

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

January 20, 1954

### **More 'Larkin Papers'**

Volume IV of "The Larkin Papers" has been received by the subscribers and the booksellers. It is the latest in the series of ten volumes to be published by the University of California Press. The regents of the University, who have supplied the funds for the publication of these valuable documents, expect to publish the remainder of 10 volumes at the rate of two or three each year and then end with a general index volume which will include a biographical dictionary of the pioneers whose names appear in the Larkin Papers.

"Such original sources are never exhausted," wrote Dr. George P. Hammond, Director of the Bancroft Library at the University of California, and the editor of the Larkin Papers, "no matter how often they are used."

But these documents, often fragile and crumbling Dr. Hammond remarks in the foreword to the fourth volume, are in constant use. A way had to be devised to preserve the originals, if possible. To Dr. Hammond, publishing the Larkin Papers seemed the only reasonable answer. In that way, he could make the material available to anyone interested in California and Western History, and, at the same time, preserve the originals.

The editions are all of exceptional interest to Monterey historians and to historians throughout the width and breadth of the nation.

Larkin, probably the most influential merchant in Mexican California, was the first and only American consul to California. He worked and lived in the home which is now known as the Larkin House at the corner of Calle Principal and Jefferson street in Monterey. The house is owned and occupied by his granddaughter, Mrs. Alice Larkin Toulmin. One of the Monterey History and Art Association historical markers is on the sidewalk in front of the building and next door is another marker calling attention to Sherman's Headquarters.

Larkin worked under specific instruction from the state department to win Californians over to the idea of separation from Mexico. From 1847 to 1849 he was naval agent and naval storekeeper for the United States at Monterey. Later when California became a part of the United States, Larkin served as delegate to the state constitutional convention held in Colton hall in 1849.

Larkin kept many of the letters and documents which came to him and copies of the letters which he wrote. These documents totaling more than 4,000 pieces, are being published in the ten volumes which the University of California is sponsoring.

The picture of five men which appears as the frontispiece of this volume of Larkin Papers is one of the most famous photographs of early California pioneers. It was probably taken in 1850, before Larkin's departure for the east, in the opinion of the author of the preface. He left in March of that year, and W.D.M. Howard left in April, 1853. Others in the picture are Jacob P. Leese, Talbot H. Green, Sam Brannan and a, as yet unidentified, friend. The picture is from a daguerreotype in the possession of Mrs. H.W. Toulmin in Monterey, who is thanked by Dr. Hammond for her courtesy in permitting its use in the series of books concerning her grandfather.

In a report to President Buchanan from the Consulate of the United States of America, dated Monterey, California, April 20, 1846, Larkin names the following men as being prominent in Monterey: Manuel Jimeno, Pablo de la Guerra, collector of customs at the Custom House; William E.P. Hartnell, Manuel Diaz, merchant and alcalde for 1846; Jose Abrego, merchant, for 8 years treasurer of California; Esteben Munras, Salvador Munras and Jose Amesti; Antonio Osio, Juan Malarin, Rafael Gonzales, Pedro Navarez, captain of the Port of Monterey; Francisco Pacheco, Juan Anzar and Joaquin Gomez; Manuel Castro, prefecto of Monterey; Francisco Rico, an officer of the Custom House; James Watson, merchant; Jose Castro, once lieutenant governor; Juan D. Alvarado, governor; David Spence, merchant; Jose Juan Pico and Charles Wolter.