away in one place and she and the Lopez children had to wait until Pedro Lopez could make a sort of bridge with logs. Teacher said she wanted to ask if he saw any changes in the geography of his home place since yesterday but she thought it would be mean to rub it in because he must see how foolish he had been.

Teacher says that the "flu" is around but she's going to see that none of us gets it. She means none of her pupils. Some of the people in the families already have it. She got a new kind of medicine to inhale. It is some kind of Eucalyptus salve. You melt it on a tine of something and inhale the steam. If you want to do an extra good job you put a little in your nose so that you can keep on inhaling it a long time. Teacher made some of the children take a tube of this medicine home to help the people who are sick and keep the rest of the family from getting sick.

Miss Blank says we must use our one ounce of prevention instead of sixteen ounces of cure. It's cheaper and when there is no doctor to be had at any price it is far better. When we get a little chilly she makes us exercise. We go outside if it's pleasant. If anyone feels as if he has a cold coming she gives a glass of hot water to start the blood circulating. If one glass doesn't do it take two, she says.

—o—

Well, what do you think? Teacher insisted on playing ball with us to-day. She plays lots of games with us and runs around like a kid. It's lots of fun to have her like to play with us. She aint much of a ball player and she's left-handed but she says she's willing to learn. She can throw pretty well if she is left-handed

O, I forgot! We caught a rattler by our school today! We didn't exactly do it but Angelino Gomez did. When he heard it Angelino said for Teacher and us to stay in the school and he would catch it. He took a heavy stick and struck it on the head and killed it instantly. It had ten rattles and Angelino took them off and gave them to Miss Blank to keep as a souvenir. We all had a good look at the snake before it was killed. It was beginning to get coiled up ready to strike Angelino. But these people here say they won't hurt you if you don't bother them.



Believe me! I won't fool with any of them.

What do you think these people use for wash tubs? -trunks of trees! They cut a trunk in two parts lengthwise and hollow the parts out. Ain't it great? And they use real honest to-goodness mortars and pestles! They grind all such things as corn with these. And, O, say, they don't have any threshing machines and such things here. They loosen the grain from the stalks by tramping it out on horseback. The children say it's lots of fun and they always help Mr. Lopez. He's the only one here who has any land level enough to raise grain on.

Yesterday it was pouring when we went to school but it was lots of fun walking up the trail and there was a nice fire in the school so we could get good and dry. We slipped a lot and got muddy but we had on our old clothes and didn't have to worry.

We couldn't go out at noon but we ate our luncheons together and told about some of our experiences in time gone by.

Afterwards we played bean-bag and ball and marbles. Then teacher read us the story about the Connecticut Yankee at the Court of King Arthur by Mark Twain. It's awfully funny. I hope you have read it.

I forgot to tell you that Miss Blank had brought along a lot of fine oranges and we had a feast on them. She said we should eat oranges all the time and drink lemonade. They would help us to keep well and were better than medicine. Uncle says he is going to get a lot of them next time he goes to Jolon. It's too bad it's so hard to get things in here. Teacher says the people here should raise their own oranges and lemons. She has sent for ten small trees and we are going to plant them around the school on arbor day, the 7th. That is Luther Burbank's birthday, and we are going to have a regular celebration. I hope it will be pleasant.

Teacher says those trees will grow very fast because the soil here is so wonderfully rich. We are getting a big pile of loam ready to put around them after the trees are planted. I would like to see them when they are full of fruit. Maybe I will come back here to visit them. O, but this would make a fine summer resort if it wasn't so hard to get in here. I would like to come here every summer. It's a grand place.

We had such a fine day that we were sorry when it was over.

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Just think! a steamer comes here once a year with supplies. It can only come in the summer when the sea isn't so rough. Even then it has to anchor away out and they send the things to shore in baskets over a pulley. They have a rope from the boat to a high rock. Steamer day is a great day for these people. Every one takes a holiday and they have a regular picnic where the things are landed. Gerarda told us about it to-day. How I would like to be here when it happens next summer.

You know Mr. Schmidt or Smith, the trustee that I told you about. Well, Gerarda told us a funny story about him. Last year they had been looking for the steamer quite a few days and had almost given it up. When the whistle blew everyone began to get ready to go down to the landing beach. When the Lopez family was starting off on horseback they saw someone come rolling straight down the mountain on his horse. When they got near the horse got up and they saw it was Mr. Smith. Everyone roared to see him. It would have been a picnic to see him.

Mr. Smith went down with them and he kept them hurrying because he wanted to be among the first on hand. Gerarda said he acted as spry as a boy that day. You see it's about the only excitement these people have all year. The Lopez family took along a lot of burros to carry the things up the mountains. All the other people had burrows too. Uncle George and my Aunt and cousins were the first ones at the

landing place because they live very near. The Lopez family and Mr. Smith were next. The teacher they had here last year was with them. The Captain wanted her to go out in the basket and get on board but there wasn't time enough.

Something wonderful has happened! Mr. Lopez, Gerarda and Mr. Smith have actually got started for King City. They have been getting ready a week or two, teacher says. For at least a week Mr. Lopez has been saying *manana seguro* — surely to-morrow. Everyday there seemed to be some more fixing to do to get ready, and they have kept singing to the tune of *manana, manana, manana*. But they're off at last. They're going to bring back supplies and also a lot of horses that Mr. Lopez has over in the valley. One of them, named Molly, is going to be for teacher's very own while she is here. She has been riding Jack, Frank, Bonnie and Nellie, by turns and she says she hasn't a chance to get real well acquainted with any one of them.

Mr. Smith stayed at the Lopez house all night and they all got up at three o'clock to get an early start. Gerarda stayed up until twelve to finish some things she was going to wear. Teacher says she was up that late also because she couldn't sleep with all the excitement going on. For, believe me, these people are starting on some expedition when they "set sail" for King City by the overland special. I wish I could have gone with them.

## —o— COSAS DE INTERES PARA LOS SOCIOS

### OFFICERS FOR 1964

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Board Meetings: The Board of Directors will meet at 4 o'clock each first Monday afternoon instead of 4:30 as in the past, with a half hour coffee break. The meeting will be called to order at 4:30 as usual. This will allow members to become better acquainted and have time to see the headquarters of the association and get a view of the rooms and exhibits.

Mrs. C. Tod Singleton will continue for another year as hospitality chairman and Mrs. William O'Donnell as house chairman. Mrs. Horace Doromody will succeed Mrs. Oberholtzer as garden chairman. Other important chairmen are still to be appointed.

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A new mailing list is being prepared. Members who have changed addresses are asked to notify the association. If you have not paid 1964 dues please do so at once if you wish to attend the Merienda.

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Three very special events of great importance are to be held soon under the sponsorship of the association.

(1) May 9 is the date chosen to hold the annual Adobe House Tour. Mrs. Charles Bentley will be the chairman of plans, having made such a complete success of last year's event. Mrs. Robert Stanton (Virginia) will be advisor for the table



settings. Tea will be served at Casa Serrano, the association headquarters, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Norman Hasselo and Mrs. Orval Polk.

(2) Saturday, June 6, is the date for the annual Merienda in Memory Garden at the rear of the Old Pacific Building, celebrating Monterey's 294th birthday. On June 3, 1770, Padre Junipero Serra and Gaspar de Portola landed at Monterey and claimed all of California for Spain. George Leutzinger is chairman for this event and Gallatin Powers will be "major domo" for the barbecue. Mrs. Thomson Hudson has accepted the appointment to arrange hostesses for each table. Each member is privileged to have one ticket this year as we now have over 900 members.

(3) R. Admiral C. Tod Singleton is working on plans for the celebration of the 118th anniversary of the landing of Commodore John Drake Sloat at Monterey and the raising of the United States flag at the Old Custom House on July 7, 1846. This historical event will be held under the sponsorship of the association on Sunday afternoon, July 5th, 1964.

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At the March meeting of the Directors it was voted to give Honorary Memberships to the surviving members who were appointed to serve until the first election and who signed the incorporation papers on the 12th day of December 1930: Carmel Martin, Col. Allen Griffen, Myron Oliver, Harold March, Miss Charlton Fortune and Mrs. Laura Wheeler.

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"Old Monterey" by the late Laura Bride Powers is to have a second edition. This book, a history of old Monterey, is out of print, which has made it a collectors item today. The second edition will be published by Pacific Books, according to word received from Mrs. Powers' daughter, Mrs. George Applegarth of San Francisco. This new version will be updated to include developments of historic interest which have taken place since the original publication 30 years ago. Mrs. Powers was a well known newspaper woman. She became the first curator of the Old Custom House after that historic building was taken over by the State. She, with Colonel Roger Fitch, were the organizers of the Monterey History and Art Association in 1930. Of special interest to our members will be a new chapter on the history and accomplishments of the society with pictures of the Merienda, Casa Serrano, and other special events and old adobes.

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A card from Mr. and Mrs. Donald Craig has been received mailed in Scotland: "Although Scotland has many links with Monterey historically — Stevenson is the only one to have a memorial to him, a museum dedicated to him in both cities. As a matter of fact, we have a bigger and better memorial to him than here in his birthplace. We have been in Scotland for three weeks and enjoyed it every moment."

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New Members: Mr. and Mrs. George Henri Picard, Mr. and Mrs. Manly Douglas, Dr. and Mrs. Roger Detels (Mimi Doud), Miss Elsie Crowley, Father Lawrence Farrell, Mr. and Mrs. Harry D. Johns, Dorothy Reiersen, Mrs. W. Egbert Schenck, Mr. and Mrs. J. Randolph Kennedy, Ellen B. Little, Mr. and Mrs. Henry H. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. John A. Clancy, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. J. Powers, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Hawley, Mr. and Mrs. Jess Braucht, Mr. and Mrs. Donald B. Reed, Mr. and Mrs. George Steinavle.

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Deaths of Members: Colonel Caryl Hazeltine, Jean T. Fuller, Olan P. Jenkins, Dr. James B. Finley.

THE EDITORS  
MONTEREY HISTORY  
AND ART ASSOCIATION

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COSAS DE INTERES PARA LOS SOCIOS

Gifts. A sleigh bed, very old, from Mrs. C. V. O. Terwilliger; antique dining table and extra leaves from Prof. and Mrs. A. Boyd Mewborn; antique reading glasses with silver frames from Miss Marian Eley; monetary contributions from Monterey Peninsula Visiting Nurses Association, Ltd., and Miss Mildred Dolores Mendia of San Jose, a descendant of the Amesti family; and an assortment of family treasures from Mrs. Winifred Wolf of Gonzales, a descendant of the Gonzales family.

Hostesses: Mrs. Howard Dabney is to be the hostess chairman for the Casa Serrano which is to be open each Wednesday afternoon from 1 until 4 o'clock, with two hostesses on duty each Wednesday. It is planned to have special exhibits of historical value each month. Hostesses are to be: Mesdames Charles Bentley, George Clemens, Van Court Warren, Raymond Spangler, John Francis Doud, Misses Laura Durgin and Dorothy X. Peacock. Substitutes: Mesdames Peter Farmer, Elmer Zanetta, Robert Johnson, Ted Durein, Leland Paul, Mildred Hall and Miss Edna Browning.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Stanton are placing on loan at Casa Serrano a large oil painting by the late Armin Hansen.

Adobe House Tour: Adobe homes to be open to guests attending the annual Adobe House Tour on May 9th, 1964 and the hostesses will be: Casa Alvarado, Mrs. Wesley Heard; Casa Amesti, Old Capitol Club; Casa Abrego, Casa Abrego Club; Casa Castro, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Work; House of Four Winds, Womens' Civic Club; First Federal Court, Mr. and Mrs. Thomson J. Hudson; Gordon House Mr. and Mrs. Francis Palms; Larkin House, Division of Beaches and Parks; Casa Serrano, Monterey History and Art Association; Casa Soberanes, Mrs. W. M. O'Donnell; The Whaling Station, Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Dodge.

The History and Art Association headquarters in Casa Serrano would be most happy to receive as gifts the following items to enhance the beauty and comfort of the adobe's interior; a fire screen and fire set; silver tea spoons; a silver service, coffee or samovar; a pier glass mirror, any nice plates or cups and saucers or an old fashioned set of dishes; and a small gas range in workable condition.