

NOTICIAS del PUERTO de MONTEREY

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THREE LIVE CALIFORNIA BEARS

To whom in South America were three California Grizzly Bears being shipped in 1852? And how does it happen that an invoice concerning their shipment was found in an old account book in the Cooper house in Monterey?

We are facing a puzzle that is gradually unfolding as we check other records, and ask for help from other California historians.

When Miss Frances Molera willed the old Cooper House to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, she also left the contents to the Trust. Among the documents found in the house were old ledgers, day books, and pocket account books, which we could identify as concerning local places and persons. Also there were several record books not of the Monterey area, but which we could connect with Captain Cooper, or his descendants. There is a book of rentals of a boarding house in South America which probably came from one of Cooper's trips along that coast. There are sales records of goods sold in Canton, Sandwich Islands, Guam, etc. in the 1820s & 1830s which of course are connected with his voyages.

But what about this one record book which appears to be the purchase and daily sales of beef, sheep, etc. — both on the hoof and cut for market? None of the customers were from the Monterey area, and certain references show the customers were from camps, towns, etc., in the Sonora area.

In the back of the account book we found a copy of an invoice showing the total costs of shipping three California Grizzly Bears to Stockton and the freight per ship Venice to South America.

Our first letter asking for help went to Mr. Carlos J. De Ferrari, County Historian for Toulumne County, Sonora. Back came a most enlightening letter, for which we thank him sincerely.

We now share with our readers the old 1852 invoice found in the back of the account book from the Cooper House in Monterey. (Incidentally, we assure our readers that all the documents found in the house are now safely under lock and key and being gradually sorted and listed.)

pr Venice

Copy of Invoice 3 Bears

1 Large Mountain California Grizzly	
Bear Bought of Catlin & Co.	\$1,763.-
1 do Cinamon do, female	975.-
1 Young Tame Bear	532.-
	\$3,270.-

Charges

Two Large Iron Bound Cages		
Made in Sonora pr order	715.-	
One small do	150.-	
Pd McShane & Searle bill		
keep 3 bears 76 ds. at 10\$ per diem	760.-	
pd keeper 3 mos. wages @ 75\$	225.-	
pd Carting & Labor fm Sonora, bill	62.2	
pd Freight to Stockton to		
Jno. Adams pr bill	200.-	
Freight pr Ship Venice		
to South America	700.-	
pd Horse Hire to Sonora		
6 times at 5\$ each	30.0	
McShane & Searles Com. 10%	327.-	3170.2
		\$6,440.2

E.E.

Woods Crossing 30 Oct. 1852
McShane & Searle

Question? Was Captain Cooper connected with this shipment of live Grizzly Bears in 1852? We do not know as yet, but we do know a little more than when we started.

Our first letter of inquiry went to Mr. Carlos J. De Ferrari, County Historian for Toulumne County, Sonora. Back came a most enlightening letter. He could identify some of the customers whose accounts are found in the old book and he found a reference to Jno. Adams whose freight bill to Stockton is part of the totaled Invoice.

In 1911 a book entitled "The Adventures of John Capen Adams, Mountaineer and Grizzly Bear Hunter of California" was published — the author being Theodore H. Hittell. On page 289 of that book, the memoirs of John Adams state "in a few weeks after my return, I received letters from my brother William who was then at San Francisco, informing me of a contract he had made to send two large and one small

grizzly bear to Lima, in South America, and requesting to know whether they could be provided at short notice. I replied, by letter, that I had a large and a small bear . . . and thought that in a few weeks I could provide another — and, as fortune willed it, in a few nights afterwards we caught a large bear in one of the traps. I now immediately wrote my brother that I would deliver the three bears at Stockton at a certain time, when he should be present, or have an agent present, to receive them.”

Mr. De Ferrari further mentions that Adams also speaks of disposing of a female grizzly and two cubs in the autumn of 1853. While the dates do not coincide, Adams — writing or speaking many years after the event — may have been slightly inaccurate. Adams was a trader at Wood’s Crossing as was McShane & Searles at the period 1850-51, according to Mr. De Ferrari. John Adams, of course, has recently been depicted in a motion picture — “Grizzly Adams”.

We believe that we will find that the old account book with the interesting invoice will be traced to Captain Cooper — either as a silent partner, or a friend of the owners. In 1852 the gold fields were still in great need of meat, and Cooper, of course, had large ranchos in Monterey and Sonoma counties from which cattle would be driven to be sold in the gold field areas.

But what about the bears? To whom were they being shipped in South America? Was this just a first stage on their journey — possibly to the eastern seaboard — to a zoo or a circus?

The total of \$6,440.2 was quite a large sum for the period — indicating some one, or some firm, with substantial funds and a wish to obtain live California Grizzly bears.

CALIFORNIA IN 1778

Ed. note: We are indebted to Eric Beerman of Madrid for a translation of a portion of a report concerning California which he found in the Spanish Archives. On the 10th of August, 1778, Fr. Antonio Reyes of the Convento de San Francisco, Mexico, wrote a long report on the Missions of Sonora, Nueva Vizcaya, Nuevo Mexico, and California. We have extracted the portion concerning Baja California and present U.S. California.

Description

The villages and missions of this peninsula (Baja California) at present extend from the Cape San Lucas, 22 degrees, latitude north, until the new establishment of Monterey at 38 degrees, latitude north, which are divided into Alta and Baja California.

In Baja California the old Missions extend from the Cape of San Lucas until 28 degrees, latitude north, for a distance of 300 leagues (approximately three miles to one league). This half of the peninsula is generally arid and does not have important rivers. The width of the peninsula from the Gulf of California to the Pacific Ocean is approximately 40 leagues.

Alta California, or Northern California, is situated on the Pacific Ocean and it extends from the port of San Diego 32½ degrees, latitude north, to San Francisco, 37½ degrees, latitude north, for a distance of approximately 250 leagues. The whole coast from San Diego to San Francisco is extremely fertile land with beautiful groves.

Four rivers have been explored, in addition to many streams, with excellent water which comes down from the Sierra Mountains, situated to the East. Four tribes, or Indians of different languages, inhabit the territory explored by our Spaniards. Those tribes are in continuous warfare with one another. Many families live together, and the Spaniards have encountered villages from 30 to 60, even 100 houses. In a word, the new colony of Monterey is the most delightful, fertile and beautiful of all the Interior Provinces (Provincias Internas) of Mexico (Neuva Espana).

Garrison

The incomparable Hernando Cortez was the first Spaniard to attempt the conquista of California. Subsequently there were other attempts and expeditions which were not fruitful until the end of the last century (17th) when the Jesuits (recently expelled) established missions in Baja California. At the time of the expulsion (1767) of the Jesuits, they left 27 missions and two small royal mines which were inhabited by Spaniards. The Franciscan missionaries of the province of Jalisco assumed ecclesiastic authority for these missions in 1767 until the following year when authority was assumed by the Franciscan missionaries of the College of San Fernando in Mexico City. The latter had control until 1773 when by royal order King Carlos III of Spain gave responsibility of the Baja California missions to the Dominican missionaries.

Present Situation

These missions have not been called, nor can they be called, villages, as they only are composed of a church, and a few houses of the priest and his servants. The Indians live from agriculture in the hills and come down to the mission on Sundays, or on days of fiestas. By information received this year of 1778, it is known that Spaniards, and many Indians abandoned their villages and missions, and have gone to live on the coast of the province of Sonora, opposite of Baja California. In the Peninsula there are not presently more than 500 inhabitants.

Alta California was settled in 1769 with the assistance and help of the Senor Visitador General (Jose de Galvez-Marquis de la Sonora). The Spaniards settled at the ports of San Diego, Monterey and San Francisco. In San Diego there were approximately from 20 to 30 Spanish families; 50 to 60 in Monterey; and 80 to 100 in San Francisco. The Franciscan missionaries of San Fernando College in Mexico had founded eight missions in which more than 1,000 Indians of all ages are congregated. Some of the Spanish soldiers married Indians and have settled at the missions.

Political Government

This Peninsula (Baja California) is under the jurisdiction of a military governor. He

resides at the presidio at Loreto on the island of Carmen, situated in the Sea of Cortez (Gulf of California). The military governor has 50 soldiers that serve at various garrisons for the security of the coastline and missions of Baja California. The indians farm the land on a cooperative basis, and the crops are given to the governor and he in turn supplies the clothing, food and necessities of the indians. The Spaniards, indians and mestizos do not pay taxes of any type.

In Alta California, there is a captain with 100 Spanish soldiers located in the ports of San Diego, Monterey, and some are garrisoned in the missions. The indians also farm here on a cooperative basis and supply themselves and the mission padres on a daily, or a weekly basis, depending on the item. If these missions have not suffered a lack of development they will already have planted the seeds, which until the year 1775 were brought from the departments of San Blas and the Reino de la Nueva Galicia.

Ecclesiastic Government

The cathedrals of Guadalajara and Durango are responsible for the missions in Baja California. The bishops of Guadalajara give the permission to the missionaries. The 20 Dominicans with Vicar are under the control of the church in Mexico. The missionaries must give the sacraments and attend to the religious needs of the indians. The missionary will receive annually the sum of 300 pesos from their parish. All the indians are christians, but with such a lack of education and religious doctrine which was mentioned in the previous section.

In the new colony of Monterey, there are 16 missionaries of the College of San Fernando of Mexico City. These must also attend the religious needs of the indians and the Spaniards, without expecting any monetary rewards for said services. Each missionary, however, will receive annually 350 pesos from the royal Mint in Mexico City. In the new settlements there will be at least two missionaries. One is to instruct catechism and the other to teach on the civil and political institutions. The Spaniards live in a depressed state as they often do not have priests to attend their spiritual needs.

COSAS DE INTERES PARA LOS SOCIOS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: As of the October Meeting, the Board of Directors welcomed the following new members: Mrs. John M. Frier, Mrs. Kenneth Ehrmann, Mrs. James Land, Mrs. Robert Stanton, Mr. Philip Coniglio, and Captain William B. Provost.

GIFTS: The Women's Architectural League, Monterey Bay Chapter, gave our association a check for \$500.00 from the proceeds of the recent Architectural Tour of houses in Pebble Beach.

An old painting of Mission San Carlos done on bolting cloth, and a very early wine jug from the Munras family were given by Lidella Ware of Santa Cruz. Mrs. Guy Gilchrist

has presented a bolt of handwoven linen circa mid 1800s and a set of Larkin Papers edited by George P. Hammond.

IN MEMORIAM: General John T. Bissell, Mrs. Ralph Borreson, Mr. Dwight Whitney Morrow Jr., and Mr. Breckenridge Thomas.

WATERFRONT OPEN SPACE: For those who have watched the removal of the old Cerritos Restaurant in front of the Custom House, we are happy to inform them that the area will be left as open space under the care of the State Department of Parks and Recreation.

SPECIAL THANKS: A colorful brochure that is distributed to visitors to the Allen Knight Maritime Museum is given to the Museum through the generosity of Mr. Warren G. Beach. He has produced and given these brochures since the Museum first opened in January 1971.

TWENTY YEARS: On March 1957 the first issue of the NOTICIAS was printed with the purpose of encouraging general interest in local history. We have tried to include in each issue an article drawn from hitherto unpublished primary sources. This December 1976 marks the end of twenty years of publication. In the meantime the membership of the association has grown from a few hundred to over two thousand. We hope the Noticias has helped in the preservation of historical structures and value.

MORE ON CONFEDERATE RAIDER ALABAMA

Ed. note: The article in our last issue by Rear Admiral Francis Boyle has brought forth further information about the confederate raider *Alabama* — information received by letter from William F. Strobbridge of Alexandria, Virginia. We learn how the *Alabama's* presence in the Pacific Ocean changed the flow of commerce. We quote in part from his letter.

By 1861, American shipping profited from a trade boom with Siam. Reacting to new commercial treaty conditions, United States merchant vessels cashed in on the expansion of Bangkok's commerce by hauling rice and sugar to other Asian ports as well as to the United States. Several San Francisco registered ships took part in this trade.

With the outbreak of the American Civil War, the United States Navy's East Indian squadron was recalled from Southeast Asian waters. Added to the pull-out of the Stars and Stripes were rumors of Confederate raiders on the high seas. Danger of losing his ship to the Rebels was enough cause for one New England sea captain to leave his vessel in San Francisco and return overland to Boston. Other American ships in Bangkok transferred their registry to the British flag.

Despite the danger of being burned at sea by Confederate raiders, a San Francisco ship, the *Catalpha* called at Bangkok for trade in October 1862. Two weeks later the bark *Sea Nymph* also of San Francisco, was less fortunate. Her crew ran away rather than risk running into confederate prowlers. The *Sea Nymph's* owners sold her to local Chinese.

When the dreaded *Alabama* finally appeared in Southeast Asian waters during 1863

most American ships were laid up in Singapore or Bangkok. Apprehension over Confederate privateers denied cargo and insurance to Union ships. For all practical purposes American trade with Siam declined to insignificance during the Civil War. From a total of 55 American ships calling at Bangkok in 1861, the numbers dropped to a mere 8 in 1864.

Thus when visitors gaze at the *Alabama's* model (in the Maritime Museum in Monterey) they may be unaware that Californians of an earlier century lost business and feared sea travel because of the threat posed by the mysterious raider.

MARITIME MUSEUM SOLICITS YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Allen Knight Maritime Museum was opened to the public on the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Monterey History and Art Association — 19 January 1971. Although in operation for only about six years, the Museum has become a recognized asset of the Monterey Peninsula community. The Museum is being operated almost entirely by VOLUNTEERS — both men and women. Without VOLUNTEERS the Museum could not have been created, or now kept open.

The Monterey History and Art Association sponsors and provides about one-half of the operating budget for the Maritime Museum. Accordingly, considerable assistance is needed from many interested individuals — FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM. The Museum Director has been authorized to solicit contributions from members of the Association, and others who may wish to assist. All contributions will be acknowledged with a FRIENDS membership card (receipt), dated and signed by the Director. All who contribute (and all who volunteer for watchstanding or other service) will be listed as FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM on a tablet displayed in the Museum, without indicating amount contributed.

The currently approved Museum budget is \$300.00 per month. Museum operating costs include a nominal rental (\$75.00 per month) to the City of Monterey for 5,000 square feet of floor space. This permits three large display rooms, necessary office space, and some work and storage areas. Other costs are for heat, light, telephone, janitorial services, refuse collection, office supplies, and essential repair services. The Museum utilizes all of its available space on the ground floor of the old County Building, and is already in need of more space.

Consideration is being given to the "Museum of the Future." A special committee has been created to promote this project in the years ahead. Mr. Harold C. Hallett is Committee Chairman. *This appeal*, however, is for funds to help operate the present Museum. Checks should be made payable to Monterey History and Art Association, P.O. Box 805, Monterey, Ca. 93940, marked for "Maritime Museum."

Earl E. Stone,
R. Adm., U.S.N.-Retired,
Museum Director (Volunteer)

THE EDITORS
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AND ART ASSOCIATION

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