

DESCENDANTS of DON GASPAR de PORTOLA WHO LIVE IN SAN FRANCISCO TO-DAY

These are the descendants of brave explorer who discovered San Francisco bay in 1769:

- MRS. E. L. VALLEJO KERN, great-great-granddaughter.
- RODRIGO KERN, great-great-grandson.
- CONRAD KERN, great-great-grandson.
- MISS TONITA VALLEJO, great-great-granddaughter.
- HAROLD VALLEJO, great-great-grandson.



pedition to colonize and settle Alta California. The military leader of this expedition was Lieutenant Don Francisco de Ortega, a Spanish nobleman. Don Gaspar de Portola was the political governor. With them came a large number of the first settlers of California and their families, also some Franciscan missionaries, among them the noted Padre Junipero Serra. De Ortega married Dona Dolores de Portola, daughter of the governor. They were blessed with a large family of sons and two daughters, Luisa and Maria Antonia. The last married Don Joaquin Sanchez, lieutenant in the Spanish navy and a native of Cadiz, Spain. Their children were two daughters, Rafaela and Soledad. Soledad was wedded to Don Jose de Jesus Vallejo, eldest living son of Don Ignacio Vallejo, captain of engineers and one of the members of the expedition, whose wife was Dona Maria Antonia de Lugo. Don Ignacio Vallejo brought with him

his exploits, with the genealogy of the family. She pronounces the name Portola, with the accent on the last syllable. Mrs. Kern was early left a widow, with two young sons, Rodrigo and Conrad Kern, who are now both well known in musical circles in San Francisco and Oakland. They were reared in the old home at the mission of San Jose, where they were taught music and languages by the ladies of the family. Now, however, the days of affluence and ease had given place to worry and anxiety, and the wolf coming nearer and nearer to the big hospitable door, the question, "What shall we do?" was discussed by the ladies who were left alone with the two young boys, and although loving the fine arts as life itself, they decided to sell the old home and go to Oakland with the idea of making business men of the young people. Their mother said: "They shall retrieve our lost fortune; we shall repossess our old home, our dead brother's children shall be cared for and our younger generation shall live after the manner of our forefathers." In pursuance of this idea the young

By Carrito May

Don Gaspar de Portola discovered San Francisco bay in 1769. In October San Francisco will invite the whole world to join with her in celebrating the one hundred and fortieth anniversary of the event. Portola seems a dim figure of the distant past. But the line of the illustrious explorer has not perished from the earth. His descendants live in San Francisco and Oakland today, and in the grand celebration next October will participate men and women in whose veins proudly flows the blood of the old hero himself. These descendants are:

that one would believe her to be English but for the sweet, musical intonation of the voice, and the charming manner which distinguishes the Latin races. She assisted General Vallejo in compiling the history of California for H. H. Bancroft. She also wrote frequently for eastern magazines and papers, and did much translating. At the time of her death in 1904, she was engaged in translating "Ben Hur" into the Spanish language, and had received from General Lew Wallace, the author, a letter in which he expressed himself as delighted to have her undertake the work. Miss Vallejo spoke with much pride

- Mrs. E. L. Vallejo Kern, great-great-granddaughter.
- Rodrigo Kern, great-great-grandson.
- Conrad Kern, great-great-grandson.



HAROLD VALLEJO

CONRAD KERN

Miss Tonita Vallejo, great-great-granddaughter.
Harold Vallejo, great-great-grandson.

One branch of the family of Portola lived at the old mission of San Jose. Soledad Sanchez de Portola, the great-granddaughter of Don Gaspar de Portola, married Don J. J. Vallejo, the oldest brother of General Vallejo, early governor of California.

They owned, near Niles, a large grant of land comprising many thousand acres, and there they lived with their family of seven children, two sons and five daughters. One son married and had two children who now live in San Francisco. One of the daughters married and had two sons, who now reside in Oakland.

But let us stay a little with the family of Soledad Sanchez de Portola and Don Vallejo, who seem to be the connecting and disappearing link between the poetic, musical and artistic life of the days of the troubadours and our own strenuous times.

This family was particularly gifted, possessing great personal beauty, combined with graces of mind and heart. They were all talented. One of the daughters excelled as a pianist, another did excellent portrait painting, while another became a linguist and an author. They all lived happily and joyously in the old home for many years. The sons were handsome and gallant—the ladies sweet and charming—as many old families around Niles remember to this day.

One of the daughters was Miss Guadalupe Vallejo, in later years a teacher of languages in San Francisco. She was a thorough master of French, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese, and spoke English so purely and fluently

of her ancestry, asserting that they were pure Castilian, with no Hebraic, Moorish or Indian admixture.

Don J. J. Vallejo died at the age of 84. His wife, Donna Sanchez de Portola, survived him for some years. She possessed much antique bric-a-brac, finely wrought tapestries and laces, gold and silver plate and many heirlooms, which her great-grandson, Don Gaspar de Portola, and Don Francisco de Ortega, her grandfather, had brought from Castile (old Madrid), Spain, and, lovers of art—listen! she possesses a Murillo! The painting is now in San Francisco and is highly prized by its present owner, a member of the family.

Trials undreamed of came upon the descendants of old Don Portola. Their lands were taken, their cattle were stolen, their sons became wanderers, and finally they sold their old home for a small sum and came to San Francisco, where the younger members of the family could find employment.

Through many years Guadalupe Vallejo, the great-great-granddaughter, of Portola, hoped and trusted that the United States government would make some restitution to her family for the seizure of their private stores by Fremont's men in 1846. Although her hopes were not realized, she died with no bitterness in her heart for the wrongs her family had suffered. After her death there were found among her effects many short stories, poems and translations which are a genuine treat to those who love such things. Perhaps the most pathetic among these treasures was a large brass door key, stored away in a corner with these verses written upon the wrapper:

THE KEY TO MY OLD HOME.
Whence came it here, this quaint old



DONNA SOLEDAD SANCHEZ DE PORTOLA, WIFE OF DON J. J. VALLEJO



MR. E. L. VALLEJO-KERN



RODRIGO KERN



MISS TONITA VALLEJO

Your duty now is to guard with great care
The thousand fond memories I hold as so fair.
'Twill be a duty of pleasure and rest,
And I trust you with it, as a friend I love best.
—Guadalupe Vallejo de Portola.

What were the heartaches silently endured by this gentle woman as she saw her loved ones scattered, impoverished and dead, while the home of her childhood was occupied by strangers, and she, herself, a sojourner? These little verses speak volumes!

The following bit of history was written by Miss Vallejo:
"In the year 1762 or thereabouts, the king of Spain sent out an ex-

the papers of his family pedigree, which he carefully had registered and which can be found in the Spanish archives.
"Don Jose de Jesus Vallejo and Dona Soledad Sanchez y de Ortega were my beloved parents."
"GUADALUPE VALLEJO."
The above statements can be corroborated by reference to H. H. Bancroft's "History of California."
Mrs. E. L. Vallejo Kern, now living in Oakland, is the only one left of the children of Dona Soledad Sanchez de Portola, wife of Don Vallejo. Her mind is rich in reminiscences of the days which made history for Alta California; the days when the Americans came in 1846, and changed the dreamy, ideal life to one of greater activity. She has in her possession a portion of the last Mexican flag, which is probably the most unique relic of the old Spanish regime in California. It floated from the flagstaff at the capitol at Monterey, the old capital of California. It has an interesting history, for it was taken down by General Vallejo, one of the governor general's California, and the American flag was raised in its place, the first to float over Monterey.
Mrs. Kern is now 69 years of age. She speaks five languages fluently, and after talking of the "old times," with girlish enthusiasm, she sat down at the piano and sang and played "La Paloma," and also some of the war songs they sang in those days. She has books nearly 200 years old, giving a full history of Don de Portola and

men were placed in business houses, where they held positions of trust, and were rapidly advanced, and while they succeeded admirably in keeping the wolf quite out of hearing they were at the same time assiduously studying music with the best masters the city afforded, and after several years of diligent study the elder, Rodrigo, who had developed a fine baritone voice, was able to give up business and devote all his time and energy to the art he loves. He says: "Take music out of my life and you take my life." Before the fire he had a studio in San Francisco.
The younger brother, Conrad, also became a proficient musician, for the same reason that a fower turns toward the light.
"These young men do not shine by the reflected glory of their illustrious ancestor, Portola, but by the light of their own achievements. Working, striving, struggling bread winners as well as students, with no financial aid to back them, no king to equip them, they finally conquered all obstacles and attained the goal they sought.
Plutarch Vallejo had died some years before, leaving a wife and two young children, a son and a daughter, in the east. They grew apace, as all good babies grow, and the girl, Tonita Vallejo, manifested such a remarkable talent for music that she was early placed under the best masters and became a successful pianist and composer. Harold Vallejo, her brother, is in a business house in San Francisco, a bright, capable young man. They both passed through the earthquake and fire and are enthusiastic participants in all activities which make for the rehabilitation of San Francisco.
In view of the approaching Portola festival in October it is inevitable that much interest should center around the present generation of Portola, though they themselves are not seekers after publicity.
Many years ago I knew, loved and admired the family who lived in the old mission, and fresh from the school room with Washington Irving's "Alhambra" and the stories of the old knights and troubadours filling my romantic young head, they seemed to me like pictures from old paintings stepped down to fulfill my ideals of all that life should be: love, song, story and romance