

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 15, 1958

### **Historical Powerhouse**

California Historical Society Notes has much to report in the latest issue of interest to Californians.

Announcements of the dedication of the Folsom Powerhouse, an exhibition of the paintings of James Walker, a program at the society's headquarters in San Francisco on Sept. 18 at 8 p.m., the new Christmas book, list of new members and new acquisitions.

In 1854 Horatio Gates Livermore, State Senator from El Dorado County, had many occasions to pass through Folsom on his way to Sacramento, the state capital. During these trips he would dream of an industrial city on the banks of the American River. This dream he told to his sons, Horatio and Charles Livermore, who later developed their father's early ditches and dams in that neighborhood into a source of electric power.

A grand electric carnival was held on Admission Day, Sept. 9, 1895, in Sacramento. On that day power was delivered at 11,000 volts to the capital from the powerhouse at Folsom, a momentous advance in the commercial application of electricity which was profoundly to effect the subsequent growth and economy of the West, the report of the Notes declares.

On Sept. 9, 1958, this pioneer hydroelectric plant which has been given to the State Division of Beaches and Parks by the Pacific Gas and Electric Co., was dedicated by the California Historical Society as a State Historical Landmark. To mark the occasion a luncheon was served at the powerhouse at noon, followed by the dedication ceremonies. The old powerhouse is located in the city of Folsom, 21 miles east of Sacramento off Highway 50.

The director of the California Historical Society reports the paintings of James Walker are of first quality and that the exhibit in the headquarters on Jackson street in San Francisco is an important one in the cultural history of the west. James Walker's technical skill and eye for color and detail make his picture a unique record of life in early California.

In addition to the society's own Walker paintings, the exhibition will include important contributions on loan to the society from Mrs. Reginald Walker, whose late husband was a descendant of the artist.

Included in the show are the paintings of Patron and the Vaquero that were reproduced in the latest issue of

American Heritage, and also a selection of works covering the Mexican war, the Civil War and early California. One of the most important pictures in the exhibition is a large oil which is the sketch for Walker's "Battle of Chapultepec" now hanging in the United States Capitol.

The Monterey History and Art Assn. is planning a special tour of the Hearst San Simeon Castle for October 30 and 31, for members and their guests as well as members of the Monterey County Historical Society. It would be well for those who intend to make the trip to secure their reservations at once. Even so they may be all gone by the time this notice appears. The price of the reservation is \$10 per person which will include a box luncheon, transportation by Greyhound bus, and admission to the castle for a conducted tour. Claude Faw of Carmel is chairman of the association's tour committee.