

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 31, 1952

And There Was Light

After considerable sawing and see-sawing during which much valuable time was lost toward building the new school house, the Doud lot on Pacific Street was at last settled upon by the 1891 school board, and everyone seemed satisfied in the old Monterey capital. The site selected was the present location of the Walter Colton school, but that problem settled did not at the same time settle the question as to the safety of Colton Hall.

It had been thought for a time that the matter of a claimant to an eight part interest in the Pacific street lot might cause delay in the start of the school foundation, but Mr. Francis Doud Sr., came to the front and gave a good bond to the district indemnifying it from any damage and or inconvenience that might occur, and hence the deed was accepted and paid, and work begun in earnest.

Now to the final disposal of Colton Hall up to the present time. Because of the Monterey school board's claim upon the Colton Hall property, the City of Monterey filed a friendly suit to quiet the title in 1897. On Nov. 2, 1897, the city attorney reported the decision of Judge Dorn in favor of the City vs. Monterey School District for the Colton Hall property.

On Feb. 7 of the following year, President W.S. Johnson informed the board that he was in receipt of a letter from Assemblyman Feliz stating his bill for the restoration and preservation of Colton Hall had been reported favorably by the committee.

In 1903 the City of Monterey purchased for \$400 the lot adjoining Colton Hall from the school board. R.C. Sargent, J.K. Oliver and L.D. Lacey were the trustees of the Monterey School District at the time. The property was described as commencing at a point of Gordon street, at the SW corner of the stone wall enclosing the Monterey Jail and down to Pacific street.

Monterey residents enjoyed both the telephone and electric lights about the same time in 1891. The district manager of the telephone company came to Monterey on Feb. 14 of that year, as did Mr. F.G. Cartwright of the San Francisco Electric Light Company. The latter represented one of the largest electric improvement companies in the United States and came to Monterey

in answer to a communication relative to the establishment of an electric light plant here.

The telephone representative stated to The Cypress reporter that the installation would be of the latest improved order and that a whisper could be heard at either end of the line.

"Tonight, the old capital will be radiant with the brilliant glow of a thousand lights. Tonight, her people will meet in grand array and trip the "light fantastic" to the tune of hundreds of glittering gems dazzling by far anything every before attempted. Tonight, Monterey will take another grand leap from darkness into light and her future will become doubly resplendent by the aid of the electric plant. To be more plainly understood, at dark this evening it won't be dark, but the bugs and bats and silurians will all get beautifully fooled for when they think it is time for them to prowl about under the shadow of night, a street light will stare then in the face and they must, of course, hunt other fields to prowl in."

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