

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### Unknown Dates

"Back of every Californian, be he native or adopted, is a noble lineage. In a little more than a century and a half California has risen from a land of barbarians to become one of the most progressive commonwealths in the world. In it has developed a true aristocracy, founded on an extraordinary if not phenomenal record of individual and collective achievement." These lines were written by the late Phil Townsend Hanna in his "California Through Four Centuries." He also wrote: "America boasts no regional history more colorful or romantic than that of California."

The Spaniards brought to California the romanticism, the imagination, and the appreciation of beauty that is inherent in their race. The later coming of the Anglo-Saxons must be credited for their contributions of courage and thrift, their tolerance and sense of justice, and the Orientals, for their industry and tenacity.

Many dates in California history are not known, unfortunately. For instance, it would be interesting to know the exact date when Hernando de Alarcon landed from his little boat on the west bank of the Colorado River and thus became the first white man to stand on the soil of the present State of California. It would be interesting also to know the date when the missionary fathers planted the first grape, the orange, the fig, and the olive, but these dates are not too important, for from none of them sprang the modern horticultural industries that have meant so much to the economic advancement of the state, in the opinion of Hanna.

It would be interesting, again, merely as a matter of curiosity, to know the exact date when David Douglass, the Scottish botanist, in removing for shipment to England the tiny specimens of firs that later were to be named for him, found enough gold intermingled in their roots to make a watch case. It was the first recorded discovery of gold in California. How unfortunate, too, that we do not know what day in November 1833, Joseph Reddeford Walker, with a party of trappers from the Great Salt Lake, arrived in Monterey. We also do not know the exact date that Richard Henry Dana arrived on the coast of California. We only know that he arrived in Santa Barbara on the first of January 1835.

The following dates and their significance we do know: Nov. 11, 1542, Cabrillo, flying the Spanish flag, discovered the Santa Lucia Mountains, which he called the "Sierras de San Martin," in virtue of the fact that they were discovered on Saint Martin's Day. Five days later, Nov. 16, he sighted Monterey Bay, which he called "Bahia de los Pinos," or "Bay of Pines." But our intention in this column was to dwell upon those dates which directly affected the history of Monterey during the month of January through the years, so back we must go to those dates in our date book.

It was on Jan. 3, 1543, that Cabrillo died at La Posesion on the present San Miguel Island, from a broken arm, probably infected, which he suffered during a shore journey on the island. His grave has never been found.

On the same date, 60 years later, Viscaino discovered the Carmel River which he named "Rio del Carmelo," in honor of the Carmelite friars who had accompanied him on his expedition of discovery.

It was on Jan. 8, 1784, Capt. Juan Bautista de Anza left Tubaco, Sonora, to explore an all-land route from Mexico to the presidios, pueblos, and missions of Alta California. He reached Monterey on May 1, the first white man ever to make the journey from Sonora to the California coast by land.

January 1, 1782, Father Juan Crespi, California's first and most extensive diarist, died at Mission San Carlos Borromeo, where his body is buried in the mission church on the gospel side of the presbytery. He had accompanied Portola's two expeditions to Monterey.