

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

April 2, 1954

'My Wild Irish Rose'

If and when the Division of Beaches and Parks and the City of Monterey acquire the block of land on lower Alvarado street bounded by Alvarado, Scott, Decatur and Olivier streets, the latter old and narrow thoroughfare will be cut in half, the remainder to run from Scott to Jackson.

The California Historical Society has in its files in the San Francisco headquarters on McAllister street three documents pertaining to the sale in 1851 to Patrick Breen of some bricks, a lot and the First Brick House. But of most interest to the story about Olivier street is this: "one lot or parcel of land 22 varas by 40 extending to the rear of Vives Schultz and Co., sold for \$66. The brick house, together with the lot, was sold for \$1,025.

The Schultz store was on Olivier street. This street was named for "Olivier Deliesseques, a Frenchman of some education who came to Monterey before 1850 and married Concepcion Boronda. Their home was an adobe building facing the street named in honor of this adopted Californian. Even though J.K. Oliver was an honored citizen of Monterey, founder of the store which bears his name and the lot on which the store stands extends to Olivier street, the thoroughfare was not named for him as many folks think and as incorrect spelling often makes for that confusion.

The historical collection of the late Dr. Herbert E. Bolton has been sold to the University of California's Bancroft Library, in Berkeley, for \$15,000, an estate appraisal has revealed. The library will establish a Herbert E. Bolton Memorial Collection. Dr. Bolton was, for many years, the director of the library. He came to Monterey many times to visit and to address the members of the Monterey History and Art Association and in the past has presented several valuable gifts to the collection of Californiana owned by the association.

To be announced shortly we believe will also be the acquisition by the Bancroft Library of the valuable collection of manuscripts and documents belonging to the late Thomas W. Norris of Carmel and past president of the History and Art Association. The reported price paid to the heirs of Mr. Norris for this collection is \$30,000.

Just how far can one get away from home? We have been reading in History News published by the American Association of State and National History [correct title of organization: American Association of State and Local History] about the collection of old newspapers owned by the New York Historical Society and found a number of items of interest.

The society's collection contains some two to three million issues, including the best collection of 18th century New York newspapers extant, and an interesting group of California Journals of 1849, sent to the society in the gold rush period by a former librarian who had gone west to establish a post office.

In the Monterey Cypress dated April 1, 1914, there appeared this special news story on the front page of the edition: "Chauncey Olcott, whimsical singer of Irish ballads who has made 'My Wild Irish Rose' famous, had his picture taken by Pathe Film Co. in Monterey today as he planted a rose in the garden of the Sherman Rose House on Alvarado street.

"I feel myself highly honored to be enabled to place my rose beside that planted by General Sherman," said the famous actor, comedian and Beau Brummell, to a representative of the Cypress. "It is my dearest wish that the wild Olcott rose will live on in the heart of the dear old lady who has made this place famous as has the one planted by her sweetheart many years ago."

Mr. Olcott was accompanied by Mrs. Olcott and they were guests at Hotel Del Monte. He was playing at the Columbia Theater in San Francisco in "Shameen Dhee or Black Jimmy."

On the same date we found this important news in the Cypress: "Gov. Johnson has renamed the trustees of the Custom House property. Florence Porter Pfingst of Watsonville who was born there while her father was collector under President Lincoln, was reappointed, Grant Towle, William Sandholdt and George Gould all now deceased, were re-appointed and Carmel Martin, still active in the preservation and life of the city, was named the new member.