

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Adobe on Alvarado Street

We notice that under the Urban Renewal "new look" program for Monterey that the nice, small adobe building next to the Ordway Drug Store will probably be returned to the earth from which it came many years ago. We are sorry for this because this two-story adobe building could tell a lot of history if it was able to speak to those who are destined to acquire the land under it to build a more modern structure.

The first owner, Don Sebastian Rodriguez, and his family, who owned many leagues of land in the Pajaro Valley in the middle 1800's, was one of the signers of the California Constitution and the only native born delegate to the first constitutional convention held in Colton Hall 112 years ago.

Now it is interesting to know that this important citizen of Monterey lived in this building destined for destruction. The adobe was originally built with a balcony overhanging the sidewalk. It was erected by Don Jacinto Rodriguez in 1818 and there the first draft of the California Constitution was signed. The balcony was later removed from the structure by city ordinance.

Don Jacinto Rodriguez, the builder of the adobe house which has been known by his name, was born January 12, 1815, in the Pajaro Valley. He moved to Monterey shortly after the death of his father, Don Sebastian Rodriguez, and very soon became prominent in the affairs of the capital City. He became a lieutenant under Alvarado in 1836, and in 1839 was selected as Alferez of Monterey. The following four years he served as Celador of the Monterey and San Francisco custom houses (1843-1846). In 1849 he was appointed Monterey's Abcalde.

Rodriguez died in 1880, leaving considerable property on the principal business street of Monterey, having purchased the property from Curtis and Conner. The first brick store here in 1857.

Jacinto Rodriguez also owned an adobe building, long since torn down, where the Ordway building now stands. In 1851 the property was assessed to Jacinto Rodriguez for \$1,500. In 1855, Jacinto Rodriguez was shown as the owner and the assessment against the building had been raised to \$2,500.

The adobe is marked with an historic marker, placed there by the Monterey History and Art Assn, and should have been designated as Casa Rodriguez. Dona Dolores Oslo and Dona Jacinto Rodriguez were sisters and they were aunts of Senorita Maria Ignacia Bonifacio. Their mother was an Amador, after whom Amador County was named in 1854.