

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

May 14, 1954

Old News Item Recalls Tenants of Castro Adobe

In the news items from the files of the Evening Herald and Express of Los Angeles 50 years ago, we have discovered this item:

"The American Flag once more floats over the site of Fort Moore. It was floated on the afternoon of Dec. 22, 1903, by the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West, while more than 5,000 loyal American citizens cheered the banner that they love better than any other emblem that waves beneath the stars.

"On the platform during the flag-raising ceremonies as guests of honor were Miss Elizabeth Fremont, daughter of the famous "pathfinder," Gen. John C. Fremont; and J.M. Moore, son of Capt. Benjamin Moore, who was killed while leading a charge in 1846 in the Battle of San Pasquale, about 34 miles from San Diego, and after whom Fort Moore in Los Angeles was named. Also on the platform with the guests of honor was Miss Ariana Moore, a granddaughter of Capt. Moore."

COMFORTED MOTHER

It was Elizabeth – her mother called her Lilly – who comforted her mother, Jessie Benton Fremont, when the two spent several months in the Gen. Castro adobe in Monterey while Fremont explored in California during the Gold Rush. In Irving Stone's "Immortal Wife" he quotes Fremont thusly: "I think you will be happy in Monterey. I will go into town to see if I can find a house."

Returning to his family, resting on the plateau above Monterey, with the little village resting in the pines beneath them, Fremont announced: "I've found two lovely rooms in the house of the wife of the Mexican General Castro." This home is now incorporated in the house of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Work on the Monterey Mesa.

The editor of another article which appeared in the Grizzly Bear, the publication of the Native Sons and Daughters, should follow the above because it is our dream and opinion also.

"We couldn't help thinking of Fort Moore hill the other night, as we watched the showing of pictures of old New England taken by a friend of ours on a vacation trip this past summer. Apparently, in that section of our

great United States they value very highly the homes, places of business, military establishments and other landmarks, which played such a part in the building of America. Many of the old inns are still in use today, while the homes of our early statesmen are preserved in as fine a state as when they were first built.

LUSTY CHARACTER

"Out here in the west, we are apparently of a most lusty character, riding rough-shod over the things of yesteryear. If a hill is in the way of a new freeway we cart it away with giant earthmoving machinery of the modern day. If a historic building stands in the way of progress, or falls into a state of disrepair, we tear it down as being of little value, paying no heed to the part that it may have played in the winning of the west, or without a thought of the pioneer who once called it home.

"It makes one wonder just how many of our early landmarks will be left for posterity 50 or 100 years from now."

PRESERVED HERE

Of course all this does not apply to Monterey for we have saved a great deal here but there is still more to be preserved for those who come after us – that history may live in California's first capital. Thanks to the Division of Beaches and Parks of the State of California, to the Monterey History and Art Assn. and to the Monterey Foundation, (the latter preserving the Casa Gutierrez on Calle Principal) much of beauty and historical value has been saved from the wreckers.

We also are deeply indebted to the Misses Lee, Margaret and Vida Jacks for their many gifts to the city and to the state – Don Davi Park, Washerwomen's Bay and Iris Canyon, Casa del Oro and now probably the Pacific Building, which will be a gift to the state from Miss Margaret Jacks. Their sister, Mrs. Mary Jacks Thomas, gave the city its ball park.

Mrs. Tobin Clark and Mrs. Edith van Antwerp saved the Stevenson House from destruction by purchasing it and in 1941 presented the property to the State of California as an historical monument.

There are many other generous and history minded citizens who have done their part in saving the Old Custom House, California's First Theater, and Colton Hall.

The appreciation of future generations will be their reward, we are sure.