

Las Pastores - The Shepherds

Spanish  
Christmas  
Play

Los Pastores-- The Shepherds.--Spanish Christmas Play. The songs.

Amados pastores. Vamos caminando  
Que lo resplandores, del día va en llegando.

Que noche tan linda para caminar,  
No mas que es mu. corta y hay mucho que andar.

Por entrestos risquos y de sus verdores  
Nuestro rancho aremos, hermanos pastores.

Y pues ya llegamos hay lugar desiado,  
Sientemo nos todos que yo estoy cansado.

Song to Bartolo, the lazy shepherd.

Quieres o no quieres te has de levantar,  
Quieres o no quieres te has de levantar.  
Y todos nosotros te hemos de llevar,  
Y todos nosotros te hemos de llevar.

Bartolo's song.

Levanta mi cuerpo, voy par al portento,  
mucho bastimento,  
Bastimento mucho, mucho bastimento.  
Bastimento mucho, mucho bastimento.

En el portal de Belen,  
Da nuestro Dios su manado (fragment)

Quien te hizo tan fortunoso.  
Quien te hizo ti su aloja (fragment)  
Un Dios todo poderoso.  
Adios! Adios! Adios, niño lindo, adios! (refrain. D.C.)

Adios, Maria bella, adios Jose amado,  
Ya nos vamos todos por nuestro ganada.

Muy contentos vamos, bien agradecida  
Del recebimiento que agamos tenida.

Dicen los pastores, bien agradecida  
Del recebimiento que agamos tenida.

Pues vamos muy gustosos a pastoria el ganado,  
Que ya tuvimos la dicha de ver a Dios su manado.

Los Pastores--The Shepherds--

Gloria a Dios a tal señor,  
Los angeles en el cielo,  
Y los hombres en la tierra  
Con alegrías fervor.

The Gloria.

Gloria a Dios, gloria en su nombre,  
Gloria en silencias puras,  
Gloria a Dios en las alturas,  
Y paz a el hombre en la tierra.

The above songs are a part of a play given in our house in the 70's. I was one of the shepherdesses, six in all. We were draped in Spanish shawls and had our hair curled on irons. We carried staves and gifts for the child. Mine was a string of fish. One was of abalone, presented to me by one of the Old Town boys. I have it yet. We kept time to the music as we marched by striking the floor with our staves. Don Jose Maria Estudillo represented Lucifer, in black suit and red sash. His young son represented the archangel Michael by whom he was defeated in a sword contest. The baby was a very much cherished little saint from the old church. My spelling is at fault throughout this transcription as it is many years since this play was given and I have forgotten much of the text, but I have tried to give it at least phonetically in the hope that something may be made of it. Most of the play was spoken dialogue of which I knew nothing except my own part. Here it is:-

"Mucho nos hemos tardado en hacer nuestro camino  
Pues ya mi amor le previno una sarta de pescado. (A string of fish.)  
Vamos que estoy con cuidado no vaya estar enfermito,  
Pues lo que yo sálicito.  
Es que es sin novedad, su divina majestad,  
En que mi alma deposito.

There were four young girls and two older women representing the shepherdesses. The older women were Doña Luz Marron Estudillo, wife of Don Jose Maria; and Doña Lugarda Machado. The three other girls were the daughters of Don José Maria and Doña Luz. The play was given also at Rosario Hall, San Diego.

LOS PASTORES (Rough notes -- recollections of Miss Whaley)

That was given of course in the church here. W Here in this house, also. Mrs. Luz Marron de Estudillo -- she was the wife of Hose Maria Estudillo, the finest Spanish gentleman you can imagine.

Their three daughters were in the play: Victoria, Maria Antonia and an ~~adopted girl~~ Cornelia (who afterwards married ~~the~~ John Osuna.) And I was in it. I must have been about 16 years old. There were two old ladies in it -- Luz Estudillo and Dona Lugarda Machado (~~who sang through her nose!~~)

They had a little bambino in a basket. That represented the cradle and manger. The angel -- St. Michael -- ~~that~~ was Luz's little son, whom they called "Chumalia." He had on long white cotton stockings, and wings on his back.

The devil was ~~on~~ Jose Maria Estudillo himself. He made a fine devil in evening dress and with a red sash around his waist. He had ~~black hair and black eyes.~~ There was a fight between the devil and the angel. There was a dialogue between Michael and the devil.

We girls were dressed in beautiful Chinese shawls, flowered, and with deep fringe. Doña Soledad Marron (She had been Soledad Tanner who married Jesus Marron) curled our hair. ~~She had golden curls herself.~~ She curled our hair on a heated poker and then we went home with our heads carefully wrapped up. We all had staves -- shepherd's s' crooks, wound around with flowers. ~~mine was yellow.~~ *mine had a yellow headband of*

*cut in the way we stood:* Here was the way we stood: In front was the little angel

MANGER

x  
A n g e l

x  
Shepherd

x  
Shepherd

x  
Shepherd

x  
Shepherd

We beat on the floor with the staves. Bartolo was a lazy old shepherd. He had cow bells on his wrists ~~and~~ tied around his waist, making a noise when he got up. He had a staff ~~too~~. He was asleep. We sang ...

"All of us are going to pull you up and make you come along."

He got to his feet then. Bastimento.  
The devil has a sword and a red sash.

Los Pastores -- continued -- rough notes -- Miss Whaley

The shepherds began with singing.

AMADOS PASTORES (First song)

Other little songs.

I could remember my own little speech. I can remember the songs.

The Gloria was sung by another group in the new church here at Old Town.

I think Michael appears first.

The devil bounced in.

My gift was a sarta de pescado -- *a string of fish* -- ~~an abalone fish~~.

Each had a gift -- a basket of *f*lowers, a basket of fruit, etc.

Saballeros: Ruth Laughlin Barker, Chap. IX ... p. 215:

" ... With no back drops, the audience was able to imagine the scene of the plains around Bethlehem from familiarity with their own winter pastures. Even twenty years ago the play was given with the Elizabethan simplicity which is the goal of stagecraft to-day. The players took their places in the center of the hall, not divided from the audience by a raised stage or footlights. Their long journey was suggested by tramping around and around the cleared space, carrying the thread of the drama in their long singsong verses. Hell's mouth was nothing more than a black curtain pulled aside to show the red glare of burning brimstone, the manger a little statue in a crib surrounded by toy oxen and asses. The star of Bethlehem was a candle set in a lantern and pulled across the stage by a rope. There was equally open machinery for the miraculous appearance of the angel announcing the nacimiento and St. Michael coming to fight the devil. They descended from Heaven in a box lowered from the rafters, and neighbors offered interested comments if the pulley stuck. Even the devil had the character of a hard-working young fellow who always got the worst of it, in keeping with his interpretation in old morality plays.

"'Los Pastores' was given in long, bare dance halls with kerosene sconces lighting the whitewashed walls. A stove made the room hot after the outside chill of the winter night, but the fire gradually died down when the firemen forgot to put in more wood in the excitement of the play. The benches along the side walls were crowded with dark-eyed mothers and chubby children, exclaiming over everything in soft Spanish. The far end of the room was packed with standing men and boys. On a raised platform at the other end there was the cradle of the Santo Niño. Between acts good children were allowed to shyly kiss the rosy, waken Baby when it was passed among the audience for homage and offerings.

"The Pastores marched into the cleared space between the rows of neighbors and friends wearing white cambric suits with ruffled sailor collars and short trousers. A tiny beribboned pillow slung over each shoulder suggested the shepherd's bed. Each carried a tall crook, festooned with pink tarlatan and small tinkling bells. They were accompanied by their cook, Gila, a serious little girl in a white dress and veil who sometimes doubled the part of the Madonna. They marched up and down singing verses about their sleeping flocks, the wondrous new star in the Heavens and the story they had heard of Mary and 'that carpenter José.' After they had camped for the night, an angel descended from a wooden box lowered from the ceiling. He woke the shepherds to tell them to hurry to see the Christ child who had just been born in a manger in 'Belén.' They spoke wonderingly of the prophecy that a Saviour would come into the world and planned gifts to take to the Babe. They began the journey to Belén, following the star drawn along the cigars by a cord, and singing a lullaby:

Oh, sleep, sweet Child of Heaven  
 Who cometh from above,  
 That Thy Mother may caress Thee

In the tender arms of love.  
Singing á la rú. á la me  
A la ru, á la me, á la ru.

In the second act a red flare burst from the end of the room. With clanging of bells and clashing of swords Lucifer dashed out of Hell's mouth. He overtook the Pastores and, enraged at their mission, urged them to turn back with all his devil's wives. He appeared in different guises, now as a black man, now as a be-whiskered Englishman, now as a helmeted Conquistador, now as a sheep and finally as the true diablo with the long tail, and horns sprouting from his forehead. Between acts he jumped into the audience with a deal of clowning, holding up a little mirror to get a smile from pretty girls and taking down their names in his hell-bent book. Children shrank back from him and crossed themselves.

A hoary hermit had joined the pilgrimage, brandishing his cross and large rosary at the Devil in slapstick comedy. In his many guises the Devil had almost persuaded the entire party to turn back. Then a box was lowered again and a small boy dressed as the shining St. Michael with cotton wings and a tinsel crown charged into a fight with the Devil. The Pastores watched the fight, as stupid as their sheep. Now St. Michael was uppermost, now the Devil. Finally the saintly sword pierced the Devil and a small foot was pressed down on his poor head.

In the third act the Pastores started on their way again but found the lazy shepherd, Bartolo, had fallen asleep during the fight. He refused to move from his sheepskin pelt, even to see the Christ child. With his long beard, huge shambling feet and mighty yawns, he was a predecessor of Shakespeare's fools. He and the overplump Hermit made the most of clowning, interspersing the original lines with ribald jokes which brought guffaws from the audience.

Finally the Pastores arrived before the cradle, each bearing his gift and presenting it with a long prayer to the Child. At the end they returned to their flocks, striking their crooks on the floor to the beat of string music so that their songs were accompanied by the tinkling of bells.

Farewell, Joseph, farewell, Mary,  
Farewell, gentle Child.  
Give to us a benediction  
From thy Lamb, so mild.  
Grant life and health the coming year  
In our mountain wild.

'Los Pastores' is still played in Santa Fe between the feast of Guadalupe and the Twelfth Night after Christmas. The quaint old props are no longer used in presenting it in the St. Francis Auditorium or in a hall down on Agua Fria Road, but the lines and acting are true to the old version. Before the lure of movies encroached upon it, the play ran continuously for the three holiday weeks. Three or four casts presented it in differ

ent parts of town at the same time, vying with each other for the best production. Neighbors made the rounds to see other companies, but usually returned for a nightly attendance at the play in their own placita. "



"Christmas was the great festival of the whole year, and La Noche Buena (the good night) was celebrated with much pomp. After the midnight mass a sacred drama called Los Pastores (the shepherds) representing the Bible story, was performed by a party of young persons dressed in appropriate costumes. The whole performance was enlivened by the notes of the guitar, and was interspersed with songs and comic incidents that seemed better adapted to the stage than to the church. The party often continued the performance for some days, going from house to house, greatly to the delight of the small boys of the place.

"The Pastorela, composed by Padre Florencio of the Coledad Mission, a copy of which is to be found among the Vallejo documents, was often performed. It was a great favorite, and was generally given on Christmas Eve. Pio Pico used to play the part of Bato, the chief shepherd, and the Vallejos frequently took part. But the best player, the one who got most applause, was Jacinto Rodríguez, who used to go to the seashore to practice his part, uttering fearful shouts, and making all kinds of crazy gestures, to the great amusement of the boys who hid near by and watched him."

## LOS PASTORES

History of San Diego: W. W. Smythe, pp. 152-153

The only thing resembling dramatic performances were the pastores, or sacred comedies, in which the inhabitants took a deep interest. On Christmas night, 1837, such a pastorela was performed, and Alfred Robinson has left an account of it. Among the performers were Guadalupe Estudillo, Felipe Barron, Isadora Pico, and other girls. He thus describes the performance and the midnight mass which preceded it:

At an early hour illuminations commenced, fire-works were set off, and all was rejoicing. The church bells rang merrily, and long before the time of mass the pathways leading to the Presidio were enlivened by crowds hurrying to devotion. I accompanied Don José Antonio (Estudillo) who procured for me a stand where I could see ~~xxx~~ distinctly everything that took place. The mass commenced, Padre Vicente de Cliva officiated, and at the conclusion of the mysterious sacrificio he produced a small image representing the infant Saviour, which he held in his hands for all who chose to approach and kiss. After this, the tinkling of the guitar was heard without, the body of the church was cleared, and immediately commenced the harmonious sounds of a choir of voices. The characters entered in procession, adorned with appropriate costumes, and bearing banners. There were six females representing shepherdesses, three men and a boy. One of the men personated Lucifer, one a hermit, and the other Bartolo, a lazy vagabond, whilst the boy represented the arch-angel Gabriel. The story of their performance is partially drawn from the Bible, and commences with the angel's appearance to the shepherds, his account of the birth of our Saviour, and exhortation to them to proceed to the scene of the manger. Lucifer appears among them, and endeavors to prevent the prosecution of their journey. His influences and temptations are about to succeed, when Gabriel again appears and frustrates their effect. A dialogue is then carried on of considerable length relative to the attributes of the Deity, which ends in the submission of Satan. The whole is interspersed with songs and incidents that seem better adapted to the stage than the church. For several days this theatrical representation is exhibited at the principal houses, and the performers at the conclusion of the play are entertained with refreshments. The boys take an enthusiastic part in the performance, and follow about from house to house, perfectly enraptured with the comicalities of the hermit and Bartolo.

CHRISTMAS IN OLD SAN DIEGO  
KFMB  
ANNCR. - LAWSON

*Written for the radio by Bob Lawson, account of  
Christmas in Old Town in the 1870's given by  
C. William Whaley, now in his 80's  
hear and living in the Old Whaley House,  
(Hemetsed) still standing in Old Town. Dec. 1948.*

ANNCR: (COLD): Christmas in Old San Diego.

THEME: SILENT NIGHT: UP FULL: BG ON CUE FOR:

ANNCR: (ON TOP) San Diego Talks It Over - Presents Christmas in Old San Diego..fifteen minutes on older times..Christmas customs and decorations...and something about the presents given in those early days when stores were not readily at hand to supply the customer with the present day modern gifts....a hint of the ingenuity displayed by the early settlers.

theme: (UP FULL): TO CONCLUSION.

ANNCR: Tonight we have Bob Lawson.. a director of the Old San Diego Chamber of Commerce..and a free lance writer who has done some research.. and will be able to answer some questions regarding Christmas time..and the manner of its celebration..starting back in the 1870's. Bob..when was the first Christmas held in San Diego?

LAWSON: Well..Al..according to history..the first Christmas to be celebrated in Southern California..was held in what is now Presidio Park in Old San Diego..at the site of that first of California's famous Missions. This spot was the seat or..we might say..the Plymouth Rock of our great West as we know it today.

ANNCR: Who were the people who celebrated this first Christmas on the West Coast?

#2.

LAWSON: They were the Fathers who founded the Mission San Diego de Alcalá..together with his small band of Spanish followers and a few soldiers..who had come to settle what was then known as Upper California.

ANNCR: Is there any record of this early celebration of Christmas?

LAWSON: The records are available..but the historians evidently neglected to consider this event of sufficient importance to catalogue it with any marked degree of particular..it is..however..stated that presents were exchanged and mass was said.

ANNCR: Let's skip a few years..and see what happened later..that is..with the coming to Southern California of the Americans.

LAWSON: While Christmas was always celebrated to some extent among the early settlers..it is believed that this event held more significance for the individual celebrations within the homes..not a celebration which was..despite its ~~being~~ universal..yet because of the great distances between.. families..not given to large gatherings.

ANNCR: Speaking of large gatherings..you mean a congregation of people banded together for the mutual celebration of the event.

LAWSON: Yes..that is right.

ANNCR: Is there any record of this first large group gathering of which you imply existence.

LAWSON: Yes..the first such fairly large group met yearly in the 1870's and for several years subsequent to that date in Old San Diego.

ANNCR: Can you tell us something of these first meetings and celebrations?

LAWSON: At that time..that is during the 1870's..those meetings were held in what was <sup>a</sup> the Town Hall..and ~~comprised~~ <sup>comprised</sup> the people who lived in San Diego at that time.

anncr; The TownHall? Is that building here today?

LAWSON: Yes..It is one of our famous landmarks in Southern California today..It is known as the Whaley House..and stands on the corner of San Diego Avenue and Harney Street.. virtually in the heart of what is now Old San Diego.

ANNCR: Who were the people who lived in the Whaley House at the time of these early celebrations at Christmas time?

LAWSON: The Whaley's..It might be interesting to state at this time that a descendant of that famous family..still lives in the Whaley House..She is..by the way..the first lady to be pensioned by the San Diego Public Library Department.

ANNCR: This is very interesting..and sometime we'd like to hear more..but getting back to Christmas..Just how was Christmas celebrated in the Old Whaley House during the 1870's?

LAWSON: As I said previously..the group comprised nearly all of the residents of San Diego at that time..Christmas..that is.. the spirit of Christmas..necessarily <sup>begun</sup> ~~comes~~ earlier than it does today..The <sup>reason</sup> ~~reason~~ being that it was the custom in those days to make gifts..which could not be purchased.

ANNCR: There were some stores in those days..however..that is correct..it it not?

LAWSON: Yes..Surprisingly..there were a few stores..But of necessity..due to transportation problems..principally.. their stock of merchandise was limited..and for this reason..restricted..~~xxx~~ to what was seemingly the bare essentials.. I do not mean that no Christmas presents.. as we ~~can~~ consider them today..could be bought..There were dolls..and later..a few mechanical toys..not by any means..the modern mechanical toys of today..but those operated by strings..etc.

ANNCR: You mention dolls....

LAWSON: The dolls..that is the commercial dolls.were china-headed dolls..with cloth-stuffed bodies..incidentally these china dolls are..some of them..considered valuable today..But the majority of the dolls..given as presents..were hand made. *There were also wax dolls finger dolls and others -*

ANNCR: You state that the Christmas Spirit began earlier than we find it today?

LAWSON: Yes..this was due to the fact that most presents were hand made..which..of course..required some time and preparation before Christmas.

ANNCR: When was this Christmas gathering held?

LAWSON: The night before Christmas....

ANNCR: Then all of these people brought their presents to the Whaley House on that date.

LAWSON: Well..not exactly..customarily the presents were brought in and placed <sup>and wrapped</sup> on the tree..~~sometimes a week before hand.~~

ANNCR: You mention a tree...Just what kind of tree did they use in those days?

LAWSON: They used a Torrey Pine..cut from the Torrey Pines Park.. Of course..that was in the days..before such measures..even for Christmas..were frowned upon by the Park Systems.

ANNCR: That brings us to decorations. Just how was the tree decorated?

LAWSON: The chief decoration ~~in those~~ was pop-corn strung along the length of ordinary binding twine..~~This was~~ similar <sup>in</sup> to some respects to the tinsel strings in use for Christmas tree decorations today..~~No other~~ <sup>decorations</sup> ~~were~~ used ~~on the tree~~..with the exception..of course..of the presents..which were tied to the branches. <sup>also placed out the floor under the tree.</sup>

*also tinsel*

ANNCR: What about house decorations?

LAWSON: I can find no record of decorations such as we use today.. They did use figures..cut from paper..and sometimes pasted to cardboard backing..representing Santa Claus..his sleigh.. reindeer..and other characters taken from children's books.

ANNCR: What did they put in the windows for decorations?

LAWSON: That seems to be a sticker..apparently they used no window decorations to speak of..and certainly no holly wreaths.. such as those of today..strangely..also..evergreen boughs.. mistletoes..and such other mediums..were not in general use for house decorations..then.

*Also tinsel... for pop corn... from balls... small candles... in line can be checked for... tinsel... from...*

ANNCR: In general what comprized these hand made presents?

LAWSON: Useful articles..of apparel..and other suitable objects.. of general utility..with the possible exception of the Snow Basket. This object was used in house decorations.. also..I forgot to mention that fact.

ANNCR: A Snow Basket<sup>S</sup>. I'll bet a lot of people never heard of a Snow Basket. I'm sure I never did.

LAWSON: Well..frankly..I had never heard of one myself..until I started looking up the old customs..A Snow Basket is quite a unique creation..requiring..considerable work and time to construct... It is..indeed..a significant contrast.. and a genuine tribute to those early settlers... when we consider a comparable amount of work expended on any single item for a present day modern Christmas.

ANNCR: Just how did they make a Snow Basket?

LAWSON: First it was necessary to acquire a good sized piece of muslin sheeting material..From this..they ripped strips <sup>half</sup> one <sub>A</sub> inch in width..The edges were then frayed out with a needle to give them a ~~xx~~ furry appearance..yet leaving a <sup>quarter</sup> inch of sound cloth in the center of the strip... They tied <sup>or knotted</sup> one end of this strip to something substantial.. and twisted the string...as many times as possible..not too much so that it would knot..but a sufficient number of times to create a spiral design throughout the length of the string.

ANNCR: They could have used these strings to decorate the Christmas tree.



LAWSON: That's right..But curiously enough..they didn't..These strings..many of them..hundreds in fact..were then sewed at <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>one or other side of the hoop or square</sup> end..around the entire periphery of a circular hoop..or..for that matter..a square one..depending entirely upon the design basket desired..Then..by means of additional rings of similar shape..but smaller in size.. graduated at intervals and sewed to the strings..they were able to fashion a basket..by drawing the string ends together..eventually..at the bottom.

*round  
around  
with russia*

*drawn together below the hoop forming a tassel*

ANNCR: <sup>Did</sup> ~~Did~~ they ever put anything into these baskets?

LAWSON: No..They never sewed the lateral edges of the strings together..so..of course..anything put in there would slip through.

ANNCR: They were used entirely for ornamentation.

LAWSON: That is correct..Sometimes they had several of these snow baskets..of various sizes..suspended from the ceilings in different rooms of the house.

ANNCR: How many people did you say attended these gatherings at Christmas time?

LAWSON: Well..I suppose..the numbers varied considerably..with the years... There must have been about 100 people..who attended the Christmas meetings at the Whaley House in the 1870's.

ANNCR: Did they have Santa Claus at these meetings?

LAWSON: The general concensus appears to bear out the theory that they did..However..in many instances.. a member of the party served in that capacity.

ANNCR: That is when Santa Claus didn't show up they provided some one to take his place.

LAWSON: That's right..Some member of the party would don a robe of red flannel...a red cap..with a tassel on the top.. and distribute the presents.

ANNCR: Was there any food ~~xxxxxx~~ served at thses Christmas meetings?

LAWSON: As a general rule..yes..there was...Usually a light lunch.. Later a dance was held..in which everyone participated.. except those with young children..Sometimes these dances lasted until 12 or 1 ~~at~~ o'clock.

ANNCR: What sort of music did they have then?

LAWSON: Most of the dancing in those days was Square Dancing..Music was supplied by local talent..usually by means of <sup>a violin and</sup> guitar.. or..an accordion.

ANNCR: Did they ever <sup>Sing</sup> ~~sing~~ Christmas carols in those days?

LAWSON: Yes..they.did..There seemed to be a great deal of singing of Christmas Carols in those years.

MUSIC: THERE: FULL: : PG FOR:

ANNCR: (ON TOP) Thank you.....

MUSIC: THERE: FULL: FILL TO END.