

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

November 10, 1952

A Letter From Mrs. Boronda

Today we will share with you a letter which we have received from Mrs. A. Boronda, who is bedridden with polio-arthritis at the Monterey County Hospital. It is such a wonderfully cheerful letter and shows that Mrs. Boronda still has a sense of humor, kindness, interest in a hobby and the affairs of the outside world. Would that all human beings could have the same outlook!

Mrs. Boronda writes: "I read with interest your happenings of long ago and some of the present. The Health column has been added and should be interesting. "Dennis, the Menace" is very cute.

"I am interested in the old-fashioned Salt and Pepper Wells. Would it be possible for you to look up the history of the wells. I would appreciate it and perhaps you have a hobby magazine, any issue, which you could send. They do not have it here.

"I get wonderful care here, the nurses and aides are 100 percent. I read and write and am interested in hobbies."

To please Mrs. Boronda and to satisfy our own curiosity, we have sought out a copy of Alice Winchester's "How to Know American Antiques" and find this information about salt and pepper wells: "Like many other condiments, salt in the old days was more precious than it is today. The early container is known as a 'standing salt'. Shaped like a great spool and standing over five inches high, it was an elaborate and dignified piece. Examples are extremely rare in American silver. The low oval or octagonal 'trencher salt,' placed beside the trencher or plate for individual use, was used in the 1600's and early 1700's. By 1730 the round salt cup mounted on curved legs developed. In the classic period this was replaced by a slim, oval shape, with or without a foot, sometimes pierced and fitted with a glass liner,"

One-hundred and thirty years ago, Nov. 9, 1822, the first diputacion or provincial legislature in California was elected and installed in Monterey,

One-hundred and sixteen years ago, Nov. 8, 1836, the territorial diputacion, or assembly, of California adopted a declaration of independence from Mexico. The partition, which was engineered by Gov. Juan B. Alvarado, existed until July 9, 1937, declared the territory was to be known as "the free and sovereign State of California."

A grandson of Governor Alvarado, J.B. Alvarado of 1900 Washington St., San Francisco, visited Monterey last week and called on a number of old friends. He visited the Old Custom House where his gift of a number of old books which had belonged to the governor are on display in one of the cases.

On Nov. 13, 1849, by a vote of 12,064 to 811, voters of California ratified the state constitution adopted by the constitutional convention at Monterey on October 13. At the same time they elected Peter H. Burnett as the first constitutional governor.