

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Presidio History

During the early part of 1938 the late Col. Roger S. Fitch then president of the Monterey History and Art Assn., wrote to Col. Oliver L. Spaulding, F. A. historical section, Army War College, Fort Humphreys, Washington, D. C., if he could supply a brief history of the Presidio of Monterey or of the City of Monterey itself. A prompt reply was received and valuable information related.

The following extracts from "United States Military Reservations, National Cemeteries, and Military Parks," was supplied by Col. Spaulding at that time, and should be of genuine interest to the new military personnel stationed here at this time.

"Presidio of Monterey: This reservation is situated partly within the city limits of Monterey, overlooking the bay, in Monterey County, and contains 398.13 acres above low water mark, with metes and bounds as announced on March 14, 1908. Occupied as a military post by the Spanish government as early as 1772. Mexico succeeded Spain, and by treaty with Mexico the United States succeeded to the title and took possession.

"By executive order, dated Nov. 23, 1868, the reservation was made to include about 158.14 acres, according to the Warner survey. Through an error in a subsequent survey (the Forman) the reservation as occupied included only about 140 acres."

The reservation was enlarged to its present area by purchases in 1903, and 1906, as follows:

"1 - Deed of David Jacks and wife, dated March 21, 1903, recorded in Vol. 116, page 407, of the deed records of Monterey County, conveying 104.17 acres. This tract includes some land, which, according to the Warner survey, belong to the military reservation.

"2 - Deed from David Jacks and wife, dated Jan. 20, 1906, in Volume 99 of said records, conveying 153.85 acres.

"Revocable licenses - June 14, 1889, the Southern Pacific Railway Co., to construct a line of track across the reservation."

On July 15, 1890, Jane L. Stanford was given permission to erect a monument to Father Junipero Serra, founder of the California Mission chain, on the hillside within the

Presidio property. Mrs. Stanford, with her husband, was the founder of Stanford University.

The next important date pertaining to the Monterey Presidio was March 31, 1903 when the Monterey Gas and Electric Co. was given permission to run its line of wires upon the reservation. There followed a water system when the Pacific Improvement Co. was permitted to lay and maintain a 12-inch water main across the reservation on Dec. 23, 1903.

The following year on March 15, 1904, the Monterey-Pacific Grove Railway Co. asked for and was given authority to construct, operate, and maintain an electric street car line across the reservation.

When we arrived in Monterey in 1925 there was a small wooden house on the Presidio curve below the railroad and almost on the beach. We find that a Mrs. King was granted a permit to occupy that house on May 5, 1904.

on Dec. 12, 1904, the Pacific Improvement Co. and the Monterey-Pacific Grove Railway Co. were extended permission to maintain the 16 inch pipe line and the electric railway, respectively, upon and along Pacific street.

"The City of Monterey was granted on Jan. 3, 1905 a permit to maintain a road to be known as Lighthouse avenue, where same crosses southern extremity of the Presidio reservation.

"it was not until May 12, 1914 that permission was granted the Pacific Telephone Co. to construct, maintain, and operate a telephone line."