

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 22, 1951

Early California Dish

In the March issue of the Notes from the California Historical Society there appeared an interesting recipe for "Tamalon," an early California dish, given to the Society by Vallejo Gantner. His mother was Adela Vallejo and she gave it to her son with the information that it had been used at Las Trancas, the home of Salvador Vallejo.

The appetizing dish was usually prepared "for the young men of the family who were returning to California for their vacations from far away colleges ... also ... for the fathers and uncles and various relatives and friends to celebrate a successful hunt of the grizzly bear." For economy of space Mrs. Gantner's recipe was condensed, but we thought "Fun with Food would not object to our using it in the Diary today, as it seems to belong to early California history.

Lightly brown in one cup of olive oil one finely sliced large red onion, two cloves garlic, two sliced green peppers. Add one quart of canned tomatoes with a pinch of soda. Wash eight or nine sweet red peppers, discarding stems and hot seeds, dry in the oven a few minutes to loosen pulp from skin. Break to pieces, boil in one pint of water slowly for 10 minutes. Rub peppers and their water through a colander to retain pulp, and add to sauce. Mix and simmer till somewhat thickened, adding several dried mushrooms.

Disjoint a 3 ½ or 4 pound roasting chicken, cut breast and back into four pieces, retain neck and giblets. Brown in one-half cup of olive oil, then set aside.

Mix two pounds freshly ground coarse masa (the masa and the red peppers may be obtained at any Mexican tortilla factory if not at your regular grocery) with one quart or more of water. Cook slowly, stirring constantly with wooden spoon until too thick to stir.

Put layer of masa (do not pat it down) in oiled Dutch oven, put half the chicken on top, sprinkle with ripe olives, one cup of large Malaga raisins and one sliced pimiento. Then carefully spread some sauce over it all. Repeat, finishing top layer with only masa and sauce. Cover (and keep covered while cooking) and place in medium oven for three hours.

Keep half the sauce to use at the table. Serve with large spoon, put some sauce and grated Mexican white

cheese on each serving. "This," wrote Mrs. Gantner, "is a complete meal in itself with a glass of mellow red wine. May you have a happy dinner hour and go forth looking for more worlds to conquer."

On display at the last "open house" of the California Historical Society in their rooms on McAllister street in San Francisco were several interesting items loaned by Dr. Milton H. Shutes of Carmel. Among the historical items were autographed letters, manuscripts, mourning badges, election tickets and badges, all from or relating to California. These, with photographs of Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln were displayed in a glass case.

Most interesting of the memorial badges was a Lincoln portrait of woven silk which, according to the Alta California of April 12, 1866, was made by Mr. Jordan of Basle [?], and which could be "obtained from Mrs. Jordan, 1016 Stockton street, Price \$1.00." The San Francisco directory of that year lists the weaver as "Jordan, August millinery," at the same address.