

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

April 25, 1967

Invitation to a Monterey Ball

The first printed invitation to a ball reads as follows:
"Jose Figueroa, Jose Antonio Carillo, Joaquin Ortego and the licentiate, Rafael Gomez, request your attendance at 8 o'clock this evening at a ball that will be given at the house of the first named to congratulate the director of the colonization and his estimable fellow travelers, the election of deputies for the territory and the country upon its enjoyment of union and peace.

"(Signed) Mariano Bonnilla. Monterey, Nov. 1, 1834.

William Heath Davis who came to Monterey in 1831 and who in 1889 wrote a book entitled "Sixty Years in California," says:

"My first visit to California was in 1831. Among the residents in Monterey the most prominent foreigners were: David Spence, Capt. J.B.R. Cooper, Nathan Spear, James Watson, George Kinlock and W.E.P. Hartnell. The first three names were in the merchandising business. Kinlock was a ship and house carpenter, Hartnell was an instructor in the employ of the Mexican government in the Department of California, of which Monterey was the capital.

"The people lived in adobe houses and the houses had tile roofs; they were comfortable and roomy, warm in winter and cool in summer. Their furniture was generally plain, mostly imported from Boston in the ships that came to the coast to trade.

"Generally the houses had floors, but without carpets in the early days. The women were exceedingly clean and neat in their houses and personal appearance and in all their domestic arrangements. One of the peculiarities was the excellence of their beds and bedding, which were often elegant in their appearance, highly and tastefully ornamented, the coverlets and pillow cases being sometimes satin and trimmed with beautiful and costly lace. The women were plainly and becomingly attired. Many of them played the guitar skillfully.

"In 1842, including the military, the white population numbered about 1,000. The white people were known as 'gente de razon' or people of intelligence, to distinguish them from the Indian who was considered on the level with the brute. The 'whites' included the families of Spanish and Mexicans and foreigners. Of the Spanish-Californians, meaning the California

descendants of Spanish and Mexican blood, there were several distinct classes. The upper class consisted of those who were or had been in the official stations, either military or civil. There were not many of those families; they were intermarried among themselves and were aristocratic in their feelings."