

Pomp and Ritual of Catholic Church Mark Services for Last San Juan Mission Indian

Daughter of Coffin Maker Near 100; Tribal Love Told

The last of the San Juan Mission Indians was buried yesterday morning from the historic church of the padres by the Maryknoll fathers. The pomp and ritual of the Roman Catholic church marked the final tribute to her tribe, converted from savagery by the Franciscan monks 150 years ago.

She was Mrs. Ascencion Solorsano de Cervantes, daughter of Miguel Solorsano, the coffin maker of the early mission. Nearly a century ago she was baptized in the mission and twenty-five years later she was married there to Don Rosendo Garcia. Two of her sixteen children survive her. Mrs. Claudia Corona of San Juan and Mrs. Jose Mondragon of Gilroy. Her surname was taken from Fra Junipero Serra, who was her family's confessor.

TOLD TRIBAL FOLK LORE

With the aged Indian woman's death the story has come to light of Professor J. P. Harrington of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, who lived in her home and spent months at her bedside, piecing together the folk lore and customs of her tribe for use in a book to be incorporated in the institution's records.

Professor Harrington, member of the Bureau of American Ethnology, mastered the tongue of the San Juan Indians in a seven months' period. With this knowledge, he heard many interesting things from the old woman, who never learned to speak English and who was 50 years old before she ever saw the ocean.

LEGEND OF GREAT FLOOD

Among them, he learned of the legend they had of the great flood, but many arks figured in it, not just one. There was the story of the dove, too, who talked like an Indian and turned into a black crow because he was false to the Indian's trust. No instruments of war were used by the tribe; family feuds, raging for generations, took the place of wars.

At the funeral mass Father Francis Caffrey, M. M., of the Maryknoll order, wore the black vestments which the Franciscan padres wore in the services for Mrs. Cervantes' father and mother. Before the ceremonies in the cata-



Mrs. Ascencion Solorsano de Cervantes and J. P. Harrington.

falque, used as a funeral bier in the church for countless members of the San Juan Indian tribe, her body rested in state.

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