

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 21, 1953

### **Famous Statues Claimed**

Today we will continue the story of "The End of the Trail," and the huge statue of the Sioux Indian on his pony which played such an important part in the exhibit of art at the Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915. That statue, along with another "The Pioneer" by Solon Hannibal Borglum, is now resting in Mooney Grove, a park in Tulare County, California.

When the Exposition was over, the Tulare County Board of Forestry heard that some of the statues were available for public parks. W.P. Bartlett and Thomas Jacobs were especially interested in obtaining some for Mooney Grove Park which had then been established about five years. The first obtained was "The Pioneer." This was part of the pioneer group in the Court of Honor at the Fair. It arrived in Visalia on a flat car on May 2, 1916 and the only cost was \$150 for freight. It had been sawed in sections for handling. Apparently the statue was assembled and erected near the north gate soon after it arrived.

Solon Borglum, the sculptor, was the son of Danish immigrant parents. He grew up in the Middle West and very early loved horses and drew sketches of them. His older brother, Gutzon Borglum, encouraged him to continue his art work. He did so, at one time living in Santa Ana, where he rented a studio at \$2 a month. Business was slow, and he didn't like confinement so he put up a sign on the door "In Studio Saturdays Only" and roamed about the country the rest of the week. This seemed to help business and he earned enough to attend art school and go to Paris. Many of his most famous statues feature horses.

Too old for soldiering in World War I he became a YWCA secretary and was awarded the Croix de Guerre. Borglum died January 22, 1922.

We have gleaned from a report in "Los Tulares," the quarterly of the Tulare County Historical Society that, having received one statue, Mr. Jacobs began negotiating for "The End of the Trail," He did not expect to get it because a San Francisco Club had asked for it. The club was turned down because it could not or would not agree to "permanently maintain" it. Since the statue was made of temporary material and was then a

pile of disjointed pieces, one wonders why the club was turned down. Mr. Jacobs was surprised when he received word that it had been awarded to Tulare County. He went to San Francisco and arranged to have the pieces sent to Visalia where they arrived Sept. 10, 1919 – four years after the Fair year.

The minutes of the Board of Forestry of Dec. 2, 1919 state that the site on the bank of the creek near the south gate was selected and the following June a bill of \$190 was presented by V. Stolz for erecting the statue. This must have been a formidable job as the parts had to be pieced together with new internal bracing and probably considerable repair work to the surface.

The plaster-like material of which the statue was made was not designed for prolonged exposure. It is a tribute to the fine care of the Mooney Grove Park Department that these statues are so well preserved. When displayed at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition the statues were light in color (natural plaster probably.) They are now painted, which protects the surface, and they will last for many more years, according to the editor of "Los Tulares."

The Automobile Club of Southern California has published a map of the Marked Historical Sites in California. A brief description of each site is given. Copies suitable for framing can be secured for \$1.50 or folded maps for 25 cents. The address is 2601 South Figueroa St., Los Angeles, 54.