

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

November 24, 1952

Raffle of the Castro Adobe

On March 15, 1848, the following advertisement appeared in *The Californian*, a newspaper published in San Francisco:

"To the people of California and to the proprietor of *The Californian* newspaper, in common with his fellow citizens: Being fully convinced that the establishment of a weekly mail for the purpose of conveyance of letters and newspapers is indispensably necessary to the agricultural, mechanical, mercantile, as well as intellectual, social and moral advancement of the enterprising people of the territory: Therefore the proprietor mentioned will give annually the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS, for and on account of safe establishment, toward defraying the expenses of a regular weekly mail to connect Sutter's Fort, with San Diego via Brawley, Montezuma, Benicia, Napa Valley, Sonoma, San Francisco, San Jose, Monterey, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles and San Diego."

The advertisement goes on to say that any other arrangement will suit the proprietor, if it is agreed upon by the good people of the territory, until such time as a government mail may be properly established, and "provided also, that the mail be free for the conveyance of all letters and newspapers. Who will second this proposition?"

Also in this issue of *The Californian*, William Heath Davis, whose "Seventy-Five Years in California" we wrote about in a recent *Peninsula Diary*, had four advertisements. In one he is mentioned as a wholesale and retail merchant in San Francisco, Alta California; in another it is stated that "W.H. Davis has just received by recent arrivals from the United States and Sandwich Islands, the following assortment of goods, viz: China chests and trunks, coffee, chocolate, nails, boots, shoes, butcher knives, spool thread, white and striped shirts, tobacco, axes, raisins, hats and caps, Manila cigars, hemp rope, sole leather, etc. All of which he offers cheap, for cash."

Davis must have been a real estate man as well as a merchant in San Francisco in the latter part of 1847, for there appeared this advertisement in *The Californian* on that date: "3 houses for sale or to let." Then he offers for sale: "1 piece of oil'd silk; 15 cans of copal varnish;

100 scarlet bandas; 40 bags of corn, pair of iron truck wheels, 1-2 pipe brandy, best brand, Otard, Dupey & Co.; 1 piece of silk, 1 piece of black cloth, 1 case cotton flannel; wool pants and shirts."

A notice headed "Grand Raffle" disclosed that Monterey was to have an outstanding event. Manuel Diaz was desirous of disposing of his house here and since he had found it difficult to find a purchaser to pay its full value immediately, he had decided to raffle off the house. Diaz stated that it was useless to recommend his establishment, for anyone who had ever visited Monterey was aware that this was, without a doubt, the best business location in all of Monterey.

Diaz promised that the raffle would be held in the presence of the Alcalde of Monterey and notice of the day of drawing would be given as soon as all the tickets had been sold.

Two hundred and seventy tickets worth \$30 each were to be printed and would be on sale in Monterey, San Francisco and Santa Barbara at the home of Don Jose Antonio Aguirre, and in Los Angeles at the home of Don Manuel Rynna. Diaz stated that one condition of the raffle was that he, the owner, be allowed six months in which to move. He would pay rent at the rate of \$50 per month from the day of the raffle until he left the house.

The raffled house of Mr. Diaz is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Work and is known as the Castro Adobe. The original, small whitewashed house overlooking El Estero has been remodeled in recent years and is surrounded by the larger residence.