

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

December 31, 1952

### **The Courtship Of Manuelita**

Alfred Sully, as we told the readers in Monday's Diary, was the son of the famous artist, Thomas Sully. He met, fell in love and married the Spanish Senorita Manuelita Jimeno, daughter of Dona Angustias Jimeno and granddaughter of Don Jose de la Guerra of Santa Barbara. The latter was one of California's most respected Spanish settlers.

About the middle of 1850 when young women of cultured Spanish families were not allowed out of their homes unchaperoned, the beautiful Manuelita had met the young lieutenant and probably was as much impressed by the American officer, a graduate of the United States Military Academy, as he by her beauty and charming manners.

One evening, according to a story told by Edward L. Williams, who arrived in California in 1849 and became County Clerk of Monterey County, Manuelita asked permission of her mother to visit at the home of Capt. and Mrs. Elias K. Kane, who resided in the old Garner home on Pacific Street at the end of Decatur. Her mother, unsuspecting, granted her wish but at the same time ordered her to be properly chaperoned and asked Dr. James Ord to perform that pleasant duty.

When the doctor and Manuelita arrived at the Kane home, Mrs. Kane invited the young lady upstairs, with the excuse that she wished to show her some newly acquired possession. Dr. Ord waited below. After some time, down the stairs came young Lt. Sully with his bride on his arm, followed by the priest, Mrs. Kane and a few members of the family. The marriage caused a break for many months between the young Sullys and her mother, but when a baby was born to the happy couple a reconciliation took place. Tragically, this did not last long; both mother and baby died soon after. Mrs. Jimeno later married Dr. Ord.

In "Glances at California, 1847-1853" which included the diaries and letters of William Rich Hutton, surveyor and were published by the Huntington Library, Hutton wrote to his mother from Monterey on Jan. 31, 1850: "Dona Angustias sends you many thanks for your kindness in offering to take care of her boys, she has been pretty sick, but is now much better. Mr. Sully (of Philadelphia) has painted for her an original historical

piece, but has not yet been able to send it" a footnote explains that the "historical piece" is not included in the list of Sully's painting which appears in the "Life and Works of Thomas Sully" by Edward Biddle, but we presume that the work of art was the painting of "Christ Blessing Little Children," which he sent to Mrs. Jimeno and which was washed up on the Monterey beach and delivered to her.

Hutton in a letter to his sister dated a few months later writes: "Manuelita and Teresita are in from the farm and as amiable as (ever). I believe I would fall in love with Teresita if she were not already engaged." Teresita Hartnell was a cousin of Manuelita Jimeno.

On September 30, 1850, Hutton again wrote to his mother who was in the east, a bit of gossip going on in Monterey: "I found things very much altered here. Manuelita's marriage to Capt. Alfred Sully has caused a great deal of ill feeling. The Dona is the same as ever toward me. She has a little baby, too, but is very sick and will hardly live long. I am glad I was not here at the wedding time."