

9-17-2018

# 1866 - Report to the California Surveyor General from W. V. McGarvey, Monterey County Assessor

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/hornbeck\\_cgb\\_15](https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/hornbeck_cgb_15)

 Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#), [Education Commons](#), [Law Commons](#), [Life Sciences Commons](#), and the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

"1866 - Report to the California Surveyor General from W. V. McGarvey, Monterey County Assessor" (2018). *Monterey County Assessor's Reports*. 5.

[https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/hornbeck\\_cgb\\_15/5](https://digitalcommons.csumb.edu/hornbeck_cgb_15/5)

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Salinas River and Carmel River Groundwater Basins at Digital Commons @ CSUMB. It has been accepted for inclusion in Monterey County Assessor's Reports by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ CSUMB. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@csumb.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@csumb.edu).

MENDOCINO COUNTY.

B. J. McMANUS.....County Assessor.

MENDOCINO COUNTY,  
August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1867.

Hon. J. F. HOUGHTON,  
Surveyor-General:

SIR: - Herewith I transmit my statistical report for eighteen hundred and sixty-six. Our Board of Supervisors will not meet for some two weeks yet, and as they reside many miles from the county seat of this county, it is not convenient for me to get their approval. I hope it may make no material difference. My report gives hops seventy-five acres. In some cases the figures approximate as near as they could be made, it being impossible to arrive at the exact figures. However, in most particulars it is right.

Hoping the report may meet with your entire approbation, and that a certificate to that effect may be sent by your office,

I remain, very truly, your obedient servant,

P. McMANUS,  
County Assessor of Mendocino County.

---

**MONTEREY COUNTY.**

W. V. McGARVEY.....County Assessor.

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE  
Monterey County, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1867.

Hon. J. F. HOUGHTON,  
Surveyor-General:

SIR: - According to law I forward to you my report for the year ending December thirty-first, eighteen hundred and sixty-six, on the resources of this county. A comparison of the statistical tables with those of the preceding year will show that the agricultural condition is improving, and that the value of the property, real and personal, is on the increase.

The land inclosed since eighteen hundred and sixty-five is seven thousand acres, and the land improved since then and put under cultivation amounts to eleven thousand acres. These improvements have chiefly taken place on ranchos were the agricultural

lands have been parceled out and rented in lots of one hundred acres, more or less, the diminution of stock allowing the land owners to dispose in such manner of their lands not needed for grazing purposes.

The lower part of the Salinas Valley is where most of these improvements have taken place, and during the year eighteen hundred and sixty-six that section has surpassed in fertility all others in the county; and this will ever be the case where there is no want of rain, while in a dry year the Pajaro Valley is far superior. However, the fertility of the Salinas Valley only extends to Township Fifteen south, including the same; further up the valley the aspect changes, and the country, except on some sheltered spots, becomes unproductive as to agriculture and only fit for grazing purposes, the high winds there prevailing from May to November every day, from ten A.M. till sundown, and blowing at times with such violence as to send over the plain clouds of dust, sand from the river bed, and even pebbles, rendering all agricultural attempts fruitless. This part of the valley is, notwithstanding, valuable for stock and sheep raising, and during the spring is covered with alfalfa and clover, while late in the season the tough and nutritious bunch grass, thriving well in dry and stony soil, and seeming to be a plant created for such locality, able by its slenderness and flexibility to withstand the severe summer blasts, afford to cattle the best of pasturage.

Good grazing lands on the Salinas and in the vicinity of Monterey have since eighteen hundred and sixty-five greatly increased in value; several large tracts of land have been rented for dairy purposes to persons lately from Marin County, and by them a large number of valuable stock have been introduced. The dairy business contributes greatly to the prosperity of this county. The products of this branch of industry during the year eighteen hundred and sixty-six, as may be seen by the tables, has been large, but much of the stock being introduced late in the season, those of eighteen hundred and sixty-seven will greatly exceed them.

The Pajaro Valley has not been so productive as the beginning of the year promised, and late rains have injured large crops of wheat in that section.

The farming lands in the vicinity of the Town of San Juan have produced fine crops. Some of them, for fertility, can vie with any in the State.

The crops of eighteen hundred and sixty-six have generally been satisfactory; but the barley crop has excelled all others, having surpassed that of all previous years – even that of eighteen hundred and fifty-three – which was heretofore considered as the best known. The wheat crop of the last named year has, until now, not been equaled.

The yield of fruit has not been superior to that of the year previous. Of late the number of fruit trees has greatly augmented, particularly in the neighborhood of Monterey City. It is, however, obvious that they will not thrive so well where they are exposed to the sea air as in some localities more sheltered, and where less fogs prevail. At present, fruit is raised only for home consumption, and even a large quantity is yearly imported.

Cattle and sheep have decreased during these last two years, but their breed is improved, and consequently their value augmented; there is little left of the old Spanish stock. The breed of horses is likewise improving, their number remaining about the same.

In most parts of the State some attention has been paid to the raising of bees, but owing to man casualties they are subject to in their domestic state, they do not

increase as well as could be desired. Bees have been raised here since eighteen hundred and fifty-eight and eighteen hundred and fifty-nine. Before that time there were but a few hives in the county, probably not numbering over a dozen. At present, the Santa Lucia Mountains, and the almost inaccessible ridge along the coast between Monterey and San Simeon, are swarming with wild bees; and there they seem to thrive a great deal better than in the hives whence they emigrated. Some parties, among whom are experienced hunters, at present are engaged in collecting honey in these mountains. This business, although it may be profitable, is not always carried on without difficulty, as the bees often select for their location some redwood trees of large dimensions in parts not easy of access. The felling of such trees cost excessive labor, and it is not uncommon for them to break in falling, shattering the combs and rendering the honey valueless.

The product of the whale fishery is gradually diminishing; the whales are getting very shy, and on their passage up and down the coast they give the Bay of Monterey a wide berth. There are still three companies, numbering in all fifty-two men, engaged in whaling; two of these companies are established on the Bay of Monterey, and the other on the Bay of Carmelo. The number of whales caught in eighteen hundred and sixty-six was seventeen, making about eight hundred barrels of oil. Other fisheries are not carried on upon a large scale except by the Chinese, who make such wholesale destruction of fish on this part of the coast as to render them very scarce. Their way of fishing is by means of ground lines, called *trolls*, having several hundred fishhooks attached; these are set in deep water along the ledges of rocks, and the fish not being migratory, when caught in large numbers without intermission, are in a few years entirely destroyed. The Chinese at Monterey and Carmelo cure yearly, for exportation to China, two hundred tons of fish; formerly, when fish were abundant, they exported about five times that quantity. During the summer months they catch great numbers of sharks for their fins and livers. They also export yearly great quantities of shell-fish (*halyotis*;) the latter, like the rock fish, they have almost entirely destroyed, depriving thereby the destitute inhabitants of the sea coast of one of their most reliable means of subsistence.

Mackerel, heretofore so plentiful, seem to have abandoned this bay; formerly a great number of persons came yearly, engaged in the mackerel fishery, but this fish has not been seen here since eighteen hundred and sixty-three. There is among the fishermen some diversity of opinion as to the cause of their not making their periodical appearance as before; some ascribe it to shoals of caracoutas that have been observed for these last years in greater numbers than before, and during all seasons, about the entrance of the bay, preying on all kinds of smaller fish and keeping out the mackerel; others, to the absence of shrimps and small fry the mackerel feed on, and in search of which they visit this bay. Those who are of the latter opinion, account thus for the disappearance of the fry.

Various kinds of small fish and shrimps locate and breed in the kelp edging the shores of the bay, particularly in the most sheltered places where the sea is smooth, and among these are the so called "kelp fish," (of the perch kind, but viviparous;) this fish is insipid in taste and altogether valueless in our market; the Chinese, however, catch large quantities of them and ship them off, together with other kinds; their way of catching them is by setting gill nets along the kelp, and then beating the water with long

poles and drumming on boxes or boards, creating as big a noise as they possibly can, thereby driving the fish out of the kelp into their nets. By this they also drive away the fry, and when the mackerel make their appearance – only visiting the bay in search of food – not finding any they naturally leave.

Whatever may be the cause, I believe that in order to prevent the total destruction of all kinds of fish on the California coast, a protective law should be passed by the Legislature, and that as early as possible. This could be easily done by prohibiting, under certain penalties, *all persons* from setting ground lines or trolls with more than twelve fish hooks, except for sharks (which are caught on sandy bottom and with a different kind of gear;) beating the water with poles and drumming when fishing with gill nets in the Bay of Monterey and other sheltered harbors or coves, and also the curing of shell fish for exportation.

Considering that the Legislature passed an Act prohibiting the killing of worthless hair seals, or sea lions, on Point Lobos, I am under the impression that that body should likewise take into consideration a matter like this, which at least is of some importance to parties depending on the fisheries for their support and maintenance, and that a law protecting the fisheries on the California coast would have more beneficial effects than that alluded to for the protection of sea lions; and certainly the matter would be considered if the time of the legislators was less absorbed by their own interests and those of their particular friends, than by those of the people they are or rather should be representing.

Having by my statistical report hereunto annexed complied with the law, I will take the liberty of saying a few words concerning it. In my report of last year, I made a few remarks on the unjustness of the same in exacting from officers an arduous duty without allowing them a compensation therefore, and attaching a penalty in case of neglect; and now, can but repeat that which I then remarked, and add, that the Assessor of this county receives no other fees or compensations than those provided by law for the performance of his official duties, and if it is believed that those compensations are ample to remunerate him for his labor in taking and compiling these statistics requested of him, I would call the public attention to that preposterous fee bill for Monterey County going into effect on the first of March, eighteen hundred and sixty-eight, (which fee bill, it must be stated, was not created as a measure of economy, and this will be understood by any one who knows that the taxpayers in this county are taxed to the amount of three dollars and fifteen cents per one hundred dollars, but was prompted by the sordidness and insatiable greed of parties interested in the speedy redemption of the county bonds,) and make no further comments on the subject.

An object of no less mortification is, that after so much unpaid labor is exacted from Assessors, the contemptible indifference exhibited towards them in the distribution of the reports and other publications of the Department of Agriculture at Washington. In each of those reports we read of how many copies of those publications and of how many packages of seeds have been distributed to members of Congress, etc., to be by them distributed among their particular or political friends, who, by the way, are generally very little concerned about such matters. Now, I believe that Assessors, whose business it is made by law to procure from farmers those agricultural statistics used for the compilation of the general reports, could make some good use of those objects distributed by the department aforesaid, and that when so much is exacted from

them, the poor courtesy of furnishing them with copies of those reports should be the least that could be bestowed on them, if no more.

Were I asked the question how this could be attained, I would answer, that the Surveyor-General, in order to encourage the Assessors in the performance of the duties the law and himself exacts from them, should procure a sufficient number of copies of all the publications already mentioned, and likewise a share of the other articles yearly distributed in the manner aforesaid, and should furnish therewith every County and District Assessor in the State.

Submitting these remarks, I have the honor to be,

Your obedient servant,

W. V. McGARVEY,  
Assessor of Monterey County.

By J. RUURDS, Deputy.

---

SAN DIEGO COUNTY.

JOHN L. McINTIER.....County Assessor.

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE,  
San Diego County, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1867,

Hon. J. F. HOUGHTON,  
Surveyor-General:

SIR: - In compliance with the law, I herewith beg leave to transmit to your office my annual report of statistics, etc., of San Diego County; boundaries, north by Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties, east by the State line and Mexican boundary, south by Lower California, and west by the Pacific Ocean.

There are two whaling companies in our bay; last season's catch amounted to some thirty thousand gallons. Our bay cannot be surpassed on this coast; completely land-locked, with a depth of water sufficient to float the largest vessel in the world; it is fourteen miles in length, and from one to three miles in width.

The lands of the county will produce as fine grapes, figs, olives, and oranges, as any county in the State. Wheat grows remarkably well, the grain being decided by wheat growers to be the largest and finest in the State.

In the mountainous districts, immense fields of barley are raised, which, by the way, is sold to emigrants, mostly coming into our Sate by the northern route.

The grape production is beginning to attract some attention. Tobacco has been tested and found to grow well.