

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

June 6, 1950

Warm Reception for Discovery

Archibald Menzies accompanied Captain George Vancouver on a voyage around the world between 1790 and 1794 on board the Discovery. His journal is in the British Museum and a certified copy is in the Victoria, B.C. archives.

The Discovery arrived in San Francisco on the evening of November 14, 1792. After ten days in San Francisco the ship sailed for Monterey and arrived here two days later. The voyagers sailed from Monterey on January 14, 1793. After sailing south to Port Trinidad they returned to Monterey on November 1, stayed here six days and then sailed south to Santa Barbara and San Diego.

Quoting from the records of Archibald Menzies, after their arrival in San Francisco: "On our arrival at the Presidio, the commandant's lady and two or three others were dressed in their best robes to receive us, but the manner of their reception was new to us – we found them squatted down on their heels upon a mat spread on a part of the floor that was a little elevated from the rest, to this emporium we severally advanced paying our obeisance to them in a low bow, but none of them offered to get up, or make the least return to our salutation, nor did they quit the mat while we were in the house. At their own invitation the two Sandwich Island women, who were on the mat, instead of folding their legs in under them they stretched them out at full length which occasioned some little tittering and looks of surprise amongst the Spanish ladies."

Speaking of Monterey Archibald Menzies said in his journal: "The Doedalus store ship had arrived here three days before us. Besides the Activa brig we found here a frigate and a schooner packet, which lately came from San Blas."

"On the morning of the 27th we saluted the garrison with 13 guns which compliment was returned with an equal number, and immediately after we loosed the top sails and hoisted them, and then saluted Sr. Quadra as commander of the Spanish squadron on this coast with 13 guns, which number was returned from the Activa Brig.

"At nine the Spanish governor and Dr. Quadra, accompanied by several of their officers visited the Discovery, the former was saluted on his coming on

board and his going away with 13 guns each time. His name was Joseph Arguello, a lieutenant in the Spanish service who lately succeeded to the command by the death of an officer of high rank, it being the post generally filled by a lieutenant colonel, who resides here as governor-general of the whole Province of California, and one of that rank was at this time soon expected to arrive from Mexico.

"The markee tents and observatory were this day sent on shore together with the astronomical instruments and were erected on a delightful spot opposite the vessels on the western side of the bay.

"The Presidio appeared to be nearly a mile from our anchorage in the southerly direction, and scarcely presented anything else to our view than a dead wall, but the land about it and on the western wide of the bay under which we were sheltered, presented beautiful lawns and rising eminences of clear pasturage diversified with clumps of trees and scattered pines and enlivened with horses and cattle grazing in numerous herds. Behind the Presidio the land rose into a naked hilly ridge of a moderate height. Saddle horses were sent down to the beach early on the second of December and Captain Vancouver, Mr. Broughton and a large party of the officers of both vessels together with the two Sandwich Island women mounted them and joining Sr. Quadra and several other Spanish officers together with the governor and his lady at the Presidio, the whole formed a large cavalcade which was escorted by a guard of soldiers to the mission of Carmillo situated in a small bay on the sea coast about four miles to the southwest of the Presidio.

"Our ride was through a pleasing hilly country interspersed with pines, thinly scattered, coppices of stiff scrubby brush wood and extensive spots of clear pasturage swarming with horses and cattle feeding in herds. When we arrived at the mission the venerable fathers received us with a hearty welcome at the head of a numerous tribe of Indians of both sexes converted to Christianity, kept in good order and decently clad – who provided a sumptuous dinner for the whole party under an arbor in an adjacent garden and employed in building another upon a much larger scale.

"After dinner some of the natives dressed themselves out like deer and sauntered through the garden to show us their manner of decoying that animal and killing it with a bow and arrow. In this they chiefly imitated its

gait and manner of browsing among the bushes till they got sufficiently near to take aim at a vulnerable animal.”