

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

April 11, 1962

### **A Broadside**

“Delightful Monterey!”

A broadside produced in 1926, is just what the title implies and a delight to read, as well as to admire the printing and the composition of John Henry Nash and the story as written by Edward F. O'Day.

“Delightful Monterey!” Sung by poets drawn in pastels of prose by lords of language, painted in golden hues borrowed from the sunshine by artists of renown! Even the dry historian comes to life and enthusiasm when he reviews the annals of this charming old town. Stevenson loved Monterey and used "its geography and its scenery in writing Treasure Island and the Pavilion on the Links. Bayard Taylor crowded its romance into stanzas teeming with color.

“Charles Warren Stoddard waxed lyrical whenever Monterey slipped into his glowing paragraphs. Francis McComas, Percy Gray and other wizards of oil and water-color find a new magic in their brushes when Monterey is their inspiration.

“A town of quaint bystreets where ancient trees droop their branches over adobe walls half-hidden in roses of Old Castile. A town with a color of age, and yet a town always youthful, as its sun is youthful, and its pure sky, and its sweet blue bay. A town of historic dignity, the capital of an era that has ended, alert with the life of today and yet tenanted by pleasant ghosts. Not least among the items of Monterey's attractiveness are its fine old homes built before the gringo came. The artist has depicted the charm of the Alvarado Home. A word about the personage whose name it bears, Juan Bautista Alvarado, governor under Mexican rule, and it is right that the name should have persisted, and that the principal street of Monterey should be named for him. It indicated the powerful impression that Juan Bautista Alvarado made on his fellow townsmen.

“Governor Alvarado was indeed a strong personality. Chapman says that he was ‘endowed with greater political capacity than any man of those times.’ They were restless times. From the beginning of Mexican sovereignty in 1822 until Commodore Sloat raised Old Glory over the Monterey Custom House in 1846, California and more particularly its capital, Monterey, was a place of political intrigue, turbulence, Indian

outbreaks, soldiers' rebellions, the rivalries of leaders, of sections, and actual revolutions.”

The broadside continues: “It was by revolution that Alvarado became the first Monterey-born governor in 1836, and it was only by the strength of his sword and the keenness of his diplomacy that he maintained leadership until 1842. He was 27 years of age when the Californians rose in their wrath and deposed Governor Gutierrez putting Alvarado in his place. Only 27, yet he had been a prominent figure for 10 years. An unusually well-read youth for that time and place, he was selected at 17 as secretary of the Diputaclon, and when his great opportunity came in 1836, he was a deputy in that body and an official of the Custom House.

“Governor first by will of the people,” Alvarado was afterwards confirmed in office from the City of Mexico, but not until he had fought a number of engagements against the soldiers of envious rivals. He handled the troublesome Indians with firmness and did not hesitate to deport objectionable gringos. With the high type of American then peacefully penetrating this western Paradise he maintained cordial relations, and won their deep respect by bringing peace out of disorder, for peace meant the orderly routine of trade, and trade was profitable.

“When he was succeeded in governorship by General Manuel Micheltoena in 1842, the Mexican government conferred high honors upon him, but he remained in the province he loved, universally respected, of engaging and genial habits, a cultured California gentleman, living to a fine old age, and dying under the American flag.”

The broadside was accompanied by a copy of a water-color of the Casa Alvarado painted by the late Rowena Meeks Abdy, a former resident of Monterey.