

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 19, 1952

### **The Episcopal Convention**

If one did not see the hundreds of clerical collars around Boston, Mass., these days, one would very well think they were in the midst of a session of the United Nations Assembly – there are so many foreigners, many in native dress, attending the 57<sup>th</sup> General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, being held here.

The meetings will last through Sept. 19, with the Most Rev. Geoffrey F. Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of All England, as a guest of honor, with Mrs. Fisher.

The head of the church of England, visiting the United States for the first time in history, who will soon crown Queen Elizabeth, spoke Sunday morning from the pulpit of the famed Christ Church or "The Old North Church," where Paul Revere hung out the warning lanterns 175 years ago and here there was a precedent-shattering event.

Needless to say, it was an impressive occasion when prayers were offered up there for the royal family of England for the first time since the two countries split and the United States won independence in the Revolutionary War.

Sunday evening in Boston Garden there was standing room only – but we had a good seat. The Garden seats 13,900 persons, but every seat was filled long before the processional of the highest dignitaries of the church, the bishops and clergy, began, and it was reported that more than a thousand persons were turned away. The Gardens had been turned into a great edifice of worship for the opening of the triennial convention.

Above a 15-foot altar with a gold brocade frontal, a great gilt cross hung against a crimson curtain. A broad crimson carpet led to and across the white chancel. Sheafs of white gladioli were on the altar. A choir of 1,050 men, boys and women from Boston and nearby communities led the singing of the traditional hymn, "The Church's One Foundation is Jesus Christ the Lord" as the long procession moved down the three aisles.

More than 2,000 were in the procession, first the Women's Auxiliary and lay members of the House of Deputies, followed by visitors and some clergy. They took seats in the main auditorium.

Then came the crucifers and the cross. Flags of the nations, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the church and the United Nations, the black and white vestments and bright academic hoods of the clergy, the long back and scarlet chimeres with wide puffed lawn sleeves of the 150 bishops, lent brilliance to the opening of a great religious service.

Last in the procession, after members of the House of Bishops and the Rt. Rev. Norman B. Nash, Bishop of Massachusetts and host to the convention, were four leaders of the Episcopal church in three nations. Walking with the Archbishop of Canterbury in the scarlet robes of convocation was the Rt. Rev. Michael H. Yashiro, presiding bishop of Nippon Sei Ko Kai. Then came the Rt. Rev. and the Rt. Hon. Henry St. George Tucker of Virginia, former presiding bishop and at the last Bishop Sherrill, home again to Boston, the city he left to become presiding bishop

We feel very much at home in Boston where so much American history was born. There are many Californians here. We have visited with Dr. and Mrs. V.O. Ward, formerly of Pacific Grove. Dr. Ward was the rector of St. Mary's church for several years and a canon at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco for a number of years, leaving there to become one of the leaders in the church at Greenwich, Conn., where we will spend some time as a guest before returning to Monterey and home.