

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Yule Card Joy

Even though it is after Christmas, it is not too late to write about Christmas cards; they have meant so much to the sender and to the receiver. But what are we going to do next year when each card will cost 5 cents to send (if the envelope is sealed), plus the cost of the card itself? It must be worth five cents to wish a home-town friend a Merry Christmas - that is the spirit of Christmas and will not be forgotten in 1963, even though it does cost one cent more. You might add the greeting to the telephone bill, but that would cause a lot of confusion also. Folks are so busy getting ready for a party, giving one or preparing for an invasion of a beloved family that an interruption is not always appreciated. But why talk about it now. There is a whole year to decide this momentous question.

This year's cards were all interesting and all were appreciated. There were religious cards of great beauty, humorous ones, gay ones, family pictures, pictures of homes both inside and out - in fact a great variety had been put into the selections.

One of the very educational ones was from Dr. and Mrs. Paul Michael and sons, Peter and Paul, who live in Carmel. They decided to educate their friends in the growing and use of herbs. Last year it was bird watching; and this year it is watching seeds germinating, growing and developing into such fragrant plants that give subtle accent to their everyday culinary productions. Photographs to illustrate the two-page card starts with the flats, then growth of such herbs as thyme, summer savory, burnet, sage, sweet marjoram, tarragon, sweet fennel dill, and ending with the garden beds planted - the history and use of each herb is also given.

Dr. Albert Shumate of San Francisco, president of the California Historical Society, revealed his big interest and hobby, in his remembrance this last Christmas to his friends. It is a reproduction of a financial transaction between John J. Vioget and Alexander Rotschef in San Francisco, March 12, 1852. A reproduction of the actual agreement is attached stating that the sum of \$560 in Spanish dollars or the equivalent in francs be paid to value received and charge to the account of His Highness the Prince Gagarine, Rue de la Paix, No. 3, Paris.

The folder was designed and printed for Dr. Schumate by Lawton Kennedy in San Francisco. The script tells that 150 years ago imperial Russia founded Fort Ross, terminating a vast expansion to the east, through Siberia, across Alaska, and finally to California. Fort Ross is now a registered national historical landmark. As president of the California Historical Society, Dr. Schumate had the privilege of being chairman of this anniversary commemoration at Fort Ross. This brought to his mind a document, obtained from Warren Howell, relating to the commandant of old Fort Ross, which the doctor chose to reproduce from his collection.

The signer of the document, Alexander Gavriolovich Rotschef (1813-1873) was the last commandant of Fort Ross, serving in that capacity from 1836 to 1841. On Dec. 13, 1841, the properties were deeded in Yerba Buena (San Francisco) to Capt. John A. Sutter, the Swiss "Lord" of New Helvetia, who thought to expand his empire from the Sacramento region. A witness to this deed was J. J. Vioget.