

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

January 15, 1951

Little of This 'n That

After the Diary appeared on January 5 telling of the first day of the operation of the electric cars from Del Monte, through Monterey and on to Pacific Grove and return, Dr. Chester Hare telephoned to tell me that he remembered that day very well – June 10, 1903. He saw the car, loaded with its free passengers proceeding down Alvarado Street, from a spot near where the Monterey Hotel now stands. He ran out and jumped aboard, so when the photograph was taken in front of the Old Custom House a few minutes later, he appears as the little boy in the white shirt and vest, out in front.

Dr. Hare recalled many of the tricks played by the younger set during those days of the horse cars and then the electric line. He remembers how it would often run off the tracks when it made the turn by Holman's store in Pacific Grove as it proceeded to the Methodist church or to the depot, depending upon the day of the week.

He remembers that a group of boys one day in their wanderings seeking adventure, found the pot of oil and the swab with which the brakeman accomplished his job of oiling and which he had hidden in the shrubbery near the tracks. They took the swab and the oil can and did a magnificent job of oiling the tracks on the hill near where the army warehouses are now. Hiding in the bushes which grew near the water's edge, they waited with eager anticipation until the horse car rounded the curve. When it hit the oiled track, down it went even faster than the horses could travel, with the lone motorman in charge, telling the world in loud and effective language what he thought of small boys and their mischievous habits.

Another trick many of the younger generation of that day had cultivated was to turn the switch each and every time they passed – just through habit, of course. When the horse car came along the car went one way and the horse another, for the switch had been put there to enable the car to turn out in order that the one coming in the opposite direction might pass at that point. This was another cause for the profane language used by the several car men of that day.

Another cheese story. Mr. E.J. Bolce of New Monterey has been interested in the cheese stories and thought

he might be able to add a bit of history to the making of cheese in Monterey County. Between 1875 and 1880, Mr. Bolce remembers what a treat it was to come to Monterey on school vacations. His parents always promised him that if he was so high in his grades that he did not have to take the final examinations at the end of the year, they would take him to Monterey.

His visits were many, so his scholarship must have been high. He recalled for me that many hours of those early days were spent by him at the Hatton Dairy at the entrance to Carmel Valley. At that time Sinclair Ollason, a native of the Shetland Islands, was associated with Hatton, and they made cheese.

Mr. Bolce recalls seeing the hopper covered with cheese cloth, into which the milkers poured the fresh milk night and morning. The milk ran down a ten foot flume from the hopper into a huge vat in the barn.

The following day it was heated from coils under the vat, rennet was placed in it and finally the firm cheese appeared. The whey was drawn off and the cheese put under presses, covered with a cloth and in tin molds. When ripe it was shipped by boat from Monterey to San Francisco – that which was not locally used.

The huge cheese knife Mr. Bolce describes as being about five feet long and six or eight inches wide with very sharp blades.

We will continue a bit of research on a subject in which we became interested a few days ago when we attended a luncheon meeting of the Kiwanis Club. The speaker of the day, Louis Merrill, manager of the Western Fairs Association, stated that in ascertaining knowledge of the history of fairs, he had come across the fact that Cortez had landed at Acapulco, Mexico, in 1592, and started a fair. Von Humboldt the geographer, called it in 1600, the greatest fair in the world. Since Cortez and Cabrillo had proceeded up the coast of California, Mr. Merrill thought that possibly that gentle man might have started the first fair in California in Monterey. It would be interesting to delve further into these possibilities – the truth would have immense advertising value.

The California Historical Society will hold an annual business meeting on Friday, January 26, at noon in the French Parlor of the Palace Hotel in San Francisco. The Monterey History and Art Association is a member of this society and there are many individual members on the Monterey Peninsula. Election of officers will be

held, followed by an address given by Mr. Edward T. Planer Jr. Mr. Planer will speak on "Some Observations of California Mission Life." The talk will be illustrated. At the meeting Col. Weddell Smith will formally present the Pony Express plaque.

Tonight at 8 o'clock the meeting of the Monterey History and Art Association will be held at the Stevenson House.