

When San Jose Was Young

A Series of Interesting Articles of An Historical Nature Prepared Especially for The News by a Well Known Author and Journalist.

NO. 66 FOREIGNERS IN THE VALLEY

The first American came to California from Boston on a trading ship in 1875. The Spaniards said that he was of the "Boston Nation." In California not long an American was known as a "Boston man." The name of this American was Joseph O'Carne. Like so many Americans, he was born in Ireland, but his parents lived in Boston.

The first American settler landed in California at Monterey, March 11, 1816. His name was Thomas W. Doak. He was really born in Boston. He married Maria, daughter of Jose Maria de Castro, of the Las Animas rancho. They settled near Gilroy. Doak was the the first American settler in the valley. He took possession of the ranch afterwards the ranch of Henry Miller at Bloomfield.

In 1820 there were thirteen foreigners in California. Three were Americans, two Scotchmen, one a Russian, one Portuguese, three negroes.

The first English speaking person in the Santa Clara Valley was John Cameron Gilroy. Sick with scurvy, he was put ashore from an English ship in Monterey. He was taken by Mrs. Maria Teodora Peralta, wife of Jose Apolinaria Bernal, to her father's ranch at Antonio, Alameda County. So quickly did the boy recover his health that he decided to remain in California, and in 1819 he applied for permission to live here. He married Maria Clara Ortega of the San Isidro rancho, the granddaughter of the Pathfinder Ortega. Her father, Ignacio, gave him one sitio of San Isidro. He was baptized in the Mission of San Carlos. The Gilroys were married in the church at San Juan Bautista.

The Spanish Californians intermarried with foreigners, but they cared little to have settlers settle in the state. They passed laws to make this difficult. Foreigners were compelled to bring passports. They were allowed neither to form settlements here nor on the islands.

In 1828, after the Spanish flag was changed to the Mexican, only those baptized in the Catholic church and desirous of becoming Mexican citizens were allowed to acquire land. This few ever did. When foreigners, especially Americans, came to this country they displayed such arrogance that the Californians feared them, though they received all strangers with hos-

pitality. Even trappers and explorers were suspected. Captain John C. Fremont and his armed men were greatly dreaded. It was commonly, and with good reason, rumored that men in power at Washington looked forward to the day when the American flag should wave from coast to coast. In 1840 Governor Alvarado demanded the arrest of all foreigners. Fifty or sixty Americans under Castro were sent to San Blas. The Mexican government disowned this act, and the Americans were returned to California.

In 1842, the late John Parrott, United States consul at Mazatlan, afterwards one of the richest men in San Francisco, was the cause of a very unwise naval exploit which almost brought a war with Mexico.

Mr. Parrott wrote Commodore Thomas Catesby Jones that England was to buy California for \$7,000,000 and that war was imminent. Parrott told the Commodore to hurry to Monterey.

Jones set sail from Lima, September 3, 1842. He arrived at Monterey with two vessels. They anchored under the guns of the castillo. Then the Commodore sent Captain Armstrong ashore with a flag of truce to demand the surrender of the fort to the United States, "To avoid sacrifice of human life and the horrors of war." Alvarado, to whom the demand was presented, was given till 9 o'clock to consider the proposal. The Governor saw that resistance was useless, and he signed articles of capitulation.

Commodore Jones landed 150 men under Commander Stribling. With music and flying colors the garrison marched out of the fort. They surrendered arms at government house.

The American troops took possession of the castillo, and for the first time in California raised the Stars and Stripes. The frigate and the sloop fired salutes. Guns of the fort replied.

Soon Commodore Jones learned that Mr. Parrott was mistaken. The conquest of Mexico had not begun. The United States and Mexico were still friendly, and England had not bought California. Commodore Jones returned the flag to Governor Alvarado, apologized, saluted the Mexican flag and sailed away. His act was disavowed by his own government. He was ordered home for trial, but he was exonerated by the Secretary of the Navy.