

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Enjoyed the Merienda

Dr. George P. Hammond, director of the Bancroft Library and professor of history on the Berkeley campus, University of California, with Mrs. Hammond, attended the Merienda on June 3rd in Monterey. Returning to his Berkeley home he wrote: "We enjoyed the luncheon yesterday immensely, and congratulate the Association for again putting on such a wonderful celebration." It was the third Merienda that Dr. and Mrs. Hammond have attended so interested are they in Monterey's history.

On June 10th, Dr. Hammond will receive an honorary Doctor of Law degree from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. The honorary LL.D degree will be conferred by President Thomas L. Pope at the University's commencement exercises. In accepting the high tribute, Dr. Hammond will return to an institution where he taught for 11 years, and an area which he has studied and written about for 30. Prior to joining the Berkeley faculty in 1946, Dr. Hammond had served as chairman of the department of history, and dean of the graduate school of the University of New Mexico since 1935.

His interest in the New Mexico region was inspired during his college years by the eminent historian, Herbert E. Bolton, late Sather professor of history emeritus, whom Dr. Hammond succeeded as director of the Bancroft Library.

Dr. Hammond's research on New Mexico began in 1922 when he was awarded a Native Sons of the Golden West fellowship in history, enabling him to study at the Archive of the Indies in Seville, Spain. From this emerged his doctoral dissertation, "Don Juan de Onate and the Founding of New Mexico," recently the subject of an exhaustive two-volume work by Dr. Hammond and Professor Agapito Rey of the University of Indiana, published by the University of New Mexico Press.

In the period spanning these two publications, Dr. Hammond has become the leading authority on the founding and colonization of New Mexico, devoting most of his extensive writings to this subject; and frequently working in Spanish and Mexican archives. In 1929 he founded the Quiviera Society, and in 1940, the Coronado Publications series – both devoted to the

advancement of knowledge in the field of Western history. He is currently engaged in editing "The Larkin Papers," a contemplated 10-volume series, the fourth of which was published earlier this year by the University of California Press.

Dr. Hammond was educated at the University of California, where he received his Ph.D. degree in 1924. He has taught at the universities of North Dakota, Arizona, and Southern California. He is a member of a number of historical societies including the Monterey History and Art Association and New Mexico, which has published many of his scholarly writings. Dr. Hammond and Professor Agapito Rey's recent publication, "Don Juan de Onate Colonizer of New Mexico 1595-1628," is a great blaze of history represented in two volumes, they being V and VI in the Coronado Quarto Centennial Publications.

New Mexico was explored and settled a long century and a half before California, both fiefs of Imperial Spain in the New World but New Mexico did not gain admittance into the Union until 62 years after its upstart younger sister province. Where California had its first gold, then Nevada silver, to make it a potent force in national and world affairs, New Mexico remained a land of illimitable and arid distances.

One reviewer writes that California had Bancroft, who just touched upon New Mexico history in passing, and California had Herbert Eugene Bolton, one operating a veritable "history factory", the other taking up history with one hand and transforming it into a living line of schooled and inspired historians with the other. But Dr. Hammond and his co-worker have "gone down to bedrock and mined the richest gravel."

The documents comprise the source papers pertaining to the initial settlement of New Mexico and its first 20 years. They were found almost 30 years ago in the Archives of the Indies, in Seville, by the young student of Dr. Bolton's, George P. Hammond, then recipient of a Native Sons of the Golden West fellowship.

With these two volumes, George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey have done for New Mexico what Bolton did for California. They, too, have passed this way and they have carved their names beside that of Juan de Onate. An honorable time shall elapse before wind, weather and years can diminish any depth of their carvings," writes W.H. Hutchinson.