

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

August 17, 1960

That Old School Of Ours

The school and Colton Hall were uppermost in the minds of the Common Council of the City of Monterey when they met on June 10, 1850.

From the secretary's report we have gleaned this paragraph: "Report received from special committee on schools. Ordered that the report be filed, and committee instructed to confer with the master of the Spanish school as to whether he desires a room which is now vacant in Colton Hall and at the disposal of this body." On July 29, the Common Council passed: "On motion the schoolmaster was given permission to use this building upon Sundays as a school."

This Information of 110 years ago should be of special interest today when a reunion of the students who attended school in Colton Hall is planned for September, with members of the City Museum Board as hosts, assisted by the curator of the historic building, Mrs. Pauline McCreery, and the City of Monterey, the owner of the property.

On May 14, 1850 there appeared this notation in the minutes of the Common Council: "On motion of Ald. Abrego that a committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the state of the schools kept in Colton Hall setting forth what is taught, and what salaries are paid the teachers and what rooms are furnished, and by what authority said rooms are furnished."

"Resolved furthermore that the, resolution passed on Monday, the 22nd, 1850, be, and is hereby repealed. - Carried." This resolution appears to be an order to the schoolmaster to vacate, the room which he then occupied in Colton Hall it being needed by the Common Council.

Monterey or the Common Council once had a chance to sell Colton Hall to the Catholic Church for the "establishment of an Academy for Young Ladies" amongst us. The minutes read on Feb. 6, 1851:

"The new Catholic Bishop, Rt. Rev. Joseph S. Alemany, accompanied by one of his clergy, was introduced by Mr. David Spence to the Council. The clerk read a lengthy petition from the Bishop, bearing also the signatures of 37 of the citizens of Monterey which, after stating the importance and the great advantages that would result from the establishment of an Academy for

Young Ladies among us, concluded by praying that the Council would sell Colton Hall, with the ground thereto, belonging, at as low a price as possible to the Bishop for the purpose already stated In the petition. On motion the petition was received. Ald. Cooper moved that a committee be appointed to report on the subject at the next meeting. - Carried."

The proposed sale, was turned down at a meeting of the Council on February 10th, 1851, when a committee of three gentlemen, Messrs. Cooper, Diaz and Curtis, were appointed to inform the Bishop that his proposition could not be accepted by the Common Council.

During February of 1900 there was a discussion back and forth between the school board and the Council concerning the school lot adjoining Colton Hall property and finally decided not to bid for it at that time as "our treasury is not in condition to warrant the expense and we are not in any present need of larger grounds." In March 1903, the following motion was carried after a motion by Mr. Schauffeie: "The Clerk was Instructed 'to draw a warrant for the sum of \$400 and retain the amount ordered drawn until the delivery of the deed for the lot to the city, by the school trustees." Trustees of the school district were Ross C. Sargent, J. K. Oliver and L. D. Lacey. The property included as described in the deed:

"Commencing at a point on Gordon Street, in said city of Monterey, at SW corner of the stone wall enclosing the Monterey jail as it now stands, running hence on the east line of Gordon Street 50 feet; hence at right angles easterly 245 feet, a little more or less, to westerly line of Pacific Street; hence at right angles northerly 40 feet to the district school lot; etc. being a piece of land 50 wide on the easterly side of Gordon Street and 40 feet wide on the westerly side of Pacific Street by 245 feet deep, a little more or less."

"Together with all the singular tenements, hereditaments and appurtenances thereunto belonging, or at any "wise appertaining, and the reversion and reversions, remainder find remainders, rents, Issues and profits thereof."