

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

May 23, 1968

### **A Beautiful Favorita**

The Herald picture of the next La Favorita" Alex Robison, will no doubt bring to many minds, as it did mine, the days when Edna Ingram Wright was a member of the Monday Afternoon Club and perhaps will also remind many others about her early history when she was a young woman lately arrived from her home down the coast to live in Monterey. Her sister was post mistress of Monterey at the time and gave Edna a job as postal clerk.

In the old days, it was the custom in Monterey to have a big Fourth of July celebration and the most beautiful young girl in Monterey was selected to ride on the float to represent the Goddess of Liberty. Historical records of that time state that Edna Ingram was the most beautiful Goddess that had ever won the honor.

Young Benj Wright, who was with the Del Monte Hotel at that time, considered himself very fortunate to win this beautiful girl for his bride. In later years he was elected mayor of Monterey, and as long as this fact was mentioned the story of his beautiful bride should go along with it.

There is no doubt that this year's lovely La Favorita has inherited some of her late grandmother's beauty.

This historical fact was contributed to the Peninsula Diary by Mrs. Ney Otis of Monterey.

The first edition of the Californian was issued in Monterey on August 15, 1846, a month and a week after the raising of the Stars and Stripes over the Custom House. A facsimile reproduction of this first newspaper printed in California was sponsored by the California Newspaper Publishers Association, when that organization held the Newspaper Centennial at Monterey, August 15, 1946.

It is believed the newspaper was printed in the Cuartel, a government building and barracks that once stood on Munras avenue in the general area of the plaza on Tyler street. Part of that first issue was printed in Spanish and part in English. The subscription price was \$5.00 per year.

W.E.P. Hartnell has an advertisement in this first issue which reads: "Notice: The subscriber offers his services to the public as a general translator of all languages

spoken and written in California. Office at his house in Monterey. Signed W.E.P. Hartnell." The Hartnell home was an adobe structure standing where the Monterey Hospital now is.

In the naval news of 1846, the Californian reporter writes: "The U.S. sloop of war Levant, Capt. Page with Commodore Sloat on board, sailed for the United States, on the 21st of July. The U.S. sloop of war Cyane, Capt. Dupont, with Capt. Fremont, Capt. Ford and Capt. Swift, with their companions on board, sailed on the 21st of July, for Pt. San Pedro, where they will land their forces to attack the combined party of the Governor and General Castro, which was supposed to be at the pueblo.

Commodore Stockton, with the frigate Congress, sailed on the 26th of July, with the intention of taking such a position as to place Castro between himself and Fremont. The U.S. sloop of war Portsmouth is still in the Bay of San Francisco, and the frigate Savannah here in Monterey."

In No. 11 of Volume 1, the editors of the Californian give a detailed account of the reception to Commodore Robert F. Stockton, Commander and governor-general of the California, on October 5, 1846, at Yerba Buena (San Francisco). The citizens gathered at Portsmouth Square to hear the introductory address by William H. Russell, orator of the day, and applauded when Commodore Stockton declared in reply:

"I would, sir, he recant to the noblest feeling of a sailor's heart if I were not in the frankest and most explicit manner to acknowledge my indebtedness for so great an honor and kindness." Then in the flowery speech of his day, Stockton went on to "Contrast the conduct of the enemy" with that of his men on the occasion when they marched to the Camp of the Mesa, above San Pedro, where Governor Pico and General Castro awaited "with seven pieces of artillery and 500 men, well mounted and armed."