

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

April 7, 1954

Important Anniversaries

This month has a number of dates which are anniversaries of important events which have made history in California and especially in Monterey. It was on April 11, 1822 that Gov. Pablo Vicente Sola, his officers, and the soldiers stationed at the Presidio of Monterey replaced the Spanish flag with the standard of the new Mexican Empire and took an oath of allegiance to the Emperor Iturbide. Thus California ceased forever to be a province of Spain and became a part of the future Mexican republic.

In "California Through Four Centuries," written by Phil Townsend Hanna, we found this item: "Isaac Graham, American trapper who had settled in California, was arrested by order of Gov. Juan B. Alvarado, at Natividad near Salinas on a charge of leading a revolt of foreigners against the Mexican government. By the 11th, 38 other foreigners had been arrested. Later all other foreigners who had entered California illegally and who were not married to native women were arrested.

"On April 24 the prisoners sailed from Monterey on the Joven Gulpuzcoana, stopping at Santa Barbara for other prisoners, destined for San Blas and the custody of the central government. A total of 47 were imprisoned at Tepic. On Sept. 23, about 20 of the prisoners were ordered released, but Graham and the balance of the group did not gain their freedom until June 1841 Later additional reparations totaling \$24,050 were paid to the exiles."

On April 3, 1848, the first public school in California after the American occupation, was opened on Portsmouth Square in San Francisco, under the direction of Thomas Douglas, a Yale graduate, and under the supervision of a committee consisting of William A. Leidesdorff, William S. Clark, and William Glover – three Williams. From this beginning has grown the public school system of California.

Brig.-Gen. Bennett Riley arrived at Monterey on April 12, 1849 to assume the office of civil governor of California, under instructions of the secretary of war of the United States.

The County of San Francisco government was instituted 14 days before the City of San Francisco was incorporated, which gave the honor of being

incorporated first to Los Angeles, for it was on April 4, 1850 that the Southern city became an incorporated community. Los Angeles was founded early in September, 1781 (the date is not definitely known though it is generally believed to have been Sept. 4) by order of Gov. Felipe de Neve, the city was christened "El pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciuncula (the city of Our Lady, Queen of the Angels of Porciuncula), for the site had been so named by Father Juan Crespi on Aug. 2, 1769, in the course of the first land expedition in search of Monterey.

The City of San Francisco was incorporated on April 15, 1850. The county's government had been instituted by the election of all officials on April 1st. It was geographically coincidental with the city, for which officials, including a mayor and a common council, were elected on May 1, 1850.

Sgt. Jose Ortega, attached to the first land expedition seeking Monterey, discovered San Francisco Bay on Nov. 2, 1769, but he did not give it its name.

April 22, 1850 – one of the first things that the new California Legislature adopted was a law to protect native Indians. Among other things, it confirmed them in the possession of their villages, permitted them to contract for their labor with the whites, but provided that in criminal cases, whites could not be convicted on their testimony. We were not able to find out if this is still the case.

Three counties in California were created in April of 1851, namely Nevada, Klamath and Placer. Klamath bears the distinction of being the only county in the state which has completely disappeared, for it was dissolved under an act of the Legislature of March 28, 1874.