

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

October 31, 1962

Capitular Hall

Still standing on the corner of Franklin and Pacific streets is the two-story house erected in 1834 by Guy Freeman Flyng (Fling) of Sonora, Upper California. Originally the house was a one-story adobe, but a second-story frame addition had been added many years ago.

A verbatim quote from a copy of the original, in which Fling, was granted the property on Feb. 19, 1834, follows: "Capitular Hall. Having produced in evidence the license which the petitioner obtained to enter upon the land, as was required of him, in the petition he presented last year, there is hereby granted unto him the lot he applies for, which is 25 varas frontage by as many in depth, fronting the house of (a foreigner) Felipe Santiago and in line with the house of (the other foreigner) Juan B. Bonifacio. . . . "Signed by Manuel Jimeno Cesarin."

The old adobe is now the home and property of Mrs. Addie Carpenter La Vallee, the daughter of the late Guy and Mary Carpenter, former owners of the home.

In early days the building was always known as "Capitular Hall," which according to Appleton's new Spanish-English Dictionary, means to conclude an agreement; draw up the articles of a contract; compound; sing prayers of divine service; to capitulate - (law) to impeach. Therefore, we believe it was probably the town hall of that day.

Fling sold the property for \$60 to John Donelly, teamster of Company F, 3rd Reg., U. S. Artillery, on June 28, 1848. The soldier did not keep the property long, for the records show that on Aug. 18, 1848, Thomas O. Larkin purchased the place. Donelly was stationed at Monterey Redoubt, in the vicinity of the Town of Monterey, Upper California, in consideration of the amount of three ounces of gold (uncoined) he agreed to sell the property.

The transaction is signed by Walter Colton, alcalde. The description of the lot varied little from that of 1846, reading: "Twenty-five varas in front by as many more in the rear opposite the house of the foreigner, Philip James, and in line with the house of D. Bonifacio.

Larkin in turn disposed of the property to Gerardo Hllgueres. In the deed of sale, the name is also spelled

as Helgers, and as Cerdo Hilgers. Hilgueras shortly after sold it to James H. Gleason.-

Other owners were James Watson, Jose Abrego, Juan E. Gomez, J. W. Gregg, and Charles Carr. In 1921, Esther Freeman Steadman is shown as the owner, and in Nov. 4 of that year, C. R. Carpenter became the new owner. The property to this day (1962) is still owned by his descendant, Mrs. La Vallee.

Some alterations and some modern features have been added to the old building, but otherwise it remains much as it did in its early history. Mrs. La Vallee has told us that the entrance was formerly on Pacific street (Calle Estrada) where a bay-window is now.

Information contained here regarding the Capitular Hall has been taken from extracts from "Severance Block Book," Monterey County Abstract Co., Salinas; "Solares de Monterey" Monterey County Recorder's office, Salinas.