

May 20, 1952

Grade A Spareribs

Mrs. Eliza Farnham's bride shipped to California in 1849 under the name and sponsorship of the California Association of American Women was a well thought out plan by its promoter, even though in the end it was a failure.

In the broadside published in New York by Mrs. Farnham, she stated that it was believed that such an arrangement, with 100 or 130 persons would enable the company, each of whom was to put up \$250, to purchase or charter a vessel, and fit it up with everything necessary to comfort for the journey. That the combination of all for the support each, would give such security both as to health, person and character, and would remove all reasonable hesitation from the minds of those who would be disposed and able to join such a mission.

In the text accompanying the reproduction of the original broadside, advertising this unusual adventure of Mrs. Farnham's promotion, David Magee states that it is possible that there existed in 1849 a hundred or so unmarried females of over 25 who would proudly bear letters from their clergymen testifying to their virtue, but could these models of virtue produce the necessary fund for passage money?

The answer to all the questions that arose was "no" But Eliza Farnham was an optimist and determined. She stumped the Eastern seaboard in search of "Grade A Spareribs" as the San Francisco Alta of 1849 irreverently termed the Angelique's prospective cargo, and though many proposed that the party sailing should also include six or eight respectable married men and their families.

The Alta later reported that when the ship sailed she carried only three or four ladies who were either married or had passed the age when matrimonial alliances are sought with any degree of avidity.

It would be pleasant to record, wrote Magee, that Mrs. Farnham's disappointment was softened by a swift and uneventful voyage to California. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Valparaiso her servant girl jumped ship with a mulatto steward, and going ashore herself in search of a replacement for her lost servant, the Angelique sailed

without her. Magee is wondering where that wayward servant girl's letter from her pastor was.

As imposing list of sponsors for the proposed bride ship signed their names at the bottom of the circular, stating that they hereby expressed their approbation of the same, and recommended Mrs. Farnham to those who may be disposed to unite with her in it, as worthy the trust and confidence necessary to its successful conduct. There was the name of a superior court judge, a vice chancellor, a U.S. attorney, Hon. Horace Greeley, the Rev. George Potts, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, a Miss Catharine M. Sedgwick, Mrs. C.M. Kirkland and number of other prominent citizens of that day.

Another rare item listed in the Western Americana as from the selections in the library of the late George D. Lyman, M.D., and other sources, is a book priced at \$15 by a rare book shop, entitled "Walter Colton, Extractos de los Mas Celebres Escritores y Poetas Espanoles" – two volumes in one. The book was published in Baltimore in 1822 and is a collection of Spanish poems by celebrated authors.

The announcement of its sale reads: A very interesting copy inscribed on the half title: "C.S. Lyman, Monterey, California, Aug. 2, 1847. From Rev. C. Colton, Alcalde, Judge, etc. "Lyman, a Yale Professor, visited Monterey at the time, according to his book (page 220) "Around the Horn"—New Haven 1924. It is assumed from the form, and the error in Colton's initials, that the inscription is in Lyman's handwriting.