

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Monterey Type Architecture**

Monterey architecture, which, adopted elsewhere, now properly named "Monterey Type," romantically combines the traits of two civilizations, Spain and New England meeting in a true-type Monterey adobe.

One of the builders of Monterey was a Boston man, Thomas Oliver Larkin, who had time to be a consul, who intrigued with a president of the United States to bring California into the union, and who built the Larkin House and the Pacific building, two of the finest landmarks standing in Monterey. Of course, we think the Casa Soberanes and several other adobes should be included in the list, although Larkin did not build these handsome homes.

In nearly all of the adobes of this region there may be found the balcony adopted from Spain, and the window trims, fireplaces, and interior woodwork shaped and used in the manner named Colonial.

The Yankee made his mark early in Monterey, affording that contrast in California architecture that differentiates between Mission type and the Monterey type. The blend of the civilization is still part of the indefinable character of Monterey, an amenity that has so far successfully withstood many stern bludgeonings of "progress," but which a more enlightened public now realizes is an asset and a charm worthy of preservation, something to be found in only two places in California, Santa Barbara and Monterey. We also vote for San Juan Bautista. It is so quiet, unassuming and preserved much as it was when the mission was founded there.

The greater the growth of California, the more outstanding this charm of Monterey will become. It is only a few years in both cities, Santa Barbara and Monterey, since progress was expressed by the destruction of the old buildings that today bring tourists and visitors and, not infrequently, are decisive "imponderable" values in causing people to make their homes in the vicinity of such cities.

Some progress has been made in recent years by architects and builders in combining the old with the new. First it was felt that the tradition was Spanish or Mediterranean. Now it is realized increasingly that it is something in its own right, a California-Colonial tradition, more truly described a "Monterey Type." The

traditional personality of Monterey is profitable personality, an environment that creates and stimulates trade, and that promises the outside public interest that adds to trade. If it did not, why do so many tourists lean on the gate of Casa Soberanes enjoying the appearance of the house and at the same time using much film taking pictures to take back home to show to their friends and talk on the historic atmosphere of the community?

The builder and the architect are more significant to a city such as this than they realize. They are either adding to or detracting from a tradition that is a most enduring asset of old Monterey.