

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Only 400 Copies**

A facsimile edition of California's first book "Reglamento Provicional" printed at Monterey in 1834 by Agustin V. Zamorano, has just been issued by the Book Club of California. The translation was made by Ramon Ruiz and Theresa Vigil. George L. Harding has written a note on the printing and Dr. George P. Hammond, director of the Bancroft Library at the University of California, has contributed a historical note to the beautifully designed and printed edition – the excellent work of Lawton Kennedy in San Francisco. Only 400 copies were printed.

A facsimile edition of the first book published in California is to be found in a pocket in the back cover of the volume. It was printed from a copy of the "Reglamento Provicional" found in a collection known as the "Antonio Coronel Collection" in the Los Angeles County Museum in Los Angeles. This small volume of 16 pages plus a title page on a separate leaf has long been accepted as the first book printed in California.

For many years, George Harding relates, the only copy of this little book known to students was that preserved in the library of Hubert Howe Bancroft, the California historian. This copy is still preserved in the Bancroft Library at the University of California. The copy was a gift to Bancroft from Carlos Olvera, son of Agustin Olvera, who came to California in 1834 as a boy with his uncle, Don Ignacio Coronel, and later became a brother-in-law of Don Agustin V. Zamorano by marrying a sister of the latter's wife.

In California, Dr. Hammond explains, a line of Mexican governors ruled but Mexico paid little attention to its possessions to the north. The first of these governors was the anemic Don Jose Maria de Echeandia, a lieutenant colonel of engineers, and the last, Don Andres Pico. The California "Reglamento" of 1834 set up a complete method of governing the province and it remained in effect until California became a part of the United States during the Mexican War.

From the translation we learn that the Assembly was to meet once a year, on the first day of May. The sessions were to open at 10 o'clock each morning, and remain open for three hours every Tuesday, Thursday and

Saturday of each week that the Assembly is in session, except holidays and customary feast days.

In Section X the Provicinal sets forth the rule that the president and members of the Assembly shall not carry firearms during the sessions but that they shall attend in a body any religious or civic celebrations held while it is convened. Section XIII specifies that the spectators shall not carry firearms and must maintain silence and decorum, and shall, under no circumstances, take part in the discussions by demonstrations of any kind.

George Harding, one of the editors of Quarterly News Letter of the California Book Club, writes in his "Notes on Printing" in "Reglamento Provicional, 1834" of the Zamorano press: It is believed that California's first printing press was delivered to Captain Zamorano at Monterey in June, 1834, from the "Lagoda," a Boston ship then trading on the California coast. It is generally accepted that the first product of the new press was the broadside, "Aviso Al Publico," bearing the imprint, "Monterey 1834. Imprenta de Zamorano y Ca."

When the printing press arrived at Monterey, the territorial legislature was in session. It had convened on May 1, 1834, and remained in session until the following November.

This latest contribution of the California Book Club to the collection of Californiana which it has published since its founding in 1912, is certain to become more and more valuable through the years. The club is a non-profit association of book lovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature, and fine printing. Its chief aim is to further the interest of book collectors in the West and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.