

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Value Of An Adobe

Is the Rodriguez- Oslo adobe on Alvarado street worth saving and restoring? The Daughter of California Pioneers seem to think so and have even appealed to the National Trust for Historic Preservation to become interested in its preservation.

Mrs. Henry Potter Russell, a member of the National Trust board as well as the Monterey Foundation board of directors, received a letter from the Daughters of California Pioneers signed by Charlotte James, recording secretary, expressing the interest of that organization.

Mrs. James writes:

"As chairman of the first Western conference of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, we should like to inform you of the possible destruction of the Rodriguez-Osio adobe on Alvarado street in Monterey. An engineer's report attesting that all four original walls are extant and that, therefore, it can most definitely be saved.

"One source among many, is the knowledge that the California Constitution was signed there, the home of Don Jacinto Rodriguez. Don Jacinto was a descendant of Pacheco and Soto families of the De Anza expedition. He worked for the American cause, remaining at his post when needed, and risking his life many times. He was a signer of the Constitution, a resident of Monterey and a landowner of prominence.

"We hope that the National Trust for Historic Preservation will join us in protesting the destruction of a precious California relic in order to make way for a group of shops, and that Urban Renewal and the town councilmen of Monterey may be persuaded to seek an alternative - perhaps its inclusion within such a group of shops.

"Any effort to rescue and/or restore a building with the historic charm of the Rodriguez-Osio adobe will be greatly appreciated by us and eventually, we are confident, by the people of California and all those who visit our state."

The first owner of this historic building, Don Sebastian Rodriguez and his family, who owned many leagues of land in Pajaro Valley in the middle 1800's, was the only native born delegate to the Constitutional Convention

held in Colton Hall 113 years ago. The adobe was originally built with a balcony overhanging the sidewalk, much like "My Attic," an adobe on Alvarado street to the south side of Franklin street.

Don Jacinto Rodriguez, the builder of the adobe house which has since been known by his name, was born Jan. 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 this capital city. He became a lieutenant under Alvarado in 1836, and in 1839 was selected as alferes (lieutenant). The following four years he served as celador (warden) of the Monterey and San Francisco custom houses (1843-1846). In 1849 he was appointed Monterey's alcalde.

Rodriguez died in 1880, leaving considerable property on the principal street of Monterey, having purchased the property from Curtis and Conover.

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 Osio 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.