

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Pioneer Librarian**

To write the life story of Miss Anne Hadden of Pacific Grove is to write the early history of the Monterey County Library, for it was Miss Hadden who arrived in Salinas in 1913 to organize the first Monterey County Library. She is now preparing to make her last and final move, she hopes, when she goes to Forest Hill Manor, formerly the Forest Hill Hotel, to make her home. Miss Hadden has been living in a cottage in Pacific Grove since 1948, following her retirement as librarian for the city of Palo Alto. She came to the Peninsula to join her sister, the late Miss Ellen Hadden, who was associated with Miss Emma Walvogel and Mrs. Mary Gottland in the Walvogel Studio.

Miss Hadden resigned her position in Monterey County in October, 1929, to become Palo Alto's city librarian, where she remained until her retirement in 1942. Then, her interest in the work still uppermost in her mind, Miss Hadden went to a part-time temporary position in the library of Modoc County where she remained until 1946.

Miss Hadden relates that the first Monterey County library was outdoors under the branches of a tree that stood in the garden on the site of what later became the Salinas post office property. However, before long the city trustees arranged for space in the city library building.

The first book was a catalogue of all books in print in 1912—an ambitious start. Within the 16 years of the Monterey County library's existence under Miss Hadden's guidance, the number of books grew from 1,942 that were added the first year to 90,260, the final count before her departure.

Miss Constance Dixon, in an article published in the Monterey County Post in 1929, writes: "Miss Hadden's accomplishments as county librarian are not to be underestimated. It is due to her leadership that the county has one of the finest libraries in the state and one which has attracted international attention. Harriet Catherine Long in 'County Library Service' speaks of the Monterey County library and devotes one whole chapter to the California library system."

It was Miss Hadden's work to open up the remote districts of the county and make it possible for their

people to get in touch with the outside world of thought and culture and science. This was true pioneer work and Miss Hadden was equal to the task.

Her first trip to the coast was in May, 1916. Miss Hadden and her companion left Jolon and the old Dutton Hotel, and began their journey over the mountains to establish two county library branches, one in Gorda and one in Lucia. Their way led over the Santa Lucia range to the Pacific Valley, where the mountains drop into the sea.

At Gorda the horses were returning to Jolon and the two women went afoot 70 miles over country that was rough and hazardous to the Big Sur. At this time there were no roads between Gorda and the Big Sur and the country was wild and its people isolated. It was in such districts as this that Miss Hadden often met children who had never seen a wagon road, not to mention a train or an automobile, although many of them had seen airplanes passing overhead. For many of these people the library did a great deal in sending them out not only books but often things they would write for, such as tools and clothes.

At first the county nurse, the county librarian and the county superintendent of schools used to travel together where the districts were remote and the roads bad. These trips by the county officials into the wilderness of the county were necessarily infrequent.

Books were kept in circulation through the mail. After the branches were established, and a custodian appointed, books were mailed according to request and returned to the main library when everyone in the vicinity had read them.

(More on Friday)