

## Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Peninsula Diary

June 19, 1962

### **A Lace Bonnet**

Margaret Elizabeth Dickinson Lawrey, daughter of Gallant Duncan Dickinson, builder of the First Brick House in Monterey, was one of six children. She resided early in Monterey 1846-48 and then from 1887 until her death in 1918.

Margaret Elizabeth D. Lawrey told a "bonnet" story that is both amusing and yet tragic. "Leaving Monterey, A.G. Lawrey sailed to the Hawaiian Islands in the fall of 1847 and returned to Monterey after an absence of two months, bringing with him numerous articles not to be obtained in California; among them was a lady's dress bonnet, made of fine braid and trimmed with ribbons and artificial flowers and very costly and beautiful. This was probably the first bonnet of that kind ever brought to the states. The native California women came to view and admire the bonnet, but it, with other articles of purchase, were confiscated by the customs officers and sold at public auction. The then American consul, Thomas Oliver Larkin, bought the bonnet at a high price and presented it to Miss Margaret Dickinson."

Jack Swan, the "Pioneer of '43 and the builder of the First Theater, following the death of Gen. Sherman in February of 1891, proudly exhibited to his friends two letters which he had received from the famous general, one in 1876 and another in 1880. From one of these letters we learn that it was during the period when Sherman was stationed here, that he was called upon to play the part of an auctioneer. The article auctioned was the first bonnet trimmed with lace, etc., ever brought to California. The article of headgear was auctioned by Gen. Sherman, and presented to the daughter of Gallant Duncan Dickinson, the builder of the First Brick House, who was to become the bride of A. G. Lawrey.

Bancroft, Vol. 21 (Vol. 4, Calif. Series) in the Pioneer series under Amos G. Lawrey, quotes from the Salinas Index, Oct. 26, 1876: "Swan tells how the young man went to Honolulu for a wedding outfit, and attempting to smuggle the goods ashore, had to purchase them anew, for a round price and indeed his arrival at Honolulu on the "Charles" in February, 1848, is recorded."