

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 24, 1954

An Institute Meeting

The seventh annual California History Foundation Institute was held at the College of the Pacific in Stockton on Friday and Saturday of last week. It was our pleasure and privilege to attend this very entertaining meeting where history in its various phases was featured in talks, papers, books, and question and answer periods.

Presiding over the various sessions were well known writers, professors and historians who had made special studies of the subject under discussion, including such men as Dr. Rockwell Hunt, director of the California History Foundation, Herbert C. Jones of San Jose, and Dr. Tully Knoles, chancellor of the College.

A special feature of the program on Friday evening was the unveiling of an oil portrait of Dr. Rockwell Dennis Hunt, Director of the History Foundation and head of the history department of the College, whose retirement at the age of 86 was announced. His birthday was celebrated Feb. 6, when the governor of California, the grand president of the Native Daughters of the Golden West and the president of the California Historical Association were all signers of a document which bestowed upon him the title of "Mr. California" proclaiming him California's first great native son historian.

Many of Dr. Hunt's former students reside on the Monterey Peninsula and he is well known to others who have heard him speak at a number of membership meetings of the Monterey History and Art Assn. in past years.

"The Fight for the Water Hole" was the title of Hon. Herbert C. Jones' talk Friday evening. His discussion, illustrated with maps, reviewed the history of the water problems in California from the time when the pioneers fought off the Indians from the sparse water supply as they crossed the deserts and mountains on their way west, to the present time when it is estimated that a 1,000 persons are arriving in the state each day to establish homes.

The surprising and satisfying fact apparent throughout the meeting of the Institute was the presence and interest of the men in the group, their number far surpassing that of the women. All the program numbers

were led by men and in looking over the printed list we find only one woman – a radio commentator – taking part.

Saturday morning's program began with a panel discussion entitled "A Publicity Program for the Local Historical Society."

Albert Gilbert of the California Newspaper Publishers Association was the leading speaker, followed by an editor of a farm journal, a radio commentator, a college professor of history and Arthur Farey, public relations, College of the Pacific.

W. Turrentine Jackson, Ph.D., University of California at Davis, chose to speak on "The Enterprising Scot in California" reviewing the history of the vast amount of money the people of Scotland had invested and lost in adventures in mining, cattle and farming and in the redwood lumber business in California in the 1880s. This revealing discussion was followed by a paper written around the history of "Gold in the Calaveras and the Mother Lode" by R. Coke Wood, Ph.D. of Stockton College.

Dr. William G. Paden was announced as the new director of the Historical Foundation Institute. Dr. Paden recently retired as the superintendent of schools of the city of Alameda. Both Dr. and Mrs. Paden are history enthusiasts and Mrs. Paden is the author of an historical story, "The Wake of the Prairie Schooner." This husband and wife team collaborated throughout 14 years of vacation periods traveling over the trail of the prairie schooner before completing the book. As one person attending the conference expressed his opinion of the finished work, we quote "It drove one straight into the past"

There were special exhibits of historic items arranged by a photographer, V. Covert Martin, a director of the Foundation and of the Pioneer Museum; Western Americana of Reginald and Grace Stuart; publications of historical societies, and a special exhibit of California by Allan R. Laursen.

The next meeting of the Foundation Institute will be held in Columbia, July 23 and 24, when the completion of the restoration of the old Wells Fargo building will be celebrated and the drama department of the College of the Pacific will present an old time drama in Fallon Theatre.