

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

January 21, 1965

Spanish Records

In Volume A, Page I, Solares de Monterey, Monterey County Records, are probably the first records of the business of the Common Council for the City of Monterey. Of course, the document is written in long hand entirely in Spanish and dated the seventh of February, 1835.

On that date the town council, "united in this common session, proposed by (or through) the First Judge David E. Spence that it buy a book in which to record the grants of town lots that this town council may make and to register all of the grants since the beginning of this garrison until the date when no documents exist in the archives of the town council, that where it is evidence the property of each is accredited to each one of the owners ... it is indispensable that each one of the proprietors make evident the time and true origin of when came his use (or title). And having heard, moreover, reasons so forcible that they approved the purchase of this book because not to have another in folio is more appropriate ..."

The record was signed by Spence and Francisco Del Castillo Negrete.

Another record of the year 1833, translated from Spanish records and now in the Monterey County records, concerns the family of Don Jose Joaquin de la Torre, many of whose descendants still reside here.

"His Excellency the Governor: I, Don Joaquin de la Torre, a Cadet in the Cavalry Company of this Imperial Presidio of Monterey, come before your Excellency and with all due respect and subjection requisite show that I have served the Nation 21 years and some months in the capacities of a distinguished Cadet and corporal; and having a large family consisting of a wife and seven male children, the eldest being 16 years of age and the youngest (as yet) less than 2 (years) and being the owner of a certain number of cattle and horses as the only means of support for this numerous family, the supplies to them furnished on account of his salary being inadequate, I find myself under the necessity of appealing by means of this petition to your well known kindness that you may in your goodness of heart to me grant as my property for me and my successors the

place (site) that your Excellency (made) the concession of lending me in the interim for the purpose of keeping (thereon) the said cattle; which place is the "Balsas del Potrero Moro Cojo" for raising said cattle and farming the same and to build houses and fences (thereon) in order that in this manner there may remain something for my family wherewith they can supply their wants. For finding myself severely attacked with paralysis on my left side, I believe my life will not be long (in this world) but should God spare it for many years, I wish to have something with which to help my family.

"Your excellency can make myself and family happy with it, and therefore I ask of and appeal to you that my request may be granted, which I shall regard as a favor and be thankful therefore."

Don Jose soon received the answer to his prayers and his request from Don Pablo Vicente de Sola, colonel of provincial militias, military and civil governor of this new California and inspector of its troops:

"In consideration of the applicant's services and of his said family he has consisting of his wife and seven male children, I do grant unto him in the name of his Imperial Majesty, the favor he asks in his petition for himself and his successors, that is the "Bolsas del Potrero y Moro Cojo; that he may raise cattle, farm products, erect buildings and make such other improvements thereon as he may need for the support of his said family.

"It was so provided and ordered by said (Governor) at the Presidio of Monterey on the 22nd day of (the month) of June, in the year Eighteen Hundred and Twenty-Two, (Signed) Pablo Vizente de Sola."