

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

August 8, 1951

### **One Terrible Drought**

"Salt of the Earth" is the intriguing title given to a booklet recently published by the Rustler-Herald of King City. As the note of explanation on the inside title page reads it is an accumulation of material which started with the publication of a series of articles in the columns of the paper concerning the founders and old timers of the lower Salinas Valley and Monterey County.

Mrs. Sarah Vivian, the widow of Frederick Godfrey Vivian, the founder of the Rustler-Herald, owner William Steglich, publisher, Ruth Vivian Steglich, editor were assisted in the publication of the valuable history of the territory by Hal McClure, photographer and co-author, Harry F. Cascy, co-author, and Harry W. Fletcher, production superintendent.

We believe that any long time resident of Monterey County would be interested in reading the biographies of 50 men and women which make up pages of the "Salt of the Earth." Their stories give rather a full account of where the folks came from who settled in the various valley and mountain areas adjacent to King City.

Mrs. Steglich reports that both the county and state libraries have asked for copies, as have the history department heads of both the University of California and Stanford. Their opinion is that the stories told by the living old timers are about as authentic as history can be, even discounting fading memories and old age.

Among the most interesting of the interviews is one with Marno Dutton Thompson, the daughter of George Dutton, the early day proprietor of the Dutton Hotel at Jolon. It began "Tell me, have you ever seen the moonlight in the Jolon country? Have you ever heard its mourning doves, walked in its dry grass and sniffed the heady fragrance underfoot? If you have, you will never forget the country."

Jolon was established about 1870 when Antonio Ramirez came from Monterey and built an adobe "with all doors opening on the porch, California style." Later H.C. Dodge acquired the property. He was a relative of Dutton, according to the "Salt of the Earth." In 1876 Dutton bought the 100 acres of land and the residence for \$1,000. He remodeled the place into a two storied hotel store, which became the center of the social life in

the Jolon area. It remained in good condition until the Army took it over and now it is mostly a ruin.

The story of the life of Dolores Encinal, colorful San Antonio Mission Indian, is delightful and thrilling. He has the distinction of being baptized by the last of the Franciscan Fathers, Fr. Doroteo Amris, before the mission went into decline.

Encinal's father, Eusebio Encinal, had been a courier rider for many years at the mission in the Valley of the Oaks. His mother was Dona Perfecto, who was noted for her basket making. She lived to be 100 years old. The family owned the ranch known as The Indians, now the property of James V. Pettitt of King City. Dolores may be seen on the streets of King City "wearing his familiar old hat with a high crown which is tipping over in front and a brim which rises in the back."

Tom Pettitt, rancher, undertaker, furniture dealer, politician and insurance agent, relates in an interview with him that he would not want to see the "good old times" again. He has lived in the area since the early 1890's and remembers the year of '98 when there was "one terrible drought."

The state was to loan farmers money so they could continue to exist. Somehow the money took too long to arrive and Claus Spreckels, founder of the Spreckels Sugar Company, started loaning money to the farmers himself. Governor Budd declared the loan was illegal – but Spreckels had already loaned \$25,000, so he just wrote to the farmers and told them they need not repay him. "Quite a present it was," said Mr. Pettitt.

Those are the stories, as told by a few of the early settlers of the country which forms part of the Monterey County. Congratulations to the Rustler-Herald for the contribution they have made to local history. Each article is well illustrated with pictures of the old timers, and with drawing and photographs of places of interest around King City, Jolon and Mission San Antonio.