

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 18, 1959

1878 Bowling

Jack Swan, the builder of the First Theater, tells in his writings in 1878 that when he landed in Monterey on board the Soledad in 1843, there was a tenpin alley at John F. Dye's on Calle Principal, there was a billiard table at Jose Abrego's, and not only a billiard table but there was a place where you could get a good hot cup of coffee as well. Calle Principal was the main street in town then, most of the stores and liquor shops were there, Thomas O. Larkin, James Watson, Mendez, Dye, Chard, Beldon and Joseph Harmen were all keeping stores, he says. Larkin did not sell liquor by the glass but by the bottle.

"Dr. James Stokes kept a store, general merchandise and drugs in the house where the Eskolle (**Escolle**) family now live," he wrote in 1878. "David Spence kept a store on Alvarado street, adjoining the house he lives in now and Iscara kept one in front, but on the street that runs down between Jose Castro's house and the present stone wall behind the Washington hotel (there was no hotel there then but only a small adobe building belonging to Montenegro). Jose Abrego kept store and a billiard room in the house where his family lives now. A Frenchman named Recardo kept a store and a bakery in a small adobe house which stood on a lot where La Porte now has a brick house. Manuel Dutra kept a saloon in his house and had most of the Indian trade. The Indians were numerous around Monterey and Carmel, for the Smallpox had not been brought to Monterey until the next spring when they were thinned out."

The Larkin House is still standing and is now a state historical monument, the Stokes home is now Gallatins restaurant, the Washington Hotel was torn down many years ago.

In describing the residences of Monterey in 1843, Swan writes, that there were but four or five two-story houses here. Larkin's, Alvarado's, the one Gov. Micheltorena lived in, Dr. Stokes', Antonio Osio's and Kinlocks. There were no brick houses. The Alvarado house must have been the one now known as the La Porte Building, Pearl and Alvarado: and the Frenchman's bakery has disappeared.

"There was no wharf," according to Swan, "goods from vessels being landed on the beach or on the rocks in front of the Custom House. The first wharf was built (according to his notes) in 1845 when it was built of pine cribs filled with stone, by Thomas O Larkin. for the Mexican government."

Details of the visit of the British vice consul and a British ship are told by Swan: "Oct 11, James Forbes, who had just received the appointment of British vice consul to California, arrived in Monterey, and on the 14th the British Corvette Carysfort. Capt. Lord George Paulet arrived in Monterey from San Francisco Bay, the governor and consul went on board, and on their return to shore the consul was acknowledged as the British Consul to Upper California. On the 15th, in the afternoon, about 50 men came ashore on liberty from the Carysfort and the pinball alley as well as the liquor saloons did a good business. On the 16th in the afternoon, a disturbance commenced between the liberty men and the soldiers wanting to fight, in which the soldiers got a thrashing for their pains. On the morning of the 17th, the captain of the Carysfort sent word to the governor that if his soldiers molested his men, they must take what they got. The same afternoon 50 more men came ashore on liberty and the Mexican soldiers attacked them again and got another good thrashing."

Of other vessels that visited Monterey that year, Swan writes: "Nov. 11, the Schooner California and two other vessels arrived from San Francisco to clear at the Custom House; one of them had a cargo of potatoes from Mazatlan; this schooner, a small one, commanded by Capt. Davis, was the first vessel built in California (San Francisco). She got her clearance and sailed the next day, she lost one of her crew coming in and going out of Monterey Bay. The schooner had a good passage to Mazatlan, where the vessel and cargo were sold. The potatoes brought \$6 per hundred. Capt. Davis returned to California the next spring as a passenger on the schooner California."

"A few years previously small schooner was built in Monterey, called Purisimanda and sent on a visit to San Francisco, and to taste peppermint tea at Yerba Buena, but the unruly bar outside the heads capsized the schooner, and with the exception of the captain, all the crew was drowned.

"About nine or ten years ago (1867 or '68) another schooner built at Monterey, was capsized in San

Francisco Bay, and all hands drowned, and in 1873 a wheat vessel was lost on the bar in fine weather. The press of San Francisco often talk about the buoys of that city, but is it not time they talked about buoys for their bar, for it needs buoying as well as their harbor in front of the wharves need dredging." That was the opinion of Jack Swan, builder of **(missing words)** in 1878.