

One of the first land grants in California--Rancho San Pedro--will be the scene of special landmarking ceremonies on Wednesday, April 25. A plaque commemorating the grant in 1784, the building of the Dominguez adobe ranch house in 1826, and the Battle of Dominguez Ranch fought in 1846, has been prepared by the Historical Landmarks Committee of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in cooperation with Californiana Parlor #247 of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, and will be presented by the Grand President of the Native Daughters to the Claretian Seminary which occupied the restored buildings. The history of this Rancho reveals a cross section of life and death in the whole period of Spanish and Mexican control of California.

Activities of this nature are valuable in presenting to citizen and visitor the fascinating historical background of our modern state. Eastern states have been developing systematic landmarking programs for many years. The important centennial anniversaries from 1945 to 1950 will give California an opportunity for outstanding achievements in popularizing state history.

Assembly Bill 448, introduced by Assemblyman Lorne Middough, seeks to give the State Historical Association authority and funds to undertake a study in keeping with this opportunity--to "investigate and report concerning those significant historical events which lend themselves to commemoration by marking of sites ... accessible to the public, classifying such sites as of State, national, or local interest ...". This measure when passed will be a step in the right direction. In cooperation with the State Division of Parks and by means of highway markers, California can be made a great outdoor museum whereby resident and tourist alike may be helped to enjoy this great state's rich heritage of historical lore and natural wonders.



### LET'S PREPARE TO CELEBRATE

The attack on Pearl Harbor interrupted a series of historical celebrations commemorating important events in the history of our country. Already the Centennial of Texas, the Quarto-Centennial of the Coronado Expedition, the Sesqui-Centennial of the adoption of the United States Constitution had all been properly observed, bringing reminders of notable milestones in the growth of our nation.

California's history is full of noteworthy events. The four-hundredth anniversary in 1942 of the appearance of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, the first white man upon these shores, was being anticipated when the war broke out. Except for an anniversary dinner meeting arranged by the State Historical Association in Los Angeles in October, 1942, Cabrillo was practically forgotten in the rush to keep the Japs from our shores in that eventful year.

Now the tide has turned. It is the part of wisdom to look ahead. The war is not over, but we are assured that the end is now in sight. Its close will inevitably release emotions and desires long inhibited. People will want to forget war, to enjoy a freedom that by necessity has been curtailed; among other things, people will travel. California has long been a mecca for tourists, and the flood of travelers long pent up can flow again toward the Golden West.

Fortunately the years immediately ahead will yield excellent opportunities for publicizing and sharing California's fascinating history. Beginning with this year (1945) and extending through 1950 is a series of centennial anniversaries most worthy of celebration. Let us list some of them:



On February 22, 1845, the last Mexican governor of California duly appointed by the president of Mexico was ejected from California by a revolution staged by the native Californians. Manuel Micheltorena was forced to give way to Pio Pico and Jose Castro. The rule of the Mexican politician was thus replaced by home rule of the natives.

Early in 1846, a year known to every schoolboy, Fremont's defiance of Castro led to the revolt of the settlers, the raising of the Bear Flag of the "California Republic" at Sonoma on June 14, followed by the raising of the Stars and Stripes by Commodore Sloat at Monterey on July 7; and by Stockton elsewhere soon afterward. The Flores revolt in September ushered in a series of events meriting celebration locally; the most important of these was the arrival of General Stephen W. Kearny in December, to be followed by the reconquest.

The year 1847 marks the recovery of lost ground for the United States forces; on January 8 was won the Battle of San Gabriel River; the Battle of La Mesa next day opened the way to Los Angeles, and the flag once again waved over that Pueblo on January 10. Three days later, January 13, was signed the Treaty of Cahuenga whereby hostilities were brought to an end between the defending Californians and the United States forces.

Of momentous importance was the year 1848. On February second at the village of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed the Treaty of Peace by which Mexico ceded to the United States a vast area including California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, a part of Colorado and all claims to Texas. California had become American in title. But other forces already at work were to render California truly American in fact. On January 24, nine days before the Treaty,



James Wilson Marshall had discovered gold on the American River. For the rest of the year Californians rushed to the mines and little by little the news encircled the globe.

Eighteen forty-nine was the year of the great Gold Rush, such a climax in the annals of California that to enumerate the events for anniversary celebrations is too big a task to attempt here. In February the gold seekers began to arrive by vessel from the East, and a new California began to develop. In June the Governor issued a call for a convention to create a constitution and in September the delegates met at Monterey. On November 13 the people ratified the constitution; in December the new state began to operate and its political and civil institutions were created. When the legislature adjourned April 22, 1850, machinery had been set up for the running of state, county, and city governments.

The year 1850 brought the great fight in Congress with the Compromise of 1850 and the act of September 9 whereby California was admitted to the Union with a free-state constitution.

Citizens of California will want to see that these anniversaries are appropriately observed. A special responsibility rests on those interested in promoting the cause of local history. Let us see that the real history is not crowded to one side by the mere desire to celebrate. Facts must be gathered, evaluated, and made available to the public. The facts of California history are fully as romantic as any fictitious array of alleged happenings could be.

Let us prepare now to commemorate the really important events of a century ago. Let us learn history and make use of the opportunity to tell it to others.