

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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An Old Gentleman Covered With Money

The old two-story adobe pictured today is a building which stood for many years at the corner of Jefferson and Pacific streets, where the proposed new Monterey Peninsula Herald building will be built. Remnants of the old chalk wall which surrounded the home are still to be seen on the Pacific street side of the property.

According to Dr. Aubrey Neasham's report the building was constructed of part wood and part rock with a mixture of adobe, about 1835, James McKinlay, who has been credited with the building of this home in Monterey, married Carmen Amesti, and later became the owner-resident of the Amesti adobe on Polk Street.

In a Monterey newspaper dated January 25, 1907, there was published a head-line news story relating to an old man sleeping in a deserted adobe with \$400 in paper money on his person. The clipping had been saved through the years by Mrs. Millie Birks, who also provided the picture of the building.

Mrs. Birks also remembers as a young girl she was told that the building, which has been torn down since 1907, was the meeting place of the Masonic Lodge from the time of its organization until it moved to the LaPorte building at the south end of Alvarado street, a building which has been the official headquarters of Governor Alvarado during his term of office.

The 1907 Monterey paper reported that an old gentleman literally covered with money was found sleeping in the deserted adobe by an Officer Birks. He gave his name as Alfred Nafus and seemed half starved. After being taken to the jail he was asked if he had any money. He produced \$2.40 in silver, but when a search was made a coin belt was revealed in which he had a \$100 bill. As the jailor turned the key in the door, the old man called him back and said he had some money wanted to entrust to his care.

Nafus removed one shoe and produced another \$100 bill from between the sole of his foot and sock. The other shoe was the hiding place for two \$100 bills, a \$20 and \$5 bill. In all \$427 was produced.

Dr. Rockwell D. Hunt, a native Californian and noted writer of Californiana, has just had his latest work on the history of the state published by the Exposition Press of New York.

The book, entitled "A Vintage of Vignettes," is a companion volume to Dr. Hunt's previously published "California Vignettes."

Dr. Hunt, 83-year-old dean emeritus of the University of Southern California and director of the California History Foundation of the College of the Pacific at Stockton, has written his reflections about the state against a background of world events through the past half century. He now directs the California History Foundation at the College of the Pacific, his alma mater, after service at Napa College from 1891-93; and at the University of Southern California until 1945, when he returned to the Stockton college.

Back in the days when sailing ships anchored at Monterey to exchange their cargo for hides and tallow, they were forced to take back to their Boston harbor something for ballast and many times this ballast was rock from the beach at Monterey.

Being thrifty folk, the citizens of Boston used these stones to pave Louisburg Square in that old city.

A few years ago, there was a project on foot by some of the modernists to replace the rock or field stone from Monterey with smooth paving. Such, a protest was made known that the project was dropped very quickly, and the square is still rough and beautiful with native rock from Old Monterey, This story was told to the Diary by Mrs. Winthrop Allen of Pacific Grove.