

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Cottages On Tyler Street**

For many years we wondered about the row of little houses on the west side of Tyler street near Scott. They were built so very close together at the very rear of the lot and next to them was a small separate cottage and then the tall two-story locksmith house. All were interesting and thought provoking.

The row of little houses had been built by Mrs. Lambert, wife of Capt. T. G. Lambert, to house the lumber for her lumberyard which occupied the block on Tyler street. When the houses were no longer needed for the lumber storage, the fronts were added, and they were rented.

The upper story of the locksmith shop was once the one-story building in which Mrs. Lambert had her shell and curio shop on the triangle of Calle Principal and Alvarado streets and the cottage next door was moved many years ago from a lot north of the Monterey Theater.

The personal appearance of Mrs. Lambert was striking, according to descriptions of her niece, Mrs. Millie Birks, and her friends in Monterey. She was almost five feet six inches in height and was finely built. She had square shoulders and a very excellent figure. Her step was firm and long, being almost a stride. Her iron-gray hair was short and parted on the side (before the time of short hair for women). She always wore spectacles while at work. She wore a checkered gingham frock which was described as "like the high-necked and long-sleeved play apron of childhood." She never wore a hat and as a consequence the Monterey air had bronzed her face and hands, but the color of her skin suited her grey eyes and her hair well. Her hands were brown and knotted as all carpenters are and she wore no ornaments of any kind except the plain gold band of wifehood.

We would be remiss if we did not write of the shell and curio shop over which Mrs. Lambert presided for many years. It is told that she hired boys to collect birds of various kinds for her. She would skin the birds very carefully, dry them and ship them to the Liebes firm in San Francisco to be used as trimmings of various kinds for which she would be paid. She collected shells from the beach, many of which had to be scrubbed, washed with lye water, and treated in various tedious ways, to

make them saleable. She sold many varieties of jewelry shell and abalone. She did dressmaking and the collection of the patterns in the case in the upstairs exhibit room at the north end of the Custom House are some of the patterns made for her by Captain Lambert.

She had many small boats and boat houses down by fisherman's wharf which she rented by the hour or day.

Mrs. Millie Birks has inherited from her aunt, Mrs. Lambert several pieces of old jewelry which were made by the latter's father Peter H. Masters, whose jewelry store was also near the end of Alvarado street in the Monterey Handbook of 1875 there is an advertisement which reads: Peter H. Masters, goldsmith and jeweler." The jewelry which Mrs. Burks presented to the History and Art Assn., was made from gold quartz taken from the mines at Mokelumne Hill. Mr. Masters had come to California in 1849 and later joined Captain and Mrs. Lambert in, Monterey.