

June 19, 1952

Souvenir Program

In the 1911 souvenir edition of a publication printed in 1911 for the seventh Triennial Fair given under the auspices of San Carlos Parish, we have found an excellent article concerning the two early day churches on the Monterey Peninsula – San Carlos Mission Carmelo and San Carlos or Royal Chapel, Monterey.

The article was probably written by Rev. Raymond M. Mestres, the pastor of San Carlos Church, although no credit was given to the author. The featured story started with the admission that there was so much confusion created in regard to the San Carlos churches in Monterey, that the writer felt obliged to clear up this historical point. The Mission and Presidio were founded here in 1770 under the names of "Mision de San Carlos del Puerto de Monterey and Real Presidio de Monterey respectively.

Eighteen months later the Mission was removed from the Presidio to the shores of Carmelo river, retaining the name of "Mision de San Carlos de Monterey until after the death of Father Junipero Serra, and then up until the time that it was abandoned about 1839, it was more often called simply "Mision de San Carlos." However, in several of the records written by Father Dumetz in 1773, the Mission is called "San Carlos de Monterey y del Rio Carmelo"; likewise the monstrance presented to the Mission in 1777 by the Viceroy of New Spain, Bucareli, has these words engraved at the foot "perteneciente a la Mision del Carmelo."

The Presidio remained here in Monterey together with the original Mission church, which was to be used only as a chapel for the troops and their families and in which one of the Padres from Carmelo held services on Sundays. The chapel, which kept San Carlos as patron saint, as did the Mission up to 1841, when the Presidio disappeared, was known either as "Real Capilla del Presidio de Monterey" or "Capilla del Real Presidio de Monterey." The building of the present stone structures at Carmelo and at the Presidio between the years 1790 and 1797 did not cause any change whatever in the name and object of the two churches.

After the abandonment and since the restoration of the Mission it has been known as "San Carlos de Borromeo" whereas the chapel from 1841 to 1849 was simply

called "Capilla de Monterey." From that time, Monterey being a recognized parish, the former Capilla has been known officially as San Carlos Parish Church of Monterey. Nevertheless the people of Monterey, visitors and even some writers insist wrongly in calling it a Mission.

This confusion is caused, according to the records, by the fact that there are two churches with the same patron saint, founded by the same men on the same spot and at the same time, though for an entirely different purpose.

"Thus, to avoid confusion and at the same time to be historically correct," so the author of the 1911 article declares, "the church at Carmelo, being the only mission, ought to be called San Carlos Mission Carmelo of Monterey, or simply Mission Carmelo of Monterey, and the church at Monterey ought to be called San Carlos Parish Church or simply San Carlos Church of Monterey."

The Monterey church is at present referred to as "The Royal Presidio Chapel" or San Carlos Church.

In the same souvenir program was printed the following suggestion: "Serra's death should be made a holy day at Monterey; agitate placing Junipero Serra statue at the capitol at Washington, D.C. (which has been done); name new streets in Monterey after Serra, Crespi, Lasuen and Sarria; change the roof of Mission Carmelo (accomplished); locate and mark the place near Carmelo called Calvario; search for the spots where the two crosses were planted by the first land expedition (a cross has been planted at the mouth of the Carmelo by the History and Art Association in memory of Portola's landing there); find and trace anew the old road between the Presidio and Carmelo; restore to the Mission the old church relics in your possession."