

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Westward Drive

A most significant and most striking theme of the first three centuries of American history is the westward movement of the American people. It was a drive west across the continental expanse to occupy what the Americans considered an empty land, although much of the occupation was contested by the aboriginal inhabitants. This pioneering process, renewed again and again on new ground in the west, was that frontier experience which, has been often pointed out, changed the European into "that new man, an American." These lines are quoted from the opening paragraph of Glen Price's explanation in *The Pacific Historian*, as the aims and objects of the Westerners Foundation recently organized at the College of the Pacific in Stockton. Price is the executive director, having resigned his position with the State Division of Beaches and Parks to accept the directorship.

The Westerners was founded some 15 years ago by the "Chicago Westerners" in that city in the heart of America, with this concept of the West as its purpose: to stimulate interest in and disseminate knowledge of the pioneer, frontier West. The founders were Leland Case, the former editor of the *Rotary* magazine, and Prof. Elmo Scott Watson of the School of Journalism of Northwestern University.

The Chicago Westerners have been very actively pursuing and achieving their objectives, carrying on continuous research in the history of the west, publishing articles and books, meeting monthly for vigorous and stimulating discussions, and by their contagious enthusiasm doing much to increase the interest of all Americans in our frontier Western heritage. They had from the beginning, however, hoped to set up a central, headquarters, or foundation, to realize more fully the original purposes. They conceived that this would provide the means to give information to groups in other cities who wish to organize corrals, as the groups as known, that would be the appropriate entity to establish a Foundation Press for the publication and also for contributions in furtherance of the objectives of the Westerners, and would in many ways effectively further the efforts of the organization in its work on the history of the west, Mr. Price writes.

The Western Foundation has now been established with the headquarters office at the College of the Pacific at Stockton, as Pres. Robert E. Burns forecast in February. The Foundation's work is carried on under the direction of a Board of Directors, of which Philip A. Danielson is president. Work is progressing on the program of the Foundation, including organizing Corrals and a publication program.

Everyone who works in history today is aware of the extraordinary increase of interest in the life and literature of the American frontier, which is, indeed, a part of a renewed concern with the history of the American people. The Foundation, in furtherance of the objects of the parent Chicago Westerners, hopes to make a major contribution in helping to illuminate this significant segment of our heritage.