

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 12, 1956

Stevenson Book Published

The Monterey History and Art Assn. has just completed publication of a reprint of "The Old Pacific Capital" by Robert Louis Stevenson. This charmingly written description of Monterey was first included in Stevenson's "Across the Plains, a Collection of Memories and Essays." The little booklet of 24 pages is on sale at the Stevenson House on Houston street in Monterey.

Mrs. William Kneass, curator of the Stevenson House, Miss Ethel Solliday, Monterey city librarian; and Mr. Fred Diffendorf, were members of the History and Art Assn. committee chosen to compile the "R.L.S." book, for which the directors are deeply thankful and rightfully proud.

A short frontispiece is worthy of repeating here: To the visitor, who would like for a few moments to step back into "Old Monterey," we offer as a guide Robert Louis Stevenson, who visited here in the fall of 1879. Roaming over the wooded hills and along the shores of the bay and ocean he absorbed the natural beauties of the Monterey Peninsula. And from his temporary quarters in an old adobe on Houston street he strolled along the streets of the old Spanish town and was befriended by a cosmopolitan group of boarders at Jules Simoneau's restaurant.

"The Old Pacific Capital" was first published in 1880, but it remains today a masterpiece of description of the Monterey that Stevenson knew.

Miss Charlotte Morton of Carmel made the drawing of the hills and the curve of the Bay, with a glimpse of old adobe buildings in the foreground, which illustrates the booklet. Harry C. Graham of the Pacific Grove Press printed "The Old Pacific Capital."

We told our readers in Monday's issue of the Diary of the valuable gift of a Vol. 1 issue of the "Californian" printed in Monterey on Jan. 23, 1847, by Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Holman. A notable gift which came with the "Californian" is a map printed from Lt. Warner's field map made in 1847, of Fort Hill, Monterey, California. This valuable addition to the History and Art Assn., collection of California will be suitably framed and hung in the Old Custom House.

The map shows the Monterey Redoubt, the claims of Dovles, Shubrick, Baily, Spence, and Little. On Bailey's claim is a notation of the Old Mexican Fort, and on Spence's a dot marked "Bones," There is a spring marked on Little's claim and several trees are spotted along a boundary.

Another gift from Mr. and Mrs. Holman for the History and Art Assn. Californiana collection in the Custom House is a Spanish-English dictionary published in Madrid, Spain, in 1797. On a fly leaf is written the original owner's name "John Guest, U.S.N., from his friend, I. M. Duncan, also U.S.N., California, 1847. Above this first gift signature is another gift notation from John Guest, U.S.N., Philadelphia, to his brother, E. G. Guest. Both Duncan and Guest were officers on the Congress with Cmdr. Robert F. Stockton in 1846.

The Monterey History and Art Assn., board of directors voted unanimously at Tuesday's regular meeting to contribute \$100 to the Navy League toward the fund being raised to complete the flagpole at the U.S. Navy Postgraduate School, in appreciation of all that the Navy had contributed to Monterey and to the Navy League and the Navy for the success of the anniversary celebration last July 7th of the first raising of the United States Flag over the old Custom House at-Monterey.

The directors also passed a resolution of appreciation to Walter Hahn Jr., for his interest in the objectives of the Monterey History and Art Assn., his work as a director of the organization and his ready assistance in all the projects of the association, especially the annual Merienda on Monterey's birthday, June 3rd, each year.

It was also moved, seconded, and carried that the association sponsor a competition in the Peninsula schools for the best composition on Monterey history and to give a prize to the winner of such a project. These plans are in the formative stage and the final decisions as to the classes which will participate, the subject, prize and panel of judges, will be announced following the meeting of the committee.

Also in the formative stage is an early recognition of the new American citizen. The association is planning a reception in their honor at an early date.

Directors present at the meeting on Sept. 4, were Mesdames Wesley Heard, W. R. Holman, M. R. Gragg, Robert Giet, Mary Greene, W. M. O'Donnell, Messrs. Carmel Martin Sr., John Martin, Claude Faw, Guy Curtis, Donald Craig, Myron Oliver, Howard Severance, Eldon Covell, Allen Knight, Misses Margaret Jacks and Ethel Solliday.