

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 9, 1953

Early Transportation

On June 2, 1873, ground was broken in San Francisco for the first cable car street railway in the world. This cable railway was devised by A.S. Hallidie, a San Francisco manufacturer of wire rope, and William Eppelsheimer, mechanical engineer, the first section being built on Clay Street from Kearney to Jones. The railway was completed and started successful operation in September, 1873. California, Through Four Centuries.

It was because many of the streets in San Francisco were too steep for horse-drawn vehicles, a local manufacturer, Andrew S. Hallidie, solved the problem in 1873, by inventing the cable car, which has since been one of the picturesque treasures of the city.

At 11:30 o'clock on the morning of March 12th there will be unveiled at the corner of Clay and Kearny streets, in Portsmouth Plaza, a handsome plaque. Provided by funds furnished by the Friends of Andrew S. Hallidie, and in cooperation with the State Park Commission, it will mark the site of the eastern terminus of the Clay Street Hill Cable Railroad, over whose rails ran the first car in the world to be operated by cable.

The plaque, designed by William Wilke, has been designated as California registered landmark number 500. Participating in the ceremonies will be the Reverend Harry Meserve, the Messrs. Clay Miller and Joseph R. Knowland, and city officials of San Francisco.

Immediately after the ceremonies, these gentlemen and members of the California Historical Society, will meet at the Palace Hotel for luncheon. The regular monthly meeting of the Society will follow and will commemorate Hallidie. [15 lines of text unreadable]

Speaking of modes of travel in the early days in California we have come across this interesting data in our research in old publications. "In 1836 Nathan Spear ran a little vessel called the Nicholas on Monterey Bay, carrying produce between Santa Cruz and Monterey." Spear later transferred the vessel to San Francisco when Governor Arguello demanded a foreign license. William Hardy, boat builder who deserted from a whaler, built a small schooner called the Santa Cruz, which was afterward lost at sea.

Judge Blackman of Santa Cruz built the schooner Zach Taylor, commanded by Captain Vincent, and she was

used as a government boat. When the original military post at Monterey was abandoned, she was sun on the Sacramento River. About 1860 the Pacific Coast Steamship Company was organized, and the first boat was the steamer Salinas. The material for the boat was brought from the East on the Wild Pigeon, by Captain Harloe, and the steamer ran between Moss Landing, Monterey and San Francisco.

The Salinas was running as late as January, 1875, and a companion steamer, The Monterey, was running about the same time.