

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Monterey County Libraries**

Historically the Monterey County Library is doing a great service today. They have a collection that is constantly growing and, as time goes on, becoming more valuable—just as are the Monterey Public Library and those of Pacific Grove and Carmel. Benefactors have come to the fore and either given during their lifetimes or bequeathed to these cultural project their private libraries or their treasured historical records, until we now have institutions which draw writers, collectors and historians from all over the world who wish to profit by the materials which they contain. The Monterey History and Art Association also has much historical value in its archives. The collection of *Stevenson* at the Stevenson House, which was given to the State of California by Stevenson's step-daughter, Mrs. Isobel Field, is also a source of information for writers of that subject.

In the county library, as in the public libraries of the county, one may find a strange assortment of things...Things that in their time were inconsequential but now have become keys to a knowledge of the past. There are old theater programs, pictures, pamphlets, newspapers, books, letters, autographs, school histories, magazines, many of which now out of print, geographical charts and surveys and innumerable other things.

In the Monterey County Library, so Miss Hadden tells us, there is an old reward sign for rustlers that was tacked up on tree trunks, signed by six cattlemen with their names followed by a picture of their brands. This dated back to some time in the 1890's.

There is a collection of school compositions written by Monterey Children in the 1890's after interviews with the old timers of the day. These were checked and corrected historically before they were filed and are invaluable, since the old timers of the '90s are now all gone.

The old magazines and newspapers are particularly interesting. There is a bound book of what was once the *Salinas Evening Owl*, a daily that went out of existence before the 20th century. The *Overland Monthly* was another magazine that existed toward the latter part of the last century and is now practically forgotten. It is

particularly valuable since it concerned itself with exploration and adventure in the West.

In July, 1929, Miss Hadden wrote in the *Monterey County Post*, (published by the late Marvin T. Londahl); "The following school districts have summer deposits at present; Woll district at Stone Canyon coal mine; Priest Valley on the eastern edge of the county; Sweetwater, near King City. Another summer school that is supplied is the Mathiot camp in the Carmel Valley. To this outdoor school come boys from all over the United States. In this case the books sent are of an informational and recreational character. There is also a regular deposit at two of the ranger stations at Big Sur and at Chew's Ridge."

In 1929, according to Constance Dixon, who interviewed Miss Hadden in that year, who was the daughter of Maynard Dixon, noted artist; up in Reliz Canyon where there is a permanent Home Deposit Station, started when the school closed but continued after it was open, the Orange County library sign could be unexpectedly encountered by visitors to this section. Reliz Canyon is even today, 1955, almost inaccessible parts of the year. It leads from the region near Jolon over the mountains to the coast. The county library sign means that even in this remote place there may be secured in a reasonable time almost any book to which he city dweller has access. Point Sur also get its allotment of books.

Under the leadership of Miss Anne Hadden the Monterey County Library became one of the most constructive in the state. Upon her resignation Miss Ellen Frink became the librarian and remained in that position until Jun. 1, 1951 when she also came to Pacific Grove to make her home. She was county librarian for 21 years, part of which time was divided between the quarters in the city library and a school building and the latter part in the present rooms in the Monterey county court house.