

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

February 14, 1951

The Little Wax Figure And the Spanish Sash

A small wax figure of San Carlos in a primitive little shrine, built many years ago in Monterey, has been presented to the History and Art Association by Lawrence Tibbett Wardell of 487 Van Buren Street. Mr. Wardell inherited the saintly figure from his great grandfather, Ponciano Manguares, who was the son of Graciano Manguares, the owner of the old adobe and property now occupied by Virginia Norris and her antique shop. Tibbetts' grandfather was Ismael Manguares.

Graciano was also the grantee from Spain of El Saucito Rancho of 2211 acres in 1833 and confirmed in 1858 by the U.S. to John Wilson, Josiah Swain and George Harris. In the census of 1836 Graciano Manguares was listed as aged 35 years. His wife was Maximiana Gongora. They had five children of which Ponciano was the third, born in 1831. Graciano was an auxiliary judge in Monterey in 1842.

The little wax figure just given to the Association by a descendant of this pioneer California family, is probably about one hundred years of age and was brought from Rome, Mr. Wardell was always told by his mother. The figure is dressed in silk and lace, made by the devoted hands of the grandmother of the family. San Carlos is centered in the shrine made from a small bureau drawer, the interior papered in a pattern popular in the early days and upon which a number of small religious pictures have been attached. Artificial paper flowers surround the figure. Perfect features and glass eyes make the face look very realistic and the modeling of the hands and the feet and the entire body, appear to be the work of an artist.

Mr. Wardell had also given to the Association a "Faja" or Spanish sash, which has been in the possession of his family for many years. This gift and the figure of San Carlos will be on display at the Stevenson House.

Under the direction of Lawrence Bulmore as president, Philip Schneider as vice-president and Mrs. Anthony Kambish as secretary-treasurer and curator, a museum has been opened by eighteen interested people in the little town of New Almaden, site of the famous quicksilver mines of the same name. Mrs. Kambish, whose home is in one of the old mine adobes, has

provided a room in her house to contain exhibits relating to the mining days. The museum is open to the public, Saturday, Sundays and holidays, and during school vacations from 11 until 5:30 o'clock. A nominal charge of twenty-five cents for adults and ten cents for children, will help to defray the expenses.

If any of our readers have ever tried to read a family lineage and have a correct answer for the fourth and fifth generation they will know how easy it is to make an error. On January 5, when writing on E.L. Williams's narrative of his trip to California in 1849, I related that Paul Pioda of Salinas was that gentleman's grandson and that Mrs. Fred Treat of Carmel was the granddaughter of James Watson. Two days later I made the mistake of saying that Mr. Williams was Mrs. Treat's grandfather, which was incorrect. Mr. Williams' wife was Narcisa Watson, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Watson. Their son Thomas Watson, early day sheriff, was Mrs. Treat's father. Now the record is straight.

It was on February 18, 1850 that California's original counties, twenty-seven in number, were created by an act of the first California Legislature. They were: San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, Branchiforte (later known as Santa Cruz), San Francisco, Santa Clara, Contra Costa, Marin, Sonoma, So[.]lano, Yola (later Yolo), Napa, Mendocino, Sacramento, El Dorado, Sutter, Yuba, Butte, Colusi (later Colusa), Shasta, Trinity, Calaveras, San Joaquin, Tuolumne and Mariposa. In that time Monterey County's population was 53,706.