

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

April 13, 1959

### **The 'Royal Road'**

The California Historical Society is interested in the preservation of El Camino Real in California as the "royal road" over which Padre Junipero Serra, Don Gaspar de Portola and the mission fathers traveled when they left Mexico to find Monterey Bay and establish the mission chain

George Harding, president of the California Historical Society, is representing the historical society on the committee. The committee is made up of representatives of the following organizations: The Native Daughters of the Golden West, Native Sons of the Golden West, Daughters of the American Revolution, California Mission Trails Assn., and the Franciscan Fathers

The committee is sponsoring legislation to bring about the following objectives

1- The elimination of the designation "Cabrillo Highway" from all portions of the U. S. Highway 101 and 101 Alternate, reinstating the intent of the original legislation. The designation of U. S. Highway 101 from the Mexican Border to San Francisco as "El Camino Real" and the U. S. Alternate from Oxnard to San Juan Capistrano as "Pacific Coast Highway."

2- The erection of the traditional Mission Bell markers on El Camino Real at or near the points of egress from the highway to the old missions.

The first bell marking El Camino Real was erected on the grounds of the Plaza church in Los Angeles. On the bell in raised letters are two dates - 1769, the date of the first mission and 1906, the date when the first bell was erected. The work was planned and supervised by the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County, and the Automobile Club of Southern California.

Several of the mission bells are placed in Monterey. A prominent one is situated on Pacific street directly in front of Colton Hall, another is on the corner of Alvarado and Polk street.

Miss Rosemary Hardy of Carmel has just recently presented to the California Historical Society a library of Western Americana. There are 190 titles in the collection chosen by the society's librarian. James de T.

Abajian. Included in the acquisition is a complete 37-volume set of California Historical Society Quarterly.

The jewel of the library, however, is a copy of Felix P. Wierzbicki's "California as it is, and as it may be; or a Guide to the Gold Region," published by Washington Bartlett in San Francisco in 1849. The librarian thinks that without a doubt, this single book represents one of the major acquisitions in the history of the society's library.

Lowell E Hardy, the son of the founding family of Oakland. was a member of the California Historical Society, 1935-51, and editor of the Quarterly, 1942-1945.

A selected exhibition of the works of Gottardo Piazzoni, 1872-1945, will be shown in the society's galleries from April 14 to May 13. Piazzoni owned a ranch at one time in the upper Carmel Valley where he spent a great deal of his time. He also taught painting in Monterey and had a studio in San Francisco for many years.

Col Fred Blackburn Rogers (USA-Ret.) will be the speaker for the April 16 luncheon meeting of the California Historical Society in the "mansion" on Jackson street in San Francisco. Col. Rogers was recently the speaker at the dedication of a marker commemorating the Battle of Natividad at the edge of the old intersection of old San Juan road and Crazy Horse Road northeast of Salinas.

The plaque was placed on a huge rock at that spot by the Monterey County Historical Society and the California State Parks Commission. At this dedication Col. Rogers reviewed the details of the Battle of Natividad, of which he has made intensive study.

His subject at the San Francisco meeting will be "Fremont's Gabilan Camp, March 1846, a study of its Relation to Fremont's State Park." This park is on Fremont's Peak, off the Old San Juan Grade before the old community of San Juan is reached.