

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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The Colton Ceremony

We wish to compliment all who have had a share in the plans for the observance of the 180th anniversary of the U. S. Navy Chaplains Corps last Monday at Colton Hall in Monterey. The whole program was carried through to perfection as it would be under the guidance of the U.S. Navy. All that was lacking was a huge, patriotic, and enthusiastic group of citizens in attendance.

During the ceremonies, the memory of Chaplain Walter Colton, the builder of Colton Hall, was honored with the unveiling of a bronze plaque by Chap. H. C. W. Albrecht of the U. S. Navy Postgraduate School, which was presented to Mayor Dan Searle by Chap. J. Floyd Dreith in behalf of the Chief of Chaplains, Rear Adm, Edward B. Harp Jr. Chap. Clifford M. Drury, official historian for the Chaplain's Corps of the U. S. Navy, was the speaker.

The California Historical Society, which has many members on the Monterey Peninsula, is moving to a new location in San Francisco. For many years associated with the Pioneer Society at 456 McAllister St. the organization and all its belongings are moving to temporary quarters on the seventh floor of the Flood building on Market street. It is because both pioneer organizations have grown, and their collections of valuable and interesting historical materials has kept pace with the growth that the two old California societies must part. The Pioneer Society owns the building, so it was the Historical Society which was forced to seek other quarters.

This Organization, which we know today as the California Historical Society, is the third or fourth reincarnation of a society that was formed in 1852.

The San Francisco fire of 1906 destroyed the library of the Society, and complete disorganization followed. It was not until February 1922, that a group of men met in the Pacific Union Club as luncheon guests of Templeton Crocker, and the problems involved in getting the Historical Society on its feet again were discussed. Within a few weeks, the "Notes" from the California Historical Society reports, funds had been raised and a room rented in the Wells Fargo Building. In July 1922 appeared the first number of the society's Quarterly, and a new era in the society's history was begun.

In 1946 the Society had outgrown the one room and much larger quarters were found in the building later known as the Marines Memorial Club, where it remained for 12 years, when it became imperative that still larger quarters be found. The Pioneer Society came to the rescue and leased to the Historical Society half of the first and second floors of their building which had been recently purchased and renovated.

Today, 33 years after Mr. Crocker's luncheon, a fourth and final move of the society is planned.

Another historical event of importance was held on Sunday, Dec. 4, at 1 p. m. when officials of the State and of the California Historical Society convened in the ghost town of Columbia, in Tuolumne County, to dedicate a bronze plaque in memory of James Wood Coffroth. It was there on Nov. 29, 1858, that Coffroth, widely known as "Tuolumne's Favorite Son," gave his famous speech celebrating the completion of the Columbia and Stanislaus River Water Company Ditch bringing water into Columbia.

Chairman of the day was A. T. Leonard, Jr., M. D., head of the Society's Committee on Historic Names and Sites. The program was opened with an address being given, by Mr. Donald I. Segerstrom, Sonora editor.

Emmett Joy, member of the Society's committee and an officer of the Grand Parlor of the Native Sons of the Golden West, presented the plaque to the State of California in the name of the society. The Hon. Joseph R. Knowland, Society president, received it in his capacity as Chairman of the California Division of Beaches and Parks.