

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Bancroft Library Makes This Year's Choice**

The Friends of the Bancroft Library have this year chosen to sponsor the publication of Jose Bandiini's "Description de l'Alta California," written about 1828. Each year the Friends publish some work regarded as significant for the history of the West.

The original document of this year's choice is from the Bancroft Library's own collection. The author, father of the more famous Juan Bandini was a sea captain who settled in California in the 1820's and his very good description of the territory as it was some 20 years before the gold rush should prove a welcome addition to the published source materials for California history. An English translation will supplant the Spanish version. The book, prepared by Doris Marian Wright of the Bancroft staff, is being designed and printed by Alfred and Lawton Kennedy of the Westgate Press.

One of the most interesting and certainly the most colorful of the new acquisitions in the Bancroft Library at the University of California, is the "Reise in das Innere Nord-America in den Jahren 1832 bis 1834." Written by Prince Maximilian of Wied-Neuwied and illustrated by the great Bodmer atlas.

Friends of the Library, who attended the annual meeting last June had the opportunity of hearing the book and atlas described by Dr. Herbert M. Evans, and of examining the beautiful Bodmer drawings. Now by action of the council and the generosity of the Friends of the Bancroft Library, the library has its own copy of this rare and important work, with all its plates in full color.

These two book recount and illustrate the scientific expedition of Prince Maximilian into the trans-Mississippi area. In the summer of 1833 the prince and his party steamed up the Missouri river from St. Louis to Fort Pierre. They visited Fort Union and Fort Mackenzie, spent the winter among the Mandans at Fort Clark, and returned to St. Louis in May, 1834. The exceptionally fine drawings by Charles Bodmer, a young Swiss artist, who was on the expedition, portray the Indians of the region and their native surroundings.

Reuben Gold Thwaites has called Bodmer "in some respects perhaps the most competent draughtsman

who has thus far sought to depict the North American tribesmen."