

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

August 9, 1951

### **The Salt of the Earth**

We cannot stop our review of "The Salt of the Earth" published by the King City Rustler-Herald, with yesterday's Diary, there is so much in the book which has Monterey County and California history as its background. These "pioneers built the bridges and slashed the trail in order that we who follow may tread a more secure path, and that, we too, may by example point the way for eager oncoming generations of pioneers."

"The Salt of the Earth" is a series of biographies of the early residents of the territory around the southern end of the country; King City, Jolon, Bitterwater, Lockwood and other mountain and valley communities. There is the story of Al Carlson, the first Mayor of King City; of Dr. Dorus Brumwell, who has practiced medicine in that city since the early 1890's; and of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Folks, who came to Priest Valley in 1887.

Mrs. William Chambers relates in her story that it was a great wonderful world which she found when she crossed the Atlantic from her home in Denmark in November, 1886, at the age of 15 years. She spent her honeymoon in Monterey and later lived in Nelson Canyon.

Fritz Weferling of Lockwood remembers the stagecoach days. He told his interviewer that the southbound coach out of Soledad where the railroad ended would arrive at Jolon late at night and the one from the south came late in the morning. The coach would be pulled by four horses. As soon as the coach would stop a hostler would come out and put four fresh horses on and away they would go."

The Rogers family came to Greenfield in 1912 because Tom Rogers, who has been mayor of the city, heard "that the little colony started in 1905 by a group of pilgrims', poor in purse but rich in faith, raised alfalfa and he would be sure of a job." They arrived with a six-horse team over a "mess of chuck holes."

John Hersom, pioneer rancher near Jolon, told the King City reporter that he got his nickname "The Duke of Argyle" because the Argyle section was named by Allen McLean, the best school teacher they ever had in that section, for his favorite Scottish author-poet.

Frank McCormack, who is now nearly ninety years of age, is the son of a native of Indiana and a Santa Clara Indian girl. His father had arrived in California for the gold rush. McCormack declares that "a little town of Chinamen existed in Jolon in 1878 and that there must have been 100 to 150 Chinese who had settled near Tidbal's and the Dutton Store. There is still a place called China Gulch near Jolon where they mined."

Mrs. Millie Duckworth is probably the only woman living who has resided in Monterey County for 89 years. She lives at Priest Valley. She was born on Smith Mountain on April 23, 1862. She tells a story in the "Salt of the Earth" of being attacked by a mountain lion as she rode home on a young mare with a colt following. The mare struck at the lion with her hooves. Lucky for her she was a good rider. She got the gate open and the lion did not catch the colt.

Mrs. Duckworth was married "in the little town of Monterey" where her husband Antone was known as "one of the Monterey Duckworths."

Cipriano Avila is another of the old timers whose life history is included in the "Salt of the Earth." His father, Vincente Avila, had been a Monterey man who went to the Jolon area in 1864 from San Miguel. He purchased for \$13, all the money he had in his pocket, a three room adobe house, from Marie Jose Gil. The ranch was known as Salsipuedes (get out if you can). He remembers his father with six or seven pack mules, going all the way to Watsonville for a year's supplies. There was nothing at King City then but King's ranch.

Mrs. Rebecca Currier, now 95 years of age and living at Greenfield, was a pioneer resident of Arroyo Seco. She was the first woman ever to go across the mountains to the ocean from the Arroyo Seco. That was sometime around 1890. She claims to have ridden alone on horseback carrying \$600 in Wells Fargo money orders to the McQuay' ranch on the coast.

Another man with a Monterey background who was included in the pioneer list in "Salt of the Earth" is Antonio Garcia. He was born at Jolon in 1867. His father had gone down from Monterey, as did many of the Garcia brothers, and started farming. Their old adobe house was situated on the road to the mission. He was baptized by Father Ambris at Dan Antonio Mission.

Such are the stories told by the pioneers of Southern Monterey County.