

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 10, 1950

Eggs for the Ball

The Cascarone Ball is over, but the following item found in an old scrapbook is still timely for so long as 141 years ago eggs were being made, as will be perceived from "The Governor's Request." The Commander, the Governor of California, at that time in Monterey, appears to have had an eye to procuring plenty of eggs that he might use the shells, and generally have a good time and consequent relaxation from the cares of State:

"The Military Commander of Alta California, writing to the Commissioner of Branciforte (Santa Cruz), December 2, 1809, says: I wish you to procure for me by the 8th all the eggs you can find, to be used in the celebration here on the 12th of the Day of Our Lord. With them send a memorandum, showing who had delivered them to you and the price they ask, and inquire if they wish pay in money or merchandise. I have spoken to the militiaman, Besankido, that he may bring them to me, but, if by reason of some accident he should be prevented from coming, then you will see that another brings them and I will recompense him for the trouble and pay the freight. I hope that you will be particular and prompt in attending to the above.

"May God protect you for many years.

Jose J. De Arillaga."

A news item: "Interesting Bit of History," is copied from the scrapbook compiled by E. L. Williams, the uncle of Paul Pioda of Salinas and Carmel. It is dated May 11, 1899:

"At the trial of the suit of Monterey City vs. a townsman in the superior court on Tuesday, E.L. Williams testified that the Ayuntamiento (common council) of Monterey adopted a seal on April 10, 1850 when he was clerk to the council, as he read from the minutes of that date the description of the seal adopted. Mr. Williams further testified that the seal was a piece of round brass, without the present lever attachment as it now appears that such attachments were not in use, or known 49 years ago! And that the impression on the paper issued by the trustees, Phillips, Osio, and Callaghan to David Jacks, were the genuine impressions from the seal adopted in 1850, though now used with a lever attachment for convenience, it having been designed to be used in the old times on sealing wax.

"The testimony of Mr. Williams was an interesting bit of history and remarkable as showing the clearest recollection of events which transpired a half century ago. But very few of those on the stage of action at that time are now living, and it will be but a comparatively short time until all shall be sleeping beneath the sod."

Also in the Williams scrapbook was the following item concerning mining in Monterey County in 1884:

An Old Silver Mine: During the investigation of the Limantour grants for lands in California, E.M. Stanton, (afterwards Secretary of War) procured me to assist (E.L. Williams) and there were critically examined many thousands of documents that had accumulated in California during the 10 years the Spanish and afterward the Mexican Government had prevailed. Among them all I found but one of any mining interest and took a copy in Spanish and a hasty translation. "Rancho Del Rey" or "The King's Rancho" was granted to Vicente Cantua in 1839, under the name of "Rancho Nacional" upon which Hill's crossing is now situated. After Mexico proclaimed her independence from Spain, all monarchical names were changed, hence the change of names for the King's Ranch to the National Rancho. Hill's Crossing at the Salinas on the road to Monterey was so called for the reason the H. Bryant Hill farmed a tract there of two or three hundred acres during 1853-4-5, and there was the Post Office then. The east side of Salinas at the present crossing became the nucleus of a small village and was known as Hill Town. The land farmed by J. Bryant Hill was a part of the Rancho Nacional and held by him under lease from Vicente Cantua. The first rental paid by Hill was six hundred dollars per annum.