

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

August 15, 1960

### Politics In 1850

The first official record of the city of Monterey shows the "meeting of the Ayuntamiento of Monterey at Colton Hall, Jan. 2, 1850, at 1 o'clock p.m." At this meeting committees were formed on roads, bridges and police, on laws and ordinances and on ways and means.

At a1 meeting Jan. 7, 1850, a "report of the commissioners to inquire into the accounts of Walter Colton received and ordered on file."

Meeting of Jan. 14, 1850, "Communication from trustees of Colton Hall in relation to Colton Hall. On motion of Mr. O'Neil; the secretary be instructed to inform the trustees appointed by Mr. Colton, formerly Alcalde, that the Ayuntamiento (council) considered themselves ex-officio trustees of the building known as Colton Hall. Adopted."

On motion of Mr. Boston (storekeeper in what is now known as the Casa de Oro or House of Gold): "Resolved by this board that all the town property be placed under its custody as the proper representatives of the people. Adopted."

On motion of Mr. Diaz: "Resolved that the thanks of this body be tendered to the former trustees appointed by Mr. Colton for the good charge they have taken of the building known as Colton Hall. Adopted."

The secretary's reply to the trustees appointed by the Rev. Walter Colton was read and ordered placed in the files at the special meeting on Jan. 16, 1850. It Contained these facts:

"To Messrs. D. Spence and others, "Gentlemen:

"Your communication relative to the trusteeship of Colton Hall has been received by the Ayuntamiento and the board instructs me, their secretary, to say: "That according to the trust placed in your hands by Mr. Colton it is to remain pro tempore or for the time being until some provision is made emanating from the action of the community.

"Now the board does not consider Mr. Colton can entail his authority after his withdrawal from the official station, for an indefinite length of time.

"Furthermore the board considers itself ex-officio custodians of the public property, and as this building is certainly public property according to the report of the commissioners to Inquire into the accounts of Mr. Colton filed in the Alcalde's office, it appears this edifice was built from the proceeds of 20,000 varas of the public domain and from money accruing from public revenue. As there are claims now pending for the building materials for which the applicants look to this board and not the trustees appointed by Mr. Colton, it is further evidence that this board as the direct representative of the people have the control of the public buildings.

"With all due deference to your opinion and charge placed In your hands of which you have taken such good care, the board would call your attention to the following resolutions passed by them:

"Resolved, that all public property belonging to the town be placed under the wardenship of the Ayuntamiento as the proper representative of the people.

"Resolved, that the thanks of this board be tendered to the trustees of Colton Hall as appointed by Mr. Colton for the manner in which they have transmitted the building.

"The board does not wish to imply that the saloon at present occupied by the second Alcaldes court and used by this board cannot be used as formerly.

"They would here assert that the saloon can be used for any other purpose consistent with decency and good order.

"In behalf of the board I have the honor to be

"Your obt. humble Svt.

(Signed) Joseph Boston

Sect. to Ayuntamiento Pro-Tempore."