

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Imported Spuds From Spain**

Young Andrew Jackson Grayson brought his family overland to California in 1846. He served as an officer for Fremont and was a leader in civic and business affairs of early California. Then, although without training in sciences or art, he began to paint the little-known birds of California and Mexico, with the result that his name ranks high among American ornithologists.

The University of California's art gallery last summer displayed Grayson's beautiful paintings of birds of the Pacific Slope. There are over one hundred and fifty of these magnificent watercolors, done in life size and full color and showing the botanical habitat of each bird. These are the property of the Bancroft Library, as are Grayson's field notes, journals letters, and manuscript account of his trip across the plains in 1846.

Lois Chambers Taylor, scientific illustrator at the University's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, has recently begun work on Grayson's biography.

In addition, she has already published two papers on Grayson in the "Condor," journal of the Cooper Ornithological Club.

Mrs. Taylor considers Grayson's painting to be done "with accuracy, strength, and vitality equalling Audubon's work."

A clipping has been sent to the Diary by William Wilder Hubbard of Pacific Grove which is of interest. The news item from Daily Pantagraph concerns Spanish potatoes; or potatoes which were imported from Spain.

A groceryman in Twin City, Illinois, could not get potatoes to sell so he entered the "patata" business instead, and sold potatoes imported from Spain,

The business man in this middle west city got his supply, five bags, through the Royal Blue Company. His restaurant friends got part of the supply. The Spanish spud looks ordinary enough, like a medium Idaho or husky cobbler.

The reporter of The Pantagraph says that while it may seem ironic that potatoes are imported by a country which produces millions of bushels annually, potato culture in what is now the United States actually had its roots, including tubers, in Spain.

Spaniards carried potatoes from Peru, probably, back to Spain and other parts of Europe in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Drake is said to have introduced the plant in England later in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Potatoes came to the country via the English colonists, rather than directly from their native South America.

Anyway, what with a shortage and the black market, which might happen some day even on the Monterey Peninsula, the Spanish potatoes will not be regarded as a curiosity by the shopping housewife.

The Monterey County Historical Society met last Sunday at the University of California Hastings' Reservation of Natural History near Jamesburg on the lower Carmel Valley road. Mrs. Donald Davies Jr. of Salinas, the president of the group, presided over a brief business meeting after which Dr. J.M. Linsdale, the director of this valuable project sponsored by the state university, spoke of the history and object of the work done there and later took the group on a tour of a small portion of the grounds and the museum.

During the business meeting the members passed a resolution that the County Society present an award to the outstanding student in California history at the Monterey Peninsula College. This award has been given to a like student at Hartnell College in Salinas for the past few years. The award chosen for presentation is the "Lives of William Hartnell" by Susanna Bryant Dakin, a very appropriate gift for the reason that W.E.P. Hartnell founded the first college in California on his ranch in the Alisal district out of the City of Salinas in 1835. Previous to that year he had lived in Monterey and had for a time had a school in his home, a large adobe house on the land now occupied by the Monterey hospital.

The next meeting of the County Historical Society will be held in Monterey when members will meet at 2 o'clock on Sunday afternoon, June 29, at Colton Hall and make their tour of the historic adobes.