

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Important February Dates

February is another interesting month in California history. On Feb. 22, 1845, Don Pio Pico became the state's third native and its last Mexican governor. The capital was moved to Los Angeles from Monterey.

On the 18th of February 1850, California's first legislature created an act forming the 27 original counties of the state. They were San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, Branciforte (now Santa Cruz), San Francisco, Santa Clara, Contra Costa, Marin, Sonoma, Salano, Yola (Yolo), Napa, Butte, Colusa, Shasta, Trinity, Calaveras, San Joaquin, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Mendocino, Sacramento, El Dorado, Sutter and Yuba.

Feb. 25. 1854, the state capital was permanently located at Sacramento. San Jose, Vallejo and Benicia had served as the capital city for short periods after the Spanish and Mexican rule, when Monterey was the capital.

When Manuel Micheltorena was defeated by the Spanish-Californian insurgents, Don Pio Pico succeeded him as interim governor and almost at once moved the capital to Los Angeles for his own convenience. On April 18th, 1848, he was confirmed in office by the central government and held the appointment until the American conquest was terminated with the official Signing of the Capitulation of Cahuenga. Thus, he became the state's third native, and its last Mexican governor.

Pico was born in San Gabriel in 1801, entered politics in the "diputacion," Jan. 11, 1832, to succeed Echeandia as governor. Opposition to his serving became so great he abandoned his claims to the position. He was granted, during these years, Rancho Temecula and Santa Margarita y Las Flores. His final administration was sullied by the antedating of some land grants, and he was criticized for his handling of mission property. He fled to Mexico at the time of the American conquest, returning to California in 1848, where he died Sept 11, 1894

On July 10, 1845 the Mexican Minister of Interior Relations ordered Gov. Pico to prevent further immigration of Americans to California in view of increasing strained relations between Mexico and the

United States over the revolt of Texas from the Mexican Republic. (Phil Townsend Hanna in "California, Through. Three Centuries.")

Pico later, Oct. 28, 1845, issued a decree leasing or selling the following missions: San Juan Capistrano, sold to Juan Forster and James McKinley for \$710; La Purisima Concepcion, sold to John Temple for \$1,110; San Luis Obispo, sold to Scott, Wilson and McKinley for \$510; Santa Barbara, leased to Nicholas A. Den and Daniel Hill for \$1,200 a year; San Buenaventura, leased to Jose Arnez and Narciso Botello for \$1,639 a year; Santa Inez, leased to Jose Maria Covarrubias and Joaquin Carrillo for \$580 a year; San Fernando, leased to Andres Pico and Juan Manso for \$1,120 a year.