

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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The Best in Californiana

Today we will complete the list of books on California chosen by the Zamorano Club, founded in 1928 for the study and enjoyment of the arts of the book. The club was named for Augustin Zamorano, California's first printer. Membership in the club is limited to men and the meetings are informal luncheons and dinners where books are discussed. Californiana has been their hobby since the organization began and the "Zamorano 80," eighty books on California history, have all become collectors' items.

Number 34 in the list is the narrative of Edward McGowan, including a full account of the author's adventures and perils while persecuted by the San Francisco Vigilance Committee of 1856. It is one of the rare pieces of Californiana.

Life Among the Modocs: Unwritten History, by Cincinnatus Hiner Miller, better known as Joaquin Miller, was published in London in 1873. It is a curious account of Miller's life and experiences with the Indians of Northern California and John Muir's "The Mountains of California" published in 1894, are in the Zamorano list. Sixty Years in Southern California by Harris Newmark, Frank Norris' McTeague, a story of San Francisco (1899); Francisco Palou's history of Father Serra, first published in 1787; and James Ohio Pattie's personal narrative, the first printed diary of an overland journey to California in 1831, follow in alphabetical order. The later book, both first and second editions, are extremely rare.

Joseph Warren Revere wrote of his tour of duty in California in 1849. He was a graduate of Annapolis and a grandson of Paul Revere. His description of California and the gold region are the best and his discussion of land laws and land titles are still valuable information. He returned to California to retire and acquired a rancho at Sonoma. The club chose this book.

Joaquin Murieta his life and adventures, by John R. Ridge (1854); Alfred Robinson's Life in California (1846); the author came to California as supercargo in 1829 and married into the de la Guerra family. This book is, without a doubt, the most important book on the period it treats, according to the Zamorano Club.

Kit Carson Days by Edwin L. Sabin, has become quite rare; Charles Howard Shinn's Mining Camps (1885); and Dame Shirley or The Shirley Letters by Louise Clappe, California in 1851 and '52, are listed in the Zamorano 80.

In the next ten, which completes the eighty books which the members of the Zamorano Club consider the best of Californiana, are: "The Annals of San Francisco," by Frank Soule, John H. Gihon and James Nisbett, containing a summary of the history of the first discovery, settlement, progress and biographical memoirs of prominent citizens; Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Silverado Squatters," (1883); William F. Swasey's "The Early Days and Men of California" (1891); the author was once associated with Thomas Larkin in Monterey; "Eldorado" by Bayard Taylor (1850) containing much information of Monterey and the Constitutional Convention; and Thornton J. Quinn's "Oregon and California in 1848."

Other books listed are: Upham's "Notes of a Voyage to California via Cape Horn" (1849) with an appendix containing reminiscences of pioneer journalism in California; George Vancouver's A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific (1798); and Felix Paul Wierzbicki's "California As It Is, and As It May Be or a Guide to the Gold Region," printed in San Francisco in 1849 by Washington Bartlett. The author was considered a one-man chamber of Commerce and California booster. Listed last in the Zamorano 80 under "W" is Daniel B. Woods' "Sixteen Months in the Gold Diggings" (1851). The writer, a clergyman, spent his time chiefly in the mines upon the American and Tuolumne Rivers. This work is a valuable contribution to the history of the mining camps. The book is in diary form.