

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Gold Rush Lithos**

The second of four parts of the 1959 keepsake series, "California Sheet Music Covers," issued for the members of the Book Club of California, has arrived and is most fascinating to look at and interesting to read.

"The San Francisco Quadrilles" is the latest in the series. Laura Retting White of Redwood City has written the comment which accompanies this sheet, music cover. In this cover Messrs. Rey, Butler and Atwell have given the '49 Gold Rush as it was in 1852.

Mrs. White explains that "San Francisco Quadrilles," published by Atwell & Co., lithographed by B. F. Butler, and signed on the stone "Rey," is one of the rarities of the day. George Peck dedicated this song to the "Ladies of California," who made up 10 per cent of the state's 1852 population. So here on one piece of music we have three of the most prominent names of Gold Rush lithographers and a song writer of that day.

The song cover for "The Quadrilles" is very handsome and must have been greatly admired in 1852, for it is truly quite well done. In the upper right-hand corner is a seated figure of "Eureka," a grizzly bear, a gold miner and a number of ships in the San Francisco Bay in the distance, surrounded by fancy scrolls and flowers. In the center is a larger figure of a gold miner at work and a few pack mules winding their way over the hills in the background.

The dedication reads: "Respectfully dedicated to the Ladies of California by their sincere admirer George Peck." There is also a notice in old style type that the quadrilles are arranged from the most favorite Negro Melodies for the Piano Forte. The original of this sheet music is owned by John Howell-Books, San Francisco.

Rey who signed the drawing on the cover, was Jacques Joseph Rey, an Alsatian who came directly to California via Panama. Benjamin F. Butler, the lithographer did much of the best early caricature; later in the '60s, sharing the distinction with Edward Jump. Butler was from New York City. He occupied quarters in San Francisco's Post Office Building, on Clay street in 1851. On his payroll, Mrs. White found, were Jump and Charles Nahl, California's finest of all painter-lithographers.

Butler lithographed one of two California portraits found in research by Mrs. White for California on Stone and his work was of a varied nature, including a number of membership certificates which resembled this music cover in their inclusion of much rich detail, laid out within scroll-inscribed vignettes.