

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **An Old-World Street**

In a small paper-covered book entitled "Olivera Street – Its History and Restoration," by Christine Sterling, I found this charming quotation:

"Each dead hand relinquishes a light; each living hand carries it on. This light is the dream which burns in every human heart; the dream of Constancy, Love, Honor, and Courage.

"The only thing that is lasting is that this perpetual flame is passed on from one generation to the other. All that is noble and beautiful in the life which we entered has been achieved for us by men and women now gone, and they left to us that heritage and with it a trust, the trust to preserve and perpetuate that nobility and beauty as a part of their work.

"We entered life assuming this obligation: How are we meeting it?"

That is the way we feel about Monterey and its historic buildings and atmosphere.

Olvera street is the short old-world street in Los Angeles within a stone's throw of the Union Depot and the Church of Our Lady Queen of Angeles. It was restored in 1930 and is now one of the most fascinating tourist attractions in the southern city. Typical Mexican shops line the center and on either side are the old adobe homes and buildings built when Olvera street was one of the two main streets of the pueblo of Los Angeles and was the old trail down which Governor de Neve led his colonists when he founded the pueblo in 1781.

Mrs. N. Wither, who has just returned from an extended visit in England and on the Continent, brought back with her a clipping from the Bournemouth Daily Echo of Tuesday, June 13, 1950, which will be of interest to Monterey:

"In Monterey, one of the oldest Californian towns, a prominent red line is painted on the road alongside the white one for traffic. Tourists follow the red line to see all the places of historical interest in the town. In front of each there is a sign: 'This parking space reserved for tourist cars only.'

"One place to which the red line leads is the old house where Robert Louis Stevenson spent several months

while waiting for the time when he and Fanny Osborne could be married.

"Telling of this, Mr. G. Miller Reid, of Southbourne, holidaymaking in America, says the house is now an American National Monument. 'I consider this a great honor which Uncle Sam has paid R.L.S.'

"During Stevenson's stay in the house, at which his health was at a low ebb, he wrote "The Pavilion on the Links.'

"In the building are many Stevenson mementos, and some of the furniture from the family home in Edinburgh. Many of the manuscripts have been given to Yale University, but much remains at Monterey.

"For three years Bournemouth was the home of Stevenson. Born in Edinburgh in 1850, he lived here from 1884 to 1887, and although from the health point of view, these three years were perhaps the most trying of his life, they were the most successful and active in his work."

The Stevensons first occupied a lodging house on West Cliff called Wensleydale, the article continues. Later they became owners of Skerryvore at Alum Chine, which was bombed during the war and destroyed. It was there that he lived, according to his own description, "like a weevil in a biscuit."

To this period of his life belonged "Kidnapped" and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

Some of the above article printed in the Daily Echo is not entirely correct.

The Stevenson House is the only historical adobe which has the tourist parking sign described by Mr. Reid. The house is not a national monument. It is owned by the State of California and administered by the Division of Beaches and Parks. Even with these slight mistakes, we are delighted to have an English paper think that our historic route is interesting and useful and that we are paying homage due to a great writer.

Mr. and Mrs. D.A. Lovell of San Diego were visitors in Monterey last week. Mr. Lovell was interested in a bit of research. He wished to know if his grandfather and grandmother, Mr. and Mrs. C.B. Lovell, early day producers and actors, had ever played in Monterey. Mr. Lovell had played in San Francisco in the 1860's at the first California Theatre, with Booth and Jefferson. He passed away in 1882, leaving to his grandson copies of many of the early day plays and programs.