

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

February 11, 1958

Historic Monterey Monuments

"The California Historical Monuments at Monterey" is the title of an attractive brochure recently published by the State of California Department of Natural Resources, Division of Beaches and Parks.

Early Monterey from an old print appears on the cover, with this information: "Monterey retains many eloquent reminders of its past as the capital of the Spanish, Mexican, and early United States regimes of Alta California. Important among these are its historic sites and structures. Preserved, their stories will serve as sources of inspiration for generations to come."

The artist who drew his impression of the City of Monterey as it appeared to him in 1842 is unknown. The lithograph, published first in 1851, was drawn on stone by Gildermeister, and we found it reproduced in "California Pictorial" by Jeanne van Nostrand and Edith Coulter, and printed by the University of California Press. Permission to use the old drawing was given by Miss Frances M. Molera well known, former resident of Monterey, now residing in San Francisco.

It is thought by some historians that this view of Monterey was made by the artist on the spot, on the occasion of the seizure of Monterey by Commodore Jones, either as a gift for Thomas Oliver Larkin, the American consul, or at his request. William H. Meyer, a gunner on the Cyane, kept an illustrated journal of the cruise in which he states that he made sketches for residents of Monterey, but Larkin's name is not mentioned.

The original drawing of possibly the lithograph used on the brochure cover was sent by Larkin on June 3, 1843, via Honolulu, to his cousin, the Rev. William Matticks Rogers of Boston. However, it was not until Larkin was in New York in 1851 that the lithographs were produced. Both lithographs were issued to two forms - mounted on rollers or folded in cases. Keys to accompany the lithographs were printed. They indicated by number, the buildings shown in the views and served as a directory of residents of Monterey at that date.

As an Introduction, the Division of Beaches and Parks opened this newest brochure of the history of Monterey with a review of the visits of the various

navigators who sailed in Monterey Bay and the naming of the bay and the city. Mexico obtained her independence from Spain in 1821, and for 25 years the flag of Mexico flew over Monterey, the capital since 1776. Mexico had built the Custom House among other public buildings. Visitors were charmed by the picturesque beauty of the place,

Today under the United States Flag, many of the old buildings have disappeared, but, the Division relates: "through the cooperation of individuals, patriotic groups, the city, and the State of California, fine examples are preserved for the enjoyment of all."

Beneath an excellent picture of the Custom House, taken from the north end, there is a brief history of this monument which enjoys nation-wide significance, for here the United States Flag was first officially raised by Com. John Drake Sloat on July 7, 1846, thus California and a large adjacent area became a part of the Union. The building is now owned by the state and is preserved and interpreted as one of the outstanding historic monuments of the State Park System.

The Pacific Building is pictured with a descriptive caption, relating that it was presented to the state by Miss Margaret Jacks in 1954. Casa de Oro, also a gift to the state from the Jacks family, became the property of the state a number of years ago and eventually will be restored as a general merchandise store.

The First Theater, pictured and historically described in the brochure, was presented to the State of California in 1906 after its purchase by a number of interested Monterey citizens, assisted by the California Historic Landmarks League. Since 1937, the building has been again used as a theater.

The Stevenson House, since received as a gift to the state from Mrs. Edith van Anwerp and Mrs. Tobin Clark, has become a depository for much Stevensoniana and a great deal of the Robert Louis Stevenson's personal possessions and furniture. The Larkin House, latest of the old adobes to be acquired by gift to the state, will soon be open to the public Mrs. Alice Larkin Toulmin, the granddaughter of the builder who was also the first and only American consul to California under Mexican rule presented the house with all its furnishings in 1957.

Casa Soberanes, a fine example of Monterey style architecture was built about 1830 in was given to the

state by Mrs. William O'Donnell who retains a life interest. It is open on special occasions by appointment.

The Gutierrez Adobe on Calle Principal has been donated to the State by the Monterey Foundation who purchased it in order to preserve it. The Vizcaino - Portola - Serra Landing Place, commemorating the early explorers and missionaries of this region is also a state historic monument.

On the back cover of the brochure is a map showing the locations of all these monuments on the route of the historic tour.