

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 24, 1963

Escolle's Flower Pots Played A Role In Monterey History

Mr. and Mrs. Francis C. Hughes of San Francisco called on me a few days ago to present some old newspaper clippings and other items pertaining to the history of Mrs. Hughes' great-grandfather, Honore Escolle, once the owner of the Stokes Adobe, now occupied by Gallatin's restaurant.

Mrs. Hughes was Marie Louise Fair when she lived in Monterey. At that time she gave to the Monterey History and Art Assn. an old scrapbook which had been in the Escolle family for many years. Mrs. Hughes also was the granddaughter of Marie Escolle Lucke. The clippings and other items of interest are to be added to the scrapbook.

In "The Republican," printed in Monterey, Feb. 2, 1871, there appeared this short news item: "By the 'Pacific' Mr. Escolle has sent to San Francisco some 5,000 flowerpots of Monterey manufacture. They find ready sale in San Francisco."

Those pots were made in the garden at the back of the Stokes Adobe on Hartnell street and were baked in a baker's oven which stood near the rear chalk rock wall which enclosed the property. In recent years the house has been the home of the late Mrs. M.M. Gragg, and then Gallatin's restaurant. It was built in the 1830's by Dr. James Stokes, a shopkeeper. The ambitious young man built in his beautiful white house one of the largest "salas" in the old capital, so it often came about that when affairs of political interest were to be staked, the Stokes house was pressed into service. It later was purchased by Honore Escolle, a wealthy Frenchman.

Honore Escolle was born in France on the 24th of December 1832, and immigrated to the United States in 1847, settling in New Orleans. After a residence of about five years in that city, he started for California, arriving in 1852. He selected Monterey County as his residence and at once engaged in business opening a bakery and general store, in which business he continued until 1886 when he sold to his son-in-law, A. Manuel

In 1872, he purchased about 1,400 acres of Paraje de Sanchez Ranch near Gonzales in this county and there spent a great amount of money. He planted about 50

acres of fruit trees, which turned out to be a good investment. He had a splendid home on the ranch where he and his family spent the summer months. He also owned 5,000 acres of land in San Luis Obispo County which he devoted to dairying and stock raising.

Honore Escolle was married in 1864 to Miss Alice Duvalle, an accomplished young lady and also a native of France according to an early Monterey County history. They were the parents of 11 children, three sons and eight daughters. One daughter married W.H. Pyburn, one time county recorder; another married B.H. Lucke, a prominent merchant of San Francisco, and another became Mrs. A. Manuel. Leon the eldest son, was in charge of his father's ranch at Gonzales for several years "but as he had an excellent business education, he resigned that position for a more lucrative occupation congenial to his tastes."

In the old Custom House Museum there is a broken piece of pottery with a charming yellow glaze which was designed and made by Mr. Escolle and probably fired in the same oven which had baked bread and fired flower pots. Mr. Escolle, it is said, became interested in the making of pottery here because he thought the soil was adaptable and he sent to France for a potter to come to Monterey to assist him in the project—but the venture was not profitable and the making of pottery here did not last long.