

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Notes on Books

A petition for establishment and maintenance of a public library within the City of Monterey was presented to the board of trustees Jan. 10, 1906.

It was signed by 218 interested residents, constituting one-fourth of the electors of the city. Many of the names appearing on the petition, although long since deceased, will still be remembered by today's residents of the Monterey Peninsula.

Among those noted in a hurried examination of the record which appeared in the newspaper of that date, were: M.W. McMenamin, William Sandholdt, C.A. Easton, J.L. McGowan, L.D. Lacey, A.B. Gunzendorfer, W.E. Parker, J. Alves, Grant Towle, George L. Salterbach, C.L. Ingels, H.A. Greene, W.H. McConnell, J.K. Oliver, A.J. Mason, E.E. James, George L. McDonald, R.H. Maddock, W.L. Teaby, M.D., and many others.

The Book Club of California has just published for the members "Geographical Memoir upon Upper California" by John Charles Fremont. Newly reprinted from the edition of 1848, it is illustrated by Fremont's map of Oregon and California and with its introduction by Allen Nevins and Dale L. Morgan.

The original document, first published for the U.S. Senate, and the present document, with the map, are now reprinted in their entirety for the first time. The fruit of Fremont's controversial third expedition is of the utmost importance in the history of Western explorations and cartography.

The edition is limited to 425 copies, and the price is \$15.25. The Book Club of California is located at 545 Sutter St., San Francisco.

A fascinating new book edited by A.P. Nasatir, is "A French Journalist in the California Gold Rush, the letters of Etienne Derbec," printed by The Talisman at Georgetown, Calif.

Derbec, later editor of the famous early San Francisco newspaper, Echo Du Pacifique, wrote a series of lengthy and intelligent letters describing the Gold Rush. These letters are highly observant and make interesting reading.

Most of Derbec's career was spent in California; in this respect he was unlike most Frenchmen, who came to California to strike it rich, failed and returned to France.

On the contrary, Derbec's career in California was long and at various time even influential and affluent, always fascinating. His newspaper was most important and was widely read by the French population in California, which during the height of the Gold Rush numbered some 32,000. The book is considered a significant contribution to the literature of the California Gold Rush.

"The Letters of a Young Miner," a contribution from John Howell Books, is the story of Jasper S. Hill, a brilliant youth of 17 years from Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. He journeyed to California by ox-team early in 1849.

His exuberance and adventurous nature are reflected in his overland letters and accounts of life in the mining camps. He tells of the tribulations, successes, and failures of members of the Mt. Pleasant Mining Co., in which his father, Enoch Hill, was the principal investor. The letters were written from April, 1849 through March, 1852, when he left for Mt. Pleasant.

"The Letters of a Young Miner" runs 124 pages and includes an introduction by Doyce B. Nunis Jr., who has edited the letters and compiled a party census of the entire Mr. Pleasant Co. as well as a map of the gold region where Jasper lived. A limited edition of 475 copies has been designed and printed by Barbara Holman and will sell for \$15.