

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **WANTED: To Bite a Man – Bulldog of Bad Disposition**

A note from Paul Parker, formerly of Salinas and now a resident of Berkeley, tells us that a very rare first volume of The Monterey Sentinel has recently been presented to the Pioneer Society of California. Hearing of this acquisition he had made the trip to San Francisco and read it from cover to cover. The dates run from June 1, 1855 to June 30, 1856, with publication once each week.

A couple of months ago we made a trip to Santa Cruz, where The Sentinel is now published, and there made a study of the volume in the office of the publication and later used a series of articles on the early day history in the Diary. One of the two rare volumes, owned by The Santa Cruz Sentinel, has been loaned to the Stevenson House for a short time, and we are again having the pleasure of reading the amusing and interesting articles therein. We intend to follow up on several of the stories Mr. Parker has brought to our attention.

In the June 16<sup>th</sup> issue, Mr. Parker reports he discovered that the first planting of alfalfa in California was made by David Spence in the lots adjoining his home in 1841.

A few other interesting items discovered by Mr. Parker are:

In the drought of 1834 there was no drinking water in Monterey. It all had to be brought from the Carmel River;

There was not a blade of grass and the Estero was so dry one could walk across it, yet the next year it rained so hard that all the adobe bricks being manufactured were melted;

The first death, the first marriage and the first baptism in Monterey;

The hotel ads carried the line "Also good stable accommodation."

One story on May 17, 1856, told of the lynching of four Indians for killing a Frenchman named Picart;

Many of the ads were in Spanish;

The sheriff's sale of the Tularcitos Rancho, 28.600 acres for \$4,445.45, the ranch boundaries were given as the mountains of Tularcitos and Jasshaguam.

"I am wondering if the latter could have been an old spelling for Cachagua mountains," wrote Mr. Parker.

1855 was a dry year, and according to the Sentinel, 5,000 head of sheep that had been driven from New Mexico headed for the mines, reached San Juan Bautista, where their herders learned that there was no feed remaining, so they were sold for \$1.50 a head – the price of two lamb chops today. Cattle caught in the same drive sold for \$9.00 each.

A graphic account of the killing of Wall, Williamson, De la Torre, Beckwith, Layton, and the wounding of others, which happened in that year, is reported. This story is now known as the famous Roach-Belcher Feud fought over the fortune of Mrs. Jose Maria Sanchez, and an account was published by Paul P. Parker in the California Historical Quarterly in 1950.

Boston and Day were prominent advertisers in the 1855 issues of the Sentinel. They listed themselves as wholesale and retail dealers in general merchandise, and invited the attention of the public to one of the most extensive assortments in the county: "Wool, hides and country produce purchased. Collections made and first class bills procured on the Atlantic States Exchange on San Francisco bought and sold. County scrip purchased at highest market rates – July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1855," read the Boston and Day Advertisement. Although there was no address printed, it is supposed that the store was located in the Casa de Ora on the corner of Olivier and Scott streets.

An amusing request appeared in a prominent location in one of the early issues of 1855. "WANTED at this office, a bulldog of any color except pumpkin and milk, of respectable size, snub nose, cropped ears, abbreviated continuation, and bad disposition – who can come when called with raw beef steak, and will bite the man that spits tobacco juice all around the editor's rooms, and steals the exchanges."