

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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A Tour of Historic Monuments

Your third walking tour of historic monuments in Monterey should pass Casa Alvarado on Dutra street off Jefferson, the home of California's first Monterey born governor, Don Juan Bautista Alvarado, (1836-42).

A few steps south is the city-owned Vasquez house, originally a one-story adobe home on Dutra directly back of Colton Hall. It was the home of Dolores, sister of the notorious bandit Tiburcio Vasquez, born here in 1939.

Dolores Vasquez sold it to Theodore de la Torre, son of a pioneer Monterey family. Many years later Louis Hill, son of railroad builder James Hill, bought it and added the second story.

Across Dutra from the Vasquez adobe is the old city jail and the rear of Colton Hall, the latter taking its name from Rev. Walter Colton, who came to Monterey in 1846 as chaplain of one of Commodore Sloat's vessels.

Colton, appointed, then elected, Monterey's first American alcalde, erected the building in 1847-1849. It was restored by a museum board in time for the centennial celebration of September 1949. The second floor assembly hall appears now very much as it must have looked for the Constitutional Convention of 1849.

The famous building is maintained by the city as a museum and is open daily to the public.

A "must" on the tour is the ancient jail, attached to Colton Hall on the south. The jail was built by the County of Monterey in 1854, when Monterey was the county seat and Colton Hall was the courthouse.

The jail is built of Monterey granite, with the best ironwork then obtainable in San Francisco. The walls are sealed with blocks of arched stone. The only wood in its construction is in the roof.

Now open to public inspection, the structure was used by the city as a jail until 1959.

Directly north of Colton Hall, at Pierce and King streets, is the Gordon House, one of the first milled lumber houses in Monterey built by Philip Roach who imported two around the Horn in 1849.

Roach, last alcalde of Monterey and its first mayor (1851) built the house about 1849 or 1850. It was

acquired by Samuel Gordon in 1871. It is privately owned.

Walking toward Jefferson street, you will read on a Monterey History and Art Assn. marker that you are in front of Casa de la Torre, an attractive adobe home set in the midst of a charming old-fashioned garden.

According to records it was built by Francisco Pino on "La Calle del Oeste," now Jefferson street on land assessed at \$7.50. The adobe, privately owned, is not open to the public.