

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library

August 30, 1954

Songs of Another Day

We should be interested in finding someone who would know any descendants of Mary Claire Callaghan, St. Catherine's Academy, Monterey. That is the address given on a bound volume of music which has been loaned to us that we might turn back the pages of history with old time piano compositions.

The young lady who once owned it evidently was a piano student and lover of music, for she thought enough of each composition to bind the whole into a volume with her name stamped in gold in a square of leather for the cover. A bit further on from where we found the Monterey address was a change to Benicia, Calif. Then another sheet was this notation: "Henrietta E. Callaghan, Sacred Heart Presentation Convent."

St. Catherine's Academy, conducted by the Dominican order, and was the first convent in old California. It was built in the year that California entered statehood, on Calle Principal just north of the San Carlos hotel. It was a two-story adobe building, erected by Don Manuel Jimeno for a hotel, and now marked with one of Monterey History and Art Association's markers on the Historic route.

When the Rt. Rev. Sadoc Alemany landed in Monterey in 1850, he brought with him the first nuns in the country, and like himself they were Dominicans. The following year they established the convent in Don Manuel's adobe—the first formal school for girls in California. Don Manuel, at one time secretary of state, had married Dona Augustias de la Guerra, daughter of Don Jose, commandant at Santa Barbara, and had built for their home an adobe on the present site of the San Carlos hotel. The adobe structure adjoining the home was bought by the bishop and the Dominican nuns were moved there in 1851.

After two years in Monterey the sisters moved again, this time to Benicia and the Monterey building was used as a chapel and then as a stopping place for visiting priests, before it was torn down to "make room for progress."

It was in this convent that Concepcion Arguello came, to "take the veil," after she heard that her love, Nicolas Resanov, had died in Siberia on his way back to Russia to ask the approval of his marriage to the lovely Spanish

maiden in California. She had waited 36 years for his return before hearing the sad news from Sir George Simpson at a fiesta in her family house in Santa Barbara.

The sheets of music in the old music book of Mary Claire Callaghan were sold by M. Gray, Clay street; Charles S. Eaton, 138 Montgomery street; and Kohler, Chase & Co, Importers, San Francisco.

Among the compositions were "The Mocking Bird: by Edward Hoffman, "Auld Lang Syne," "Cloches du Monastere" (Bells of a Monastery) by Lefebure Wely," and "Une Voix Des Ondes" (A Voice from the Waves) a composition by George W. Hewett with this notation "entered according to an act of Congress A.D. 1852 by A. Fiot in the clerk's office of Pa."

Brainard's Musical World, an illustrated monthly magazine, dated 1869, is advertised on the back of "Silvery Waves." The publishers will give premiums for new subscribers, including a \$40 Wilson Shuttle Sewing Machine for the person securing forty new subscribers, Ladies Work Boxes for five subscribers, and a Mason and Hamlin Organ for fifty new subscribers, the Musical World will give to the worker a choice of a group of Prang's American chomos, all of which are now, in all probability, collectors' items, for they include "Poultry Life, the Poultry Yard, Group of Chickens, Group of Quail, Group of Ducklings, etc."

ROSE JAR

(From an Old Diary)

'Gather the petals on a warm day.

Spread them to dry until they shape.

Place by layers in a jar;

Sprinkle with salt, and leave they are.

Ten days must pass till their perfume entice;

Then combin with the following spices;

Ground clove, aloe, stick-cinnamon shedded.

Then let stand till all are wedded.

Set in a cool, dry place; Leave be."

Such was a grandmother's potpourri.