

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Books of the Old West**

George C. Yount and his "Chronicles of the West," a book designed and printed by Lawton and Alfred Kennedy in San Francisco, has been procured recently for the memorial library in Casa Serrano by the History and Art Association.

The book is edited by Charles L. Camp, and gives extracts from Yount's memoirs and from the Orange Clark "narrative," He reached the borders of present day California twice before 1828.

George Yount never learned to read or write. Everything he told in his long narrative was the product of a phenomenal memory.

The full story lately brought to light, and acquired by the Huntington Library, forms the basis of the present account and is important as a record of the activities in frontier Missouri; the Santa Fe trade and trapper in the Southwest in the 1820's; the wanderings of the Patties, George Nidever, and other figures in the early trapping and fur trade days along the California coast; Indian wars along the Russian River and in Napa and Lake counties and the early American history and settlement of California.

His block house and adobe fort were set up on the remote frontier three years before Sutter's establishment in the Sacramento Valley. The local Indians became his friends and assisted in skirmishes with the wilder tribes.

In later years Yount's Napa County farm became a welcoming center for many of the early overland emigrants including members of the Donner party.

His hospitality was unstinting. His farm was one of the first in the region to boast of extensive vineyards, fruit orchards and grain. It witnessed the beginning of agriculture as it is today in California.

Charles L. Camp's interest in George Yount goes back forty-three years. The jacket cover informs the reader that Camp regards Yount as one of the "quiet heroes" of the frontier. With the newly found manuscript. Camp's lone study comes to fulfillment and George Yount emerges as one of the great pioneers of the Southwest.

The book contains 300 pages, illustrated, in 7x10 ½ inch format and is priced at \$20. The Old West Publishing Company are the publishers in Denver, Colorado.