

NOTICIAS del PUERTO de MONTEREY

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

Vol. IX, Number 3

SEPTEMBER, 1965

December In Monterey, 1602: Viscaino's Diary (Concluded in this issue)

"Returning to the discussion of the port of Monte-Rey, where only the *Capitana* and the frigate remained, getting in water and firewood in order to continue their exploration, I say that this port is very good and well protected from all winds. It has plenty of firewood and great abundance of big straight pines, smooth for masts and spars, many very large oaks for the building of ships and rock roses and broom (*genista*?) and rose bushes as in Castile, blackberries, willows, and strong creek-side sycamores. There are very large and pretty ponds, fine, fertile pastures and grazing land for livestock and beautiful lands for grain crops.

There are many and varied large animals: there are bears so big that standing, their paws are a foot long and eight inches across. There are other animals that have hoofs like mules; some say they are of the kind we call elk. There are others as big as yearling bulls, and their shape is that of deer. Their pelt is gray and a quarter of a yard long. On their heads are wide antlers like those of stags; the tail is about a yard long and half a yard broad, and their feet cleft like those of oxen. There are deer, stags, hares, brush rabbits, wild cats; there are bustards, large ducks, small ducks, swallows, geese, doves, two kinds of thrushes, sparrows, linnets, cardinals, quail and grouse, wagtails, cranes and buzzards. There are other fowl the size of turkeys, which are the biggest seen on the voyage: from wing tip to wing tip, they measured sixteen palms. There are curlews, seagulls, crows and many other sea birds. In the sea between the rocks, there are plentiful mussels and some very large shellfish whose shells are like fine mother-of-pearl. There are oysters, lobsters, crabs, *burgaos* (?); there are very large sea lions and many whales.

"This whole port is surrounded with settlements of friendly Indians, well-disposed and fond of sharing whatever they have. They use bow and arrow and have their own way of government. They were exceedingly sorry to see the Spaniards leave their land." (*19)

(Now let us return to Viscaino's official "Relacion" which found the explorers at Carmel.)

No people were found; because of the great cold, they were living farther inland. He sent Ensign Juan Francisco with four soldiers to a village to see what was in it. It was found abandoned and he returned. The general came back to the *Capitana* at dusk and we swung at one anchor. At midnight, aided by an offshore wind, we made sail and clearing the port, the favorable northeast wind so aided us that by dawn, when the wind died, we were ten leagues farther on.

Helped by the land breeze we arrived at the place of the cove where the *San Agustin* was lost. Sebastian Melendez Rodriguez had been pilot in her. (*20) Although the chief pilot recognized it, we did not stop since we had a favorable wind. The next day, however, a great gale out of the northwest forced us to take shelter in it. We anchored, although just outside to seaward, with intent to land the next day, but at daybreak the land breeze struck us and made us hoist sail.

While we were sailing away, there came out of the said port two canoes with one Indian in each shouting to us to return to port and to beware of the lee (?). As they did not dare approach the ship, we left them so as not to lose time. It was not fitting to lose any, for the people were very sick, the cold was getting worse and the frigate was nowhere to be seen. In the recent storm out of the northwest it had disappeared.

So, aided by favorable winds from the land we ran along the shore until the 12th of the said month, when the moon was in conjunction and we found ourselves up as far as Cape Mendocino, so desired by us all, for it had taken us so much labor and difficulty to get to it. (*21) So that our travails might be the more esteemed, God willed it that the new moon of January entered with such a fury of south wind and so much rain and fog that it put us in great doubt whether to go ahead or to turn back, for it was as dark by day as by night, the seas so great we could make no headway, nor even lie to. All the people fell sick so that only two sailors could be found to man the maintopsail.

The general, seeing our great necessity and the confusion we were in,

(*19) Venegas, Padre Miguel de *Noticias de la California*, Tomo III, Pages 68-73.

(*20) He was now captain of the frigate. The *San Agustin* was the Manila galleon wrecked at Drake's Bay in 1595. Francisco Bolanos, pilot in the *Capitana*, also recognized it.

(*21) Named for Antonio de Mendoza, Viceroy of New Spain, 1535-1549, after Cabrillo's voyage of 1542.

called a meeting of the captains, pilots and their assistants to discuss what more could be done in His Majesty's service. It was agreed that it was not wise to go forward, for there were no men fit for it, the cold was great, and the sea and winter weather worsening all at once, so that if we went on, we would all perish. In accord with this, the general ordered us to return to Cape San Lucas when the weather permitted.

The next day the weather improved. The sun came out, allowing the pilots to calculate our position and they found that it was 41 degrees north. Although we had agreed to turn back, a windstorm out of the southwest hit us and sore afflicted us. On Saint Antonio's Day, the 17th of the said month, at 8 o'clock at night, the sea on our beam, the ship met two waves which heeled her over so far that it was believed that the keel came out of the water and that the vessel had capsized. In that great rolling and pitching, sick and well were thrown from their beds, and the general from his. He fell on some boxes and the heavy blow broke his ribs.

We were in this predicament until the 20th of the said month, San Sebastian's Day, when the storm subsided and we found ourselves at latitude 42 degrees because the currents and waves were bearing us rapidly toward the Strait of Anian. (*22) This day we saw the mainland on the said cape, as well as up the coast, all forested with great pines and so much snow covered the peaks that they seemed volcanos. The snow came all the way down to the sea.

On the 21st of the said month, God granted us a little northwest wind (which had been such an obstacle to us on our way up but which was so longed for on the return voyage) and it carried us out of our difficulty. We came down along the coast, seeing again all that was seen before until we got to this stopping place.

Concerning The Return From Cape Mendocino And The Arrival At The Islands Of Mazatlan And Of What Happened On The Return.

We returned, as has been told, from Cape Mendocino, and from beyond that other one which was given the name of San Sebastian, on the 21st of January. The north wind favoring us, we came hugging the coast, checking it all very carefully, and on the 25th we got as far as the port of Monterey, where the Indians sent up smoke signals to us. We did not enter it, however, so great was our need for health; the sick clamoring, without either doctor or medicine nor comfort to give them except rotten jerked beef, sea biscuit mush and weevil-infested beans and chickpeas. All of us had mouths full of sores, our gums swollen bigger than our teeth so that we could scarcely drink water, and the ship resembled a hospital more than a vessel of the Armada. The matter

(*22) The Strait of Anian was a famous mythical, clearwater Pacific-to-Atlantic passage over the top of Canada. Spain feared that the English and Dutch were short-cutting through this strait into the Pacific and was therefore anxious to find its Pacific outlet and stop the traffic.

came to such extremity that he who had previously been a helmsman now had to steer, set the mainsail and do everything else, and those who could walk, assisted at the cook-stoves to make mush and poultices for the sick. Above all, the non-appearance of the *Tres Reyes* frigate greatly worried us, for we feared she had been lost in the last storm, but such was our distress, as has been said, that we could not wait for her, although we did intend to do so at the island of Santa Catalina, where we arrived on January 29. And although many canoes of Indians came out with fish and other things, inviting us to go ashore, the general did not dare anchor there, for there were not enough sound men to raise the anchors and the sick were perishing of hunger. Thus we continued our voyage to the island of Cerros (*Cedros*).

On February 6, we got to the said island of Cerros, and so great was our necessity for water and firewood that we anchored there with one small anchor, intending to cut its cable and leave it there if it could not be raised. The general went ashore with six men, the strongest of whom had not even strength to lift a water jar from the ground, and with the greatest labor in the world they collected twelve quarts of water. The Indians of the said island came down to the beach where the waterhole was with their bows and arrows, all painted in red, playing flutes and making gestures with their weapons. Although the general called them and coaxed them, offering them biscuits, the said Indians refused them, nor would they behave peaceably but tried to disturb and prevent us getting the water, which obliged the general to order some arquebusses to open fire over their heads to frighten them. With this, they took to flight up the hills.

The next day the general commanded Ensign Pascual de Alarcon to go ashore with the men and make firewood. He did so, and at midnight on the 8th of the said month we hoisted sail with the greatest difficulty in the world, got the anchor up and continued our voyage with a fresh following wind.

Ranging along the coast until the 11th, we arrived at Cape San Lucas to pick up the longboat we had left there on the outward trip, and also to go to Port La Paz to wait for the assistance that had been requested of the Lord Viceroy. All were of the opinion that we should not enter the bay nor go to La Paz because the men were so ill and exhausted that if we anchored there, we could not get the ship out again; some were of the opinion that we should cross over to New Spain (*the mainland*) to the nearest port to alleviate our distress, and others thought we should head straight for Acapulco.

The general, having heard the opinions, and considering the great misery we were in and that the sick were dying of hunger because what there was aboard ship could not be eaten by reason of the bad state of our mouths, therefore ordered us to go to the islands of Mazatlan. Crossing the mouth (*of the Gulf*) of California, we reached them on the 18th in the greatest suffering and need and trouble that ever Spaniards have seen, for the sick lamented and

those of us who could stand or crawl could not handle the sails. We let go the anchor between the islands and the mainland. The next day the general determined to go ashore with five soldiers (for in the whole vessel there were no others who could walk). Without knowing the way through the brush and thickets, he walked thirteen leagues inland beyond the town of Mazatlan, and because there was no definite road and the scrub was so high, he missed the direction and took the path to Culiacan. On this he ran out of food and was at the point of perishing from hunger and thirst if God had not miraculously saved him by a pack-train that was traveling to Culiacan from Mexico. The packer noticed where he was and how he was wandering as if lost. He gave him wine and tortillas and bananas and mounts with which to go to the town of Sacanta, subject to the Villa of San Sebastian, and there, the general, having explained to the alcalde, Martin Ruiz de Aguirre, the need that had obliged him to go there to succor his perishing people, was gladly given the supplies that were available in his jurisdiction, such as hens and chickens, goats, beef and veal, bread, fruit and other vegetables. With these which the general kept sending, the people were much refreshed and began getting better.

God, like a merciful father, furnished on those islands a quantity of little fruits, like small pineapples, called *jucoixtles*, upon eating which those sick with mouth sores and swellings had the proud flesh of their sores so cut away that it made them bleed profusely, and in such a manner did the said fruit act that within six days, not a person remained who was not healed. And His Divine Majesty also provided that the halt and lame were all healed without any kind of doctoring or medicine, just the good weather and the food. In the eighteen days we were on the said islands, until March 9th, when we made sail, all recovered and were able to hoist sails and man the helm, and so as not to tire you, I do not mention the hardships the general experienced on land and his expenses in sending supplies. The ones who went with him were Andres Leal, Juan Garcia, Cristobal de los Reyes, Gonzalo Hernandez and Diego Lopez and they will be able to testify as eyewitnesses.

As afore-mentioned, we left the islands for Acapulco, going along the coast, and on the 10th of the said month, at dawn we were off Cape Corrientes, all very joyful that the people were better and healthy. Continuing the said voyage down the coast, we came to Acapulco and to our great content, dropped anchor there on the 21st, although downcast with the news we had found of the many deaths among those who had gone with the messenger ship, the *Almiranta*. For lack of supplies, the majority of those in the said ship had died."

The frigate, which had gone astray in the storm off Point Reyes, passed unwittingly the islands off Mazatlan where Viscaino's men lay recuperating and made port three weeks before them. It had lost four men on the return, bringing the expedition's total loss of life from disease, hunger and hardship to forty-eight.

But the story of the voyage which put Monterey on the map does not quite end here. Viscaino's patron, the Count of Monterey, received him with praise and rewarded all who had taken part in the discoveries, Viscaino being given the rich plum of command of the next Manila galleon. However, the explorer's good fortune soon turned sour. Monterey's term as viceroy expired shortly thereafter and his replacement, Montesclaros, either through spite or a chance for graft, cancelled the appointment, disparaged the value of Viscaino's findings and even brought charges of forgery against the expedition's cartographer, Martinez, and hanged him.

The royal court took a very dim view of these actions. The obstructive new viceroy was reprimanded, ordered to make Viscaino general of the 1607 galleon so that on the return trip he might plan a frontier settlement at Monterey Bay and plant it with a high type of Spanish colonists,—all at royal expense.

Montesclaros wriggled out of that by saying that the 1607 galleon had sailed before he received the king's instructions, and besides, a colony on two legendary Pacific islands near Japan would be more suitable. The ruse worked. The funds were diverted to this wild goose chase and Viscaino was sent on an embassy to Japan in 1611 with secret orders to search out those ideal islands.

Nothing came of this adventure (if we except the eventual closing of Japan to the western world, which Viscaino's ineptness as an ambassador and the imprudent zeal and rivalry of the Spanish missionaries greatly influenced); Monterey Bay was forgotten and for 167 years its history is a void.

—Donald M. Craig

COSAS DE INTERES PARA LOS SOCIOS

Mayo Hayes O'Donnell, our beloved secretary and the principal pillar of the association, has done it again! At the Merienda she received a Laura Bride Powers Award for her devotion to the ideals of our association, and now the Senate of the State of California has honored her with a commendatory resolution introduced by State Senator Fred Farr.

It cites the "deep and abiding interest in the history of Monterey" of Mayo and Bill O'Donnell, her years of leadership in the Monterey History and Art Association, the Monterey Foundation, the Casa Abrego Club, the manner in which she has delighted thousands of Californians with her column in the Monterey Peninsula Herald and enriched our lives through her accounts of the interesting history of early and late California, and it also adds something that we know only too well: "that Mayo Hayes O'Donnell, perhaps more than any other individual, has kept alive the spirit of 'Old Monterey'."

May each year bring its official commendation, Mayo; we commend you every time we think of you,—and that's every day.

THE EDITORS
MONTEREY HISTORY
AND ART ASSOCIATION

336 Pacific Street
Monterey, California

Non-Profit Organization
Bulk Rate
U. S. POSTAGE
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Permit No. 20
Monterey, Calif.

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1145 Harrison St.
Monterey, Calif.

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Admiral Hobbs' inventory committee has completed photographing and cataloging the hundreds of items offered to the museum by Mrs. Adele Knight. The next steps toward realization of the project are action by the City of Monterey to arrange site details and the naming of the museum fund-drive committee by the association.

* * * *

New Members

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Diaz, Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Allen, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Williams, Mrs. Thelma Bradley, Mr. and Mrs. Brooke Elgie, Mr. Roger W. Fremier, Mr. and Mrs. F. C. Kilpatrick, Mrs. J. A. Thomas, Mrs. Harold A. Titus, Mrs. Lawrence A. Murphy, Mrs. Lee Harbick, Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Hill, Mr. and Mrs. D. A. McCormick, Mr. and Mrs. Bourke Welch, Miss Mary Jane Leutzinger.

* * * *

We are sorry to announce the passing of these old friends and associates: Mrs. Juan Garcia, Mr. James H. Parks, Dr. H. Spencer Hoyt, Miss Theodosia Winfree, and Mrs. Mabel Cooper Norwood.

There will be a General Membership Meeting Friday, October 22nd,
at 8 P.M., Casa Serrano.

Program: "Heritage", a film from the State Architectural Bureau, and
"Reminiscences of Old Monterey," a tape recording.