

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

November 12, 1962

Early American In Monterey

This morning at 11 a.m., the California State Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, dedicated a marker at Carmel Mission honoring four early Americans in California: Thomas W. Doak, George Mayo, Marcus Masson; and Samuel Grover. They came from Massachusetts on sailing vessels in the early 1800s and remained as settlers. Three were baptized at Carmel Mission and one at the Royal Presidio of Monterey. These men, according to Monsignor James Culleton's "Indians and Pioneers of Old Monterey," were Monterey's first Americans.

Available records disclose more information about Thomas Doak than the other three men. According to historians, Doak was married in 1820, by vice - regal permission, to Maria Lugarda, daughter of Jose Mariano Castro, the ceremony being performed in the Mission Church of San Juan Bautista, in which location he lived for a number of years. The records further reveal that with the help of two Indian neophytes he painted the mission altar and pulpit.

The California state regent, Mrs. Frank R. Mettlach of San Diego, officiated at the dedication ceremony. She was assisted by the following state officers: Mrs. Harvey B. Lyon, vice regent; Mrs. Ralph R. Campbell, assistant chaplain; Mrs. Arthur F. Strehlow, assistant secretary; Mrs. Thomas Meagher, historian, and Mrs. Louise M. Rankin, librarian. The plaque was officially accepted by the Rev. Roger J. Dieudonne, assistant pastor of Carmel Mission Basilica.

Present also was Harry Downie, procurator of Carmel Mission, and eminent authority of the history of California missions. Not only did Mr. Downie render invaluable assistance in obtaining historical information of the early settlers, but he personally planned and prepared the pedestal upon which the marker is mounted.

The idea for the plaque was originated by the then California state regent, the late Mrs. Walter Marion Flood. She contacted Mrs. Frank E. La Cauza, former regent of Commodore Sloat Chapter of Monterey, and requested her to handle all phases of the plan on a local level. This included establishing a liaison with the authorities of Carmel Mission and conducting a research

for any available information pertaining to these early settlers: After several months of painstaking efforts, the historic project, in which Mrs. Flood was so keenly interested, will be carried to fruition. Arrangements for the dedication were handled by Mrs. La Cauza.

In 1816, Thomas Doak was left behind by the "Lydia." Other sailors whose names first appear as California residents in this year are George Mayo and Marcus Masson. The latter seems to have gone to Manila soon afterward. In 1817 Samuel Grover arrived. All these men were from Boston, or its vicinity, and all entered the Catholic Church while in Monterey. The only one whose ancestry is clearly given is Masson whose father is said to be Irish. Doak's parents may have been Huguenots. These were Monterey's first Americans. Juan Maria Romero, an Irish resident, appears in 1816 as interpreter for some English-speaking visitors.

Father Culleton's book reveals the fact that the first Chinese resident came as a cook with Gov. de Sola. He was An Nam, a native of China, some 6 leagues from Macao in Canton Province. He became a Christian Oct. 27, 1815 and died two years later.

The first foreign resident of California, according to Father Culleton, was Antonio Alegre, the Genoese. In 1814 came John Gilroy, whose true name is said to have been Cameron; Antonio Rocha, a Portuguese; Julian Malcom of Malcolmson; and James Baldwin, John Mulligan, or Milligan, the Irish weaver, may have arrived on the same occasion. Gilroy, Malcom and Baldwin were left behind suffering from scurvy when the "Isaac Todd" sailed out of Monterey?