

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Monterey's Early Visitors**

Monterey Bay was discovered in 1542 by a Portuguese, Juan Rodrigues Cabrillo, sailing for Spain. He anchored off Moss Landing, not going ashore, but claiming the country for Spain. It was Cabrillo who named Point Pinos (Punta de los Pinos). Now the highway the length of the state has been named in his honor.

The next arrival on these shores was Sebastian Vizcaino on Dec. 16, 1602. He named the Santa Lucia mountains and the Carmel River, and landed at the mouth of the creek in the vicinity of what is now the Presidio's main gate. The little stream, the landing place, was filled in when the railroad was built, and Pacific street was paved. The bay was named Monterey in honor of the Counte de Monterey, the viceroy to Mexico from Spain. The explorers' camp was moved from Monterey to the mouth of the Cannel River where they remained until January 1603, before they sailed for San Diego. He named Rio del Carmelo in honor of the Carmelite friars who accompanied his expedition.

Captain Gaspar de Portola marched overland in 1769 from San Diego with a party of 67 men and arrived in the Salinas Valley in two- and one-half months. They visited the Monterey Bay but did not realize he had reached the Cabrillo - Vizcaino discovery. Portola remained a few days camping on the present Pajaro River, which his soldiers named for a bird which they found, and which had been stuffed by Indians. After leaving the bay the company marched north and discovered San Francisco Bay. On Dec. 7, 1769, the party returned and camped near Point Lobos but did not realize that they had been so near to Monterey Bay.

Now Father Junipero Serra, organized an expedition by ship to Monterey and Portola marched overland. Serra reached Monterey on May 31, 1770 and on June 3rd, the Presidio and Mission were formally founded, with Portola claiming the country for Spain. This started the permanent occupation of Monterey, which became the port and capital of California in 1778. California then included Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Wyoming, New Mexico, and parts of Colorado and Idaho. Present eastern boundary at the Sierras was determined at the First Constitutional Convention held in Colton Hall, Monterey, Sept 3 to Oct. 13, 1849. The mission was established at Carmel in 1771, when Father Serra

discovered that the Indians lived up the Carmel Valley. The Monterey mission was made the Royal Presidio Chapel.

The military to protect the port occupied a group of adobe buildings 500 feet square containing the Presidio Chapel, barracks, store houses, etc. An earthwork. El Castillo, just above the main gate of the entrance of the present Presidio, was built and armed. This earthwork participated in the defense of Monterey against Gen. Hypolite Bouchard, a Frenchman ostensibly in the service of the Argentine insurgents. Bouchard arrived on Nov. 20, 1818 with two vessels and anchored at Monterey. He attacked the fort on the 26th after looting the town. The Spanish defenders retreated to Salinas, we are told.

In 1822 control of California changed to the Republic of Mexico. Capt. Ap Catesby Jones, U.S.N., in 1842, landed and took Monterey. He departed when he discovered that Mexico and the United States were still at peace, after lowering the Stars and Stripes, replacing the Mexican Flag and apologizing.

Cmdr. John Drake Sloat, U.S.N., commanding the navy on the Pacific coast, had instructions that in case of war he was to take Monterey. He entered the bay on July 2, 1846, and finally landed unopposed on July 7, raising the United States flag at the Custom House and later at El Castillo.

The anniversary of this historic event will be re-enacted at the same setting this year under the auspices of the Monterey History and Art Assn., the Navy League and the City of Monterey. Allen Knight, president of the association, is chairman of this 113th anniversary celebration.