Recommended Books on Monterey’s History and Heritage

Walter Colton, Three Years in California. New York, 1850. Several subsequent printings. Unique and charming account of Walter Colton, a naval chaplain who became the American Alcalde of Monterey and his life and times in Monterey, 1846-1849, during the transition period from Mexican to American government.

Connie Chiang, Shaping the Shoreline: Fisheries and Tourism on the Monterey Coast. University of Washington, 2008. Stimulating social and environmental history of Monterey and the twin pillars of its history—fisheries and tourism—up to the present day.


Richard Henry Dana, Two Years Before the Mast. New York: Harper and Bros, 1840. Dana offers the quintessential irony of the Yankee in Arcadia (Mexican California), critical yet enchanted.


John Walton, Storied Land: Community and Memory in Monterey. University of California, 2001. Fascinating overview of Monterey history and the varied patterns in which its history has been retold— from romanticized Spanish past to contrasting industrial Monterey (fishing and canning) and the shift to historic preservation and tourism.

Other Books to Consider:


