

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

June 3, 1964

### **Old Press Led Hard Existence**

We have been asked many times what happened to the ancient press on which "The Californian", the first newspaper ever published in California, was printed right here in Old Monterey. The editors were the Reverend Walter Colton, first Monterey alcalde and the builder of Colton Hall; and Dr. Robert Semple, the president of the first Constitutional Convention held in Monterey in 1849. The first issue arrived on the streets of this old town on August 15, 1846, printed by Augustin V. Zamorano on the old press spoken of above. W. E. Hartnell aided in printing a portion of the paper in Spanish.

In the issue of February 17, 1847, page one, we find the following article:

"To our patrons - It will be remembered that this week is our 26th No. and of course closes the first six months. Many of our patrons only subscribed for that period. Those wishing to continue the paper, will let us know. We are making arrangements to enlarge our paper, and it is desirable to get the money already due and what we can from new subscribers."

Evidently the owners did not get the necessary financial support from the residents of Monterey for in May 1847, Semple, who became the sole owner of "The Californian," moved the paper and equipment to San Francisco. Later the printing equipment was removed to New Helvetia or Sutter's Fort, where it was used to print the Placer Times, the first newspaper in the interior of California. Later on, came another move, this time to Stockton, in order to produce the Stockton Times. Still another move in 1850 to Sonora, where the old press printed the Sonora Herald. Once again on wheels, now to Columbia, where it came to rest, rather tragically,

"Not entirely paid for - ever the grief of the craft - the pioneer press was by the party of the first part, unfeelingly dismantled."

(To be continued)