

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 1, 1957

The Oliver Adobe

The Casa de la Torre, or the Oliver adobe as it is probably better known is a charming old home on Jefferson street facing the Friendly Plaza. It is comfortably settled in a nice old garden amid appropriate plantings. For years it had been kept in excellent repair by Mr. and Mrs. Myron Oliver until its sale a few years ago.

According to the records Philip A. Roach, alcalde of Monterey, gave a grant deed to the property to Francisco Pinto dated March 15, 1850, which was recorded the same day. The home was built by Pinto in 1852. It was in 1850 that Roach made the grant of the property belonging to the City of Monterey, the same being described as on "La Calle del Deste," now Jefferson street with the rear portion extending to the same lane, now Dutra street. According to the terms when the grant was made, Pinto was to erect a building on the premises within two years from the date of the grant.

On June 12, 1851, Pinto is recorded as having sold the property to Juan Bonifacio for \$150. It was described as on the west side of Vallejo street, now known as Pierce street.

On Feb 7, according to the records of the Coast Counties Land Title Co., Juan Bonifacio signed a release and quiet title to Pinto. Two days later Pinto mortgaged the place to Don Jose Abrego. According to the tax records of June 30, 1858, the location was given as on the western corner of Piece and Jefferson streets. The land was assessed at a value of \$750 and the improvements on the same for \$150. Shortly after it was sold for taxes for \$750.

Jose Abrego sold the place to Jose Torres, Aug 1, 1862 for \$1500. The records had to be changed in order to take care of a correction in the name of Torres, the correct name being Jose de la Torres.

March 2, 1864, de la Torres laid claim to the property according to the new homestead law stating he was living there at the time he made the request. This request was granted. and the property was duly homesteaded.

Don Jose de la Torres and his wife, Guadalupe, deeded the property Feb. 13, 1907, to their daughter, Mrs. Maria Hernandez.

When it was found necessary to widen Jefferson street, which had up until this date been little more than a trail, Maria Hernandez deeded 11 feet to the City of Monterey for the sum of \$10.

On April 8. 1920, Maria Hernandez deeded the property to her son, James Hernandez. The property at this time was described as between Jefferson and Gordon streets.

James Hernandez and his wife, Henrietta, with his father and mother, sold the property to Katherine Osborn on May 24, 1923. In less than a year Miss Osborn disposed of the same to Myron and Dorothy Oliver.

The house originally was quite small with only three rooms, but from time to time several frame lean-tos have been added.

The house has no special history attached to it as no outstanding historical events took place there. It is a charming part of the altogether beautiful setting of Colton Hall and the Friendly Plaza.

It is the fond wish of many that the de la Torre adobe, the Gordon House, Casa Vasquez, Casa Alvarado and the entire surroundings of this interesting part of Monterey will always be kept intact, and unspoiled by too much modernism and wrong architecture.