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ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON HOUSE - MONTEREY COUNTY

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ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON HOUSE

Monterey is historically one of the most interesting cities in California and much of its charm lies in its romantic atmosphere. It was first discovered and claimed for the Spanish Crown by Vizcaíno in 1602 but it was not until 1770 that Portolá rediscovered the harbor and Junipero Serra founded the settlement that was to be the first capital of California. These two men were the first of many illustrious persons whose names are intimately connected with this unique city. Soldiers, statesmen, artists and men of literature have all contributed to the story of Monterey, and in no other California city do we have so many landmarks to recall the famous men in our state's history.

One of the most unusual of these landmarks is known as the Stevenson House. Here Robert Louis Stevenson lived during October, November, and December in 1879. It is unusual for several reasons; for the short period of Stevenson's stay in the house, the fact that he was not an American author, and the fact that even the location of his room, or rooms, is not known. Despite this slight connection with the famous author, this house is second only to the birthplace of Shakspere at Stratford-on-Avon in the number of literary pilgrims who visit it.

Americans seem to have adopted Stevenson for their own, and indeed why not? Much of his work was published in this country and his popularity was universal. He spent so much of his life outside the boundaries of his birthplace, Scotland, that he was a cosmopolitan in the true sense of the word - even the natives of Samoa adopted him and gave him the rank of a "chief." It is because this house is the only remaining tangible link we have on the west coast with this great author, that lovers of "Stevensonia" find such interest in the Stevenson House.

One cannot exaggerate the beauty of Monterey, located at the southern side of the immense bay which is twenty-two miles wide at its mouth. Behind the city rise high mountains covered with oaks and pines. San Francisco is ninety miles north by sea and about one hundred and twenty-five by rail or highway. The estates in the surrounding vicinity are among the most beautiful in the world. No part of the Riviera is as picturesque in scenery and rugged coast line, nor water a deeper blue, than is found along the Seventeen-Mile drive from Monterey to Carmel. It is little wonder that this vicinity held Stevenson. He writes his friend, Sidney Colvin from Monterey, October 1879:[1] "Monterey is a place

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1. Sidney Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 173. (1907)

where there is no summer or winter, and pines and sand and distant hills and a bay all filled with real water from the Pacific."

Monterey held premier place in California as it was capital under Spain, Mexico and the United States. A period of quiet rested on the once proud city for the next forty years, and it was during this time that Stevenson made his visit. Spanish was the language most frequently heard, and many of the easy customs of early California prevailed. The majority of the buildings were those built of adobe, or chalk rock before the annexation by the United States. The population was sadly diminished and the importance of the Bay of Monterey gave way to the harbor of San Francisco. So much nearer to the gold fields, San Francisco took the men and ships from Monterey. Stevenson writes: "The population of Monterey is about that of a dissenting chapel on a wet Sunday in a strong church neighbourhood. They are mostly Mexican and Indian - mixed."[2]

Stevenson's Monterey, or as he names it, "The Old Pacific Capital" was a far cry from the prosperous city of today, with world-known hotels, golf courses, polo fields and villas; the bay filled with ships, a center of the fishing

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2. Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 173. (1907)

industry. The natural beauty has not been impaired by this new prosperity, the pines on the hillsides remain to enhance the beauty of the homes they harbor. The sea is just as blue and the booming of the surf still brings delight to us as it did to Stevenson. The Chamber of Commerce has preserved and marked many of the historic spots; private individuals have protected others. More than fifty landmarks that were familiar to Stevenson, enjoy this care and make us remember romantic old Monterey.

The reason for Stevenson's visit to Monterey lies in the story of his romance with the lady who afterwards became his wife, Mrs. Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne. Robert Louis Stevenson together with a small group of artists, was accustomed to spend some time at the village of Gretz, France. This village had been suggested to Mrs. Osbourne, whose young son had recently died, as a place of solitude and quiet. The meeting of Stevenson and Fanny Osbourne was quite accidental. Her daughter describes it:[3]

> One night we were at dinner; though the lamps were lit, it was not yet dark. We had finished our meal, and were talking idly and pleasantly over our coffee. Happening to glance at my mother, I saw that she was looking toward the window with an odd, intent

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3. Mrs. Isobel Field, <u>This life I've loved</u>, 104.

> gaze. It was not exactly a window, but a half door, and standing in the opening, the lights from the hanging lamps showing up his figure like a portrait painted against a black background, stood a young man, slender, dark, with a high color and yellow hair worn rather long. He was leaning forward staring, with a sort of surprised admiration, at Fanny Osbourne. Years afterwards, he told me he had fallen in love with her then and there.

Mrs. Osbourne's marriage had been unfortunate, and her residence abroad was occasioned by the domestic rift. This fact no doubt enhanced Stevenson's interest. He assumed a knightly attitude toward the attractive lady. This continued after she had moved back to Paris from Gretz, and was maintained throughout the remainder of her stay abroad. It was destined to determine and transform the rest of his life. Mrs. Osbourne left Paris in the autumn of 1878. Mrs. Field, her daughter, declares: "I don't know why my mother decided to return to California; she never told me, but suddenly we were leaving." Undoubtedly Mrs. Osbourne had determined on a divorce, for she began proceedings immediately upon her return.

Nearly a year after Fanny Osbourne arrived in California she cabled Stevenson of her ill health. Chivalrous Stevenson made haste to be at her side. He overruled the objections of his parents, and unknown to his friends, he left England with very little money for California at the beginning of August 1879. A detailed account of the

journey is recorded in his book, An Amateur Emigrant. He was not well, and the conditions to which he was subjected as a steerage passenger and then upon an "emigrant train" were a further strain on his weakened body. He himself, knew best that this move on his part seemed foolish knight-errantry, for he describes himself being at this time a Don Quixote "tilting at windmills."

Stevenson's Across the Plains carefully details the arduous trip across the United States on this slow, primitive train. Rather than stay in the close, crowded car he rode most of the time on the top of the coach. His spirits and health were depressed by the long, flat, bleak plains; it was only after he had reached the summit of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and began the descent into the Sacramento Valley that his body and soul began to revive with the green freshness of his surroundings. He stopped in San Francisco only long enough to get a train for Monterey where Mrs. Osbourne was staying with her children and sister. Stevenson's first stay at Monterey was brief as he felt that a sojourn high in the mountains would enable him to recover his health.

He went into the Santa Lucia Mountains, about eighteen miles from Monterey and determined to camp out of doors. This he did for four days, each day growing weaker so that at last he could only find strength enough to get

water for his horse. He writes to Sidney Colvin in September 1879:[4]

> Here is another curious start in my life. I am living at an Angora goat-ranche, in the Coast Line Mountains.... I was camping out, but got so sick that the two rancheros took me in and tended me. One is an old bear hunter, seventy-two years old, and a captain from the Mexican War; the other a pilgrim, and one who was out with the bear flag and under Fremont when California was taken by the States. They are both true frontiersmen, and most kind and pleasant. Captain Smith, the bear hunter, is my physician, and I obey him like an oracle.

Stevenson remained at the ranch for three weeks, his health steadily improving. The rancher's wife was away, so to partially repay his host for his kindness he acted as teacher for the children, and worked on his notes of the voyage. His funds were running very low, causing him much anxiety and desire for a means of livelihood. Had he but known it, there were funds sent by his father awaiting him at a New York bank. His feeling can be best understood from a letter to Edmond Gosse: "It was an odd, miserable piece of my life; and according to all rule, it should have been my death; but after a while my spirit got up again in a divine frenzy, and has since kicked and spurred my vile body forward with great emphasis and success."[5]

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4. Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 170. (1907)
5. Ibid., 175.

To illustrate his need of money, in this same month he writes to W. E. Henley from Monterey:[6]

> Herewith The Pavilion on the Links; grand carpentry story in nine chapters, and I should hesitate to say how many tableaux. Where is it to go? God knows. It is the dibbs that are wanted. It is not bad, though I say it; carpentry, of course, but not bad at that; and who else can carpenter in England, now that Wilkie Collins is played out? It might be broken for magazine purposes at the end of Chapter IV. I send it to you, as I dare say Payn may help, if all else fails. Dibbs and speed are my mottoes.
>
> Do acknowledge The Pavilion by return. I shall be so nervous till I hear, as of course I have no copy except of one or two places where the vein would not run. God prosper it, poor Pavilion! May it bring me money for myself and my sick one, who may need it, I do not know how soon....

Stevenson came directly to Monterey from the ranch of Captain Smith and established himself in the house that now bears his name. At this time the property belonged to Dr. Heintz, a Frenchman.[7] This house, properly speaking, is the larger of two adjoining houses at 530 Houston Street, between Pearl and Webster streets. The building was known as the "French Hotel." The smaller house was the home of

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6. Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 176. (1907)
7. Katherine D. Osbourne, Robert Louis Stevenson in California, 17.

Doña Manuela Girardin, whose daughter was the wife of Dr. Heintz. The building is frequently referred to as an adobe, in fact it is built of chalk rock which is plentiful in the vicinity, and is covered with limestone mortar.

The room occupied by Stevenson is open to question, and though not important, it makes a subject for debate. Katherine Durham Osbourne says that "...upstairs, in the ell...he found two airy rooms with five windows opening on a balcony. The rooms were barely furnished, but it seems that there was even more furniture than Stevenson wanted; for he did not occupy the bed, but slept on the floor in camp blankets."[8]

But Mrs. Osbourne may be confused, for Stevenson wrote to W. E. Henley in October 1879: "...to my great airy rooms with five windows opening on a balcony; I sleep on the floor in my camp blankets; you instal yourself abed..."[9] Here Stevenson is picturing an imaginary visit by his friend, Mr. Henley. He certainly never would have slept on a floor by habit; Stevenson had to guard his health and took advantage of every moment that he could lie down and comfortably, in bed! His best work was done in bed because of frequent illness. Because he was carefully guarding the small remains

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8. Katherine D. Osbourne, Robert Louis Stevenson in California, 17.
9. Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 178. (1907)

of his capital he, who was willing to suffer the crowded discomforts of an "emigrant train," would scarcely demand two rooms when economy was so necessary. Again, unless there has been a radical change in the architecture of the building, of which no trace is found, there are no two rooms answering this description. It has been claimed that the script of the letter was misread or altered, the purpose of "altering" supposedly was to give Stevenson a more grandiose background. The script may have been misread for Stevenson was a scrupulously correct biographer. If it were altered to "improve" his condition at this time, it would be indeed futile for most of his letters speak his need for money at Monterey. Whatever room he occupied we may be quite sure that he spent most of his time at Señora Bonafascio's while Fanny Osbourne made that her home in Monterey. One of the most impressionable observers is a growing child, and Fanny Osbourne's son, Lloyd, was with her in Monterey. He later wrote "I was old enough to appreciate how poor he was, and it tore at my boyish heart that he should take his meals at a grubby little restaurant with men in their shirt-sleeves, and have so bare and miserable a room in the old adobe house on the hill."[10]

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10. Lloyd Osbourne, An intimate portrait of R.L.S., 19.

The Osbournes were in Monterey only the first month of Stevenson's stay, but in that single month many things happened to affect their lives. Mrs. Osbourne and her husband definitely decided that they must be divorced, and Mrs. Osbourne accepted Stevenson's proposal of marriage. This was indeed a brave decision on the part of Mrs. Osbourne and Stevenson, for she had no money of her own, and Stevenson believed himself cast off by his family. His writings brought in very little, and that was uncertain. It was only the great faith that he had in himself, and that Fanny Osbourne had in him that made such a decision possible.

When the Osbournes left Monterey, it was necessary for Stevenson to find people and diversions to relieve the strain of writing. He made one fast friend, Jules Simoneau, and he made many acquaintances. He became familiar with the Genoese and Chinese fishermen whose occupation was sending dried fish to China. He also made friends with the fast disappearing Mexican-Californians, who would gallop down the sand-covered streets as fast as their horses could go, then bring them to a stop so abruptly that it seemed impossible to the amazed English writer. Those colorful Californians, with their silver-mounted saddles, bridles and spurs and gayly colored costumes! A strange town for Stevenson, this <u>Old Pacific Capital</u>, as he wrote of it.

Huge whale jaws framed many a garden gate and the

vertebrae of these animals served for paving the walks. There were only three streets, the principal one being Alvarado, named for Cortez' lieutenant. Most of the houses dated from the time that Monterey was first made the capital of Upper California, and a few date back to the founding of the Mission. The walls of these houses were three to four feet thick, cool in summer, warm and compact in inclement weather. Many of them like the house Stevenson lived in, were two-storied.

His favorite pastime was walking, and indeed he could hardly have found a location of more diversified scenery. The curve of the wide, White beach stretches for miles along Monterey Bay as far as Santa Cruz where the mountains behind that city are just visible from Monterey. Toward the Pacific Ocean on the west, there are rocky cliffs below the pine forests that he could explore. Behind the cities, the forests of pine and oak set his senses on edge; he strained his attention; he would walk listening like an Indian hunter; and that voice of the Pacific was a sort of disquieting company to him in his walk.[11] The sand hills and lagoons drew the explorer; here the sand is scarcely concealed by thick underbrush and stunted live oaks. From

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11. Robert Louis Stevenson, The old Pacific capital, 72.

this sort of scenery he wrote the description of Treasure Island; in just such a tangle of brush and trees he let "Jim Hawkins" find himself on leaving his mutinous shipmates whom he had followed ashore.

The Carmel Mission was then a beautiful ruin with no roof - "sea breezes and sea fogs, and the alternation of the rain and sunshine, daily widening the breaches and casting crochets from the wall."[12] One day a year the padre from Monterey came to hold mass in the little sacristy, the only roofed portion then, and the pitiful remnants of Indians would gather for devotion. Stevenson was fortunate in being present on this occasion, he writes:[13]

> An Indian, stone blind and about eighty years of age, conducts the singing; other Indians compose the choir; yet they have the Gregorian music at their finger ends, and pronounce the Latin so correctly that I could follow their meaning as they sang...I have never seen faces more vividly lit up with joy than the faces of these Indian singers.

One of the highlights of Stevenson's sojourn in Monterey was his friendship with Jules Simoneau, the restaurant keeper. Simoneau was able to furnish the author with an excellent meal and intelligent conversation. In later

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12. Robert Louis Stevenson, The old Pacific capital, 84.
13. Ibid.

years he was greatly appreciated by the artists who congregated in Monterey, but it was Stevenson who first discovered the talents of the French philosopher. Stevenson never forgot his friend; their correspondence continued until the end of Stevenson's life, and the author sent Simoneau a suitably inscribed first edition of each of his works as they came from the press. The author's name being written in every case, he sends: Memories and Portraits, "To my kind friend Simoneau"; Fleeming Jenkin, "To his good friend Simoneau"; The Merry Men, "For old lang syne"; Child's Garden of Verses, "To my good old Simoneau"; Underwoods, "If there ever was a man who was a good man to me it was Simoneau"; The strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, "But the case of Robert Louis Stevenson and Jules Simoneau - if the one forgot the other - would be stranger still." Many others are similarly inscribed to attest their friendship. The collection has been given to the city of Monterey.

In letters to friends in England Stevenson describes Simoneau as a "most pleasant old boy, with whom I discuss the universe and play chess." Simoneau was fifty-eight years old at the time and had once been a wealthy Nantais tradesman, according to a letter to Sidney Colvin. In another letter he mentions the "little whitewashed back-room...with François the baker, perhaps an Italian fisherman, perhaps Augustin Dutra, and Simoneau himself. Simoneau,

François, and I are the three sure cards; the others mere waifs."[14]

Mrs. Nellie Van de Grift Sanchez, Mrs. Stevenson's sister gives a story strongly illustrative of the character of Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson, that concerned François.[15] The scene is a very smart watering place, years later, in France.

> A voice cried: 'I will see my Louis!' Going out to see what the trouble was, Louis found four French fishermen in a char-a-bancs - all in peasant blouses. The major-domo of the fashionable hotel was trying to keep them out, but when Louis appeared he called out their names joyfully and they all cried: 'Mon cher Louis!' After each had embraced him, he asked them up to his rooms, and, despite the ill-concealed scorn of the waiter, ordered up a grand dinner for them. They were the French fishermen he had known at Monterey, California, and one may be sure that they met with as cordial a welcome from his wife as from himself. I know that in one of her letters she urges him not to forget to write to François, the baker, at Monterey, saying: 'It seems to me much more necessary to write some word to him than to...your friends who know you and will not be disappointed, either in a pleasure or in humanity, as this poor baker will be. Indeed you must write and say something to him.'

Jules Simoneau and his wife were both devoted to Stevenson and proved their friendship in many ways. Stevenson

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14. Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 178. (1907)
15. Nellie Van de Grift, The life of Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson, 321.

wrote to Sidney Colvin "I take one of my meals in a little French restaurant; for the other two I sponge." There was no need for the author to "sponge" with the Simoneaus; they were always delighted with his company. One time Simoneau missed Stevenson from the restaurant for several days. Alarmed, he went to his room and found the author ill. Simoneau and his wife nursed Stevenson, brought him his meals, and knowing how short he was of money, permitted him to draw upon what little he, Simoneau, possessed. This kindness was reciprocated in later years by Mrs. Stevenson. When Simoneau lost his restaurant and was no longer able to work, she provided him with a comfortable living. She also paid his funeral expenses and erected a marker at the grave for him and his wife.

The story of Stevenson's life at Monterey reveals the taut condition of his nerves, the worry about financial difficulties, the need of encouragement from his friends, and the uncertainty of life ahead. Of his work he was always confident, but anxious lest it should not be up to his standard. Several recorded incidents illustrate extreme methods by which the tension was relieved, at great personal risk. Of one occasion he says:[16]

> I have an interest of my own in these forest fires, for I came so near

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16. Stevenson, <u>The old Pacific capital</u>, 75.

to lynching on one occasion, that a braver man might have retained a thrill from the experience. I wished to be certain whether it was the moss, that quaint funeral ornament of California forests, which blazed up so rapidly when the flame first touched the tree. I suppose I must have been under the influence of Satan; for instead of plucking off a piece for my experiment, what should I do but walk up to a great pine tree in a portion of the wood which had escaped so much of the scorching, strike a match, and apply the flame gingerly to one of the tassels. The tree went off simply like a rocket; in three seconds it was a roaring pillar of fire. Close by I could hear the shouts of those who were at work combating the original conflagration. I could see the waggon that had brought them tied to a live oak in a piece of open; I could even catch the flash of an axe as it swung up through the underwood into the sunlight. Had anyone observed the result of my experiment my neck was literally not worth a pinch of snuff; after a few minutes of passionate expostulation I should have been run up to a convenient bough.

'To die for faction is a common
evil
But to be hanged for nonsense is
the devil.'

I have run repeatedly but never as I ran that day. At night I went out of town, and there was my own particular fire, quite distinct from the other, and burning as I thought with even greater vigor.

Stevenson promised his future wife he would say nothing of this escapade while he remained in Monterey. He does not exaggerate the seriousness of the offense in the

above account, and the "lynch law" was very popular at the time.

He recounts another adventure in a letter to his friend, W. E. Henley:[17]

> I had a near escape for my life with a revolver: I fired six charges, and the six bullets all remained in the barrel, which was choked from end to end, from muzzle to breech, with solid lead; it took a man three hours to drill them out. Another shot and I'd have gone to kingdom come.

He entered into the spirit of his fun loving friends with great jest. An amusing story concerning one of their pranks has to do with the parish priest, the Reverend Father A. Cassanova. The Father was approached by a wandering Swiss boy for assistance and the priest gave him twenty-five cents. The Father was spending all of his own small means and as much of the donations of his followers as possible to preserve the old Mission from ruin; then too, the demands on a parish priest are numerous so we cannot accuse the Father of penury. However, Stevenson and his friends decided they would make sport out of the occasion. They had placards made in San Jose, nicknaming the Father: "Dos Reales; deaux réaux; two bits; twenty-five cents; about a shilling; but in practice it is worth from ninepence to threepence;

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17. Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 177. (1907)

thus two glasses of beer would cost you two bits."[18]

In the dead of night Stevenson, Simoneau, and a third conspirator, an Italian fisherman, an old Garibaldian, placed the libelous sheets on every conspicuous post and corner. The faithful on their way to mass the next morning made quick work of destroying them; the nickname never was applied to his reverence, no harm was done, and Stevenson and his cronies had great fun from the jest that should have been saved for Halloween. The story is noteworthy as it shows he did find time for relaxation. This period of his life has many bright highlights.

Stevenson secured a job as reporter on the town newspaper, the Monterey Californian. His stepson, Lloyd Osbourne recounts the experience as he remembers it:

> Conceive my joy, therefore, when one day he burst in with news of a splendid job, and prolonged the suspense by making us all try to guess what it was; and my crushing disappointment when it turned out to be as a special reporter on the local paper at two dollars a week.

Two dollars a week may not have seemed much to young Osbourne, but it meant eight meals at Simoneau's for Stevenson.

Unfortunately we are unable to locate issues of the Monterey Californian wherein any of Stevenson's work

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18. Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 183. (1907)

appears. What we know of him as a reporter are from extracts of his letters as in one to Edmond Gosse, a friend in England:[19]

> I will send you herewith a Monterey paper where the works of R.L.S. appear, not only that, but all my life on studying the advertisements will become clear. I lodge with Doctor Heintz; take my meals with Simoneau; have been only two days ago shaved by the tonsorial artist, Michaels; drink daily at the Bohemia saloon; get my paper from Hadsell's; was stood a drink today by Albano Rodriguez; in short, there is scarce a person advertised in that paper but I know him, and I may add scarce a person in Monterey but is there advertised. The paper is the marrow of the place. Its bones - pooh, I am tired of writing so sillily.

He speaks of the paper half humorously to W. E. Henley:

> I am a man, and cannot live by bread alone, but must have guineas into the bargain. Burns, I believe, in my own mind, is one of my high-water marks; Meiklejohn [a publisher] flames me a letter about it, which is so complimentary that I must keep it or get it published in the Monterey Californian. Some of these days I shall send an exemplaire of that paper; it is huge.

Monterey was the only place that the famous author ever worked as a reporter, though it has been erroneously stated that he acted in this capacity for a San Francisco

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19. Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 182. (1907)

paper. True, he offered to write for a newspaper in that city, but the remuneration offered was so little that Stevenson refused.

Stevenson, although suffering from pleurisy, was unbelievably active during his residence with the people of Monterey, "a people full of deportment, solemnly courteous and doing all things with grace and decorum.[20] The days that he was not forced to remain in bed seem to have been overbrimming with interest for this new world. It was here he first learned to love the Pacific, near which he was to spend most of the remainder of his life; here circumstances made it possible for him to openly court the lady who was to become his wife - he exacted her promise during this time. He felt, for the first time, the need for money and the necessity to earn it strengthened the character of his writings. It is hard to believe that he found time for work in this hectic period, but he worked furiously, spurred on by his need.

The first book begun in Monterey was <u>An Amateur Emigrant</u> taken from his notes crossing the Atlantic on the steamship <u>Devonia</u>. To his friend, Edmond Gosse, he writes of it, "I do not know if it will be good, but I think it ought to sell in spite of the devil and the publishers; for

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20. Stevenson, <u>The old Pacific capital</u>.

it tells an odd enough experience, and one I think never told before."[21] To Sidney Colvin:

> It is not a monument of eloquence; indeed, I have sought to be prosaic in view of the nature of the subject; but I almost think it is interesting.... Here and there, I fancy, you will laugh as you read it, but it seems to me rather a clever book than anything else; the book of a man that is, who has paid a great deal of attention to contemporary life, and not through the newspapers.

Stevenson's father bought up all the printed copies of the first edition of this book as he thought it was scandalous for the som of a rich man to comporte himself in such a manner. It was the fourth book that Stevenson had written, and has been reprinted many times since the first edition that was "confiscated." It enjoys a wide sale among admirers of the author's work today.

He next began a lengthy novel which he must have felt not up to his "standard," for he soon gave it up. It was to have been called A Chapter in the Experiences of Arizona Breckonridge; or, A Vendetta of the West. Even when he first started it he wrote to Colvin that he expected nothing for it. No wonder he gave it up!

He wrote The Pavilion on the Links at Monterey.[22]

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21. Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 174, 182. (1907)
22. This monograph, footnote 6.

He also wrote the essays on Thoreau and the Japanese reformer, Yoshida Torajiro. Prince Otto, he planned, but it was not completed until much later, after he had returned to Europe. He made many contemporary notes on Monterey which he later assembled in the essay, Old Pacific Capital.

In his last published letter to Sidney Colvin from Monterey in December he makes suggestions for collecting and illustrating previous short stories in a single volume. In this letter the need for money stands out foremost, to quote:

> They say that republished stories do not sell. Well, that is why I am in a hurry to get this out. The public must be educated to buy mine or I shall never make a cent. I have heaps of short stories in view. The next volume will probably be called Stories or A Story Book, and contain quite a different lot: The Pavilion on the Links: Professor Rensselaer: The Dead Man's Letter: The Wild Man of the Woods: The Devil on Cramond Sands. They would all be carpentry stories; pretty grim for the most part; but of course, that's all in the air as yet.

Stevenson was working and planning for the future as he had never done before. A great deal was accomplished during this period of transition. He was indeed fortunate to have happened on such a beautiful place as Monterey and one that fitted with his feeling at this time. He writes to

W. E. Henley in the first month of his visit:[23]

> This is a lovely place which I am growing to love. The Pacific licks all other oceans out of hand; there is no place but the Pacific Coast to hear the eternal roaring surf. When I get to the top of the woods behind Monterey, I can hear the seas breaking all round over ten or twelve miles of coast from near Carmel on my left, out to Point Pinas in front, and away to the right along the sands of Monterey to Castroville and the mouth of the Salinas.

No doubt that Stevenson thought many times of Monterey in the years that followed. The city is frequently mentioned in his writings and his wife's sister, Nellie Van de Grift Sanchez, made her home there so we also find a physical tie. In his dedication of Underwoods to that lady, he speaks of: "Surf and great mountains and loud river bars..." memories of the "eternal surf" and beloved mountains of his Monterey.

The Stevenson House is today one of the best preserved of the quaint Spanish-Californian dwellings. With proper care it will be a lasting remembrance of Stevenson for many years to come. It was purchased by Mrs. William C. Van Antwerp, of Pebble Beach, and Mrs. Tobin Clark, of Burlingame in 1915. The renovated house is about forty-five

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23. Colvin, Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, 177. (1907)

feet in length and fifty-one in width, and is used as an antique store. The floors of this old building are of varnished wood. The ceilings are about sixteen feet high, and the rooms are long and narrow.

A plaque near the entrance bears this inscription:

In this House
In the year 1879 lived
Robert Louis Stevenson
Essayist, story-teller and poet
Whose contributions to literature
delighted the world.
. . . . . .
This memorial unveiled
Nov. 13, 1932, the 82nd
Anniversary of his birth
is presented by the
Literary Anniversary Club

Stevenson leaves us a beautiful word picture of Monterey in To my Name-child.[24] This was written at Samoa for his sister-in-law's son, the child of the now well known author, Nellie Van de Grift Sanchez:

Some day soon this rhyming volume, if you learn
with proper speed,
Little Louis Sanchez, will be given you to read.
Then shall you discover, that your name was
printed down
By the English printers, long before, in London
town.
In the great and busy city where the East and
West are met,
All the little letters did the English printer
set;
While you thought of nothing, and were still too
young to play,
Foreign people thought of you in places far away.

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24. Stevenson, Poems, ballads and plays, 134.

Ay, and while you slept, a baby, over all the
English lands
Other little children took the volume in their
hands;
Other children questioned, in their homes across
the seas:
Who was little Louis, won't you tell us, mother,
please?

Now that you have spelt your lesson, lay it down
and go and play,
Seeking shells and seaweed on the sands of Monterey,
Watching all the mighty whalebones, lying buried
by the breeze,
Tiny sandy-pipers, and the huge Pacific seas.
And remember in your playing, as the sea-fog rolls
to you,
Long ere you could read it, how I told you what to
do;
And that while you thought of no one, nearly half
the world away
Some one thought of Louis on the beach of Monterey!

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