

Walker Journal B-10

History of Rancho San José

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Indians

The aboriginal natives here, as everywhere else in America, were the Indians. One historian says that when the explorers discovered this coast, and during the century following, "The hills and valleys of California were more thickly peopled than was any other part of the continent." (Norton's *Story of California*) Others estimate the number of Indians in California before the Americans came as about 100,000. That this valley held its share is evident from the quantities of relics, arrowheads, wampum, mortars, pottery, etc. turned up by the plow.

But the Spaniards who first built their adobe homes on the San José Rancho in 1837 found no large villages nor populous tribes. What they did find were little bands of Indians, families and groups of families, making their camps by the cienegas and streams and moving from place to place as their need or whim prompted them.

Different writers give different pictures of them—one writes that they were lazy and indolent with no such thing as morals; while another one writes they were a superior race. Somewhere between these extremes lies the real truth about the Indians found on the San José Rancho in the forties. Certainly the Indians of Southern California were an inferior race compared with those of the north, east and middle west.

The Indians here in the valley were less vigorous and active than those living in the mountains, in whom the breath of the pines, the cold water and snows of the summits and the climbing over range and canyon as they hunted mountain sheep, wildcat and bears, had developed a more rugged physique. Here in the valley, amid milder surroundings, the natives were lazy and dirty, living on a low plane both physically and mentally. Although not naturally a warlike people they were obliged to defend themselves against the attacks of the mountain and desert tribes. In these battles they were usually worsted by their more hardy enemies. Under these conditions it is not strange that when the Spaniard grantees came to the valley, comparatively few of the natives remained. By this time too, the Indians showed in various ways the effect of their contact, more or less direct during a half century or more, with the white race. The effect of this contact, so far as it was the direct influence of the missions, was universally good. (San Gabriel Mission was built, 1771). Almost universally bad was the influence of the presidio and pueblo. From the one they had adopted some of the better clothing and habits of civilized people, had learned to cook and to make many things unknown before. From the others they had acquired the habits of drinking and smoking and had been encouraged in their natural inclination to theft. Such were the Indians whom the Palomares and Vejar families found in the valley when they came, and for many years after; and whatever else we may say about them, at any rate they solved the labor problem for the settlers. However inefficient and lazy they may have been, they could learn or had already learned to ride, to help in herding, corralling and branding cattle, and in killing and skinning them, and the Indian women and children could wash and cook and do the simple work of servants in the house. Still at times the tribes of the mountains and those of the desert would swoop down and attack both Indians and settlers of the valley. More fearful now of the guns of the settlers they usually avoided direct battle, but the prizes were richer in captured booty, in horses and cattle. The occasional attacks and thieving depredations of the Indians persisted throughout the forties. Even as late as 1844, the Vejar family moved on this account to the place in what is now Walnut, where they built a large adobe

house, surrounding the place with a high wall. This hacienda remained the family home until after the death of both Ricardo Vejar and his wife Maria (Soto) de Vejar.

The E.R. Forster home is now located on this site. Ricardo Vejar died November 29, 1879, his wife Maria Soto Vejar died in 1863.

History of San José Rancho by F.P. Brackett, M.A.

San José Rancho

For nearly 300 years, since that Sunday in August 1542, when Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo sailed into San Diego Bay and took possession of this whole land in the name of Spain, no one had ever claimed this valley as his very own. The Indian tribes had hunted and fought upon it, had lived by its streams and used it all as they needed, with never a thought of ownership.

For over 60 years the flocks and herds of the San Gabriel Mission had grazed over the valley, yet neither church nor Padre held any grant or title to its acres.

About this time, two young men, sons of loyal Spanish subjects left San Gabriel Mission at daybreak one morning following the trail which led from the old mission to its branch outpost mission at San Bernardino. By their fine mounts, richly caparisoned in silver and figured leather, and by their own uniforms, as well as by their commanding presence, these two men were evidently Mexican officers. They were Ygnacio Palomares, born in Monterey, and Ricardo Vejar, born in San Diego. Both men were in the prime of early manhood and were intimate friends. Besides the half dozen soldiers accompanying them, there were a number of Indian followers who unsaddled the horses and watered them, gathering water and fuel for the camp, and obeying the orders of their leaders. These men followed the trail beside the low-lying hills, which we now call the Puente and the San José Hills. About sunset they had come to a place at the eastern end of the hills where a generous stream flowed around the point. Here, weary from the days riding, they dismounted and camped. This place is now known as Ganesha Park. Mounting their horses the next morning they crossed the stream and rode to the top of the hill. Arriving at the summit a scene of wondrous beauty met their eyes. League upon league of virgin country lay below them. Sitting long upon their horses, drinking in the beauty of this picture, they decided to choose this wonderful place as their own and petition their friend Commissioner Alvarado for a grant of land, here in this valley and over these hills. In due time the petition of Y. Palomares and R. Vejar was granted. They were given two square leagues of land. Their dream was to come true, their ambitions to be realized—they would build their homes beside the streams in the beautiful valley. They would go out with their families and take possession—they would mark off the boundaries and select their home sites. It should be no ordinary occasion, for it was the beginning of a new life for them and all their families. The priest would go with them and bless their undertakings. So a day was selected and the little party rode out, first to the Mission San Gabriel where Padre Zalvidea joined them, and then to the valley of promise. Besides Ygnacio Palomares and Ricardo Vejar and their wives, Padre Zalvidea brought a small band of Indians to take part in the simple but formal service of dedication which he was to conduct, as well as to assist in the work that would be necessary at the first.

Arrived again at the spot where the men had camped before when they chose this part of the valley for their claims, the party gathered under a large oak tree for the services and Padre Zalvidea offered a mass of thanksgiving and pronounced his benediction upon the families and their new possessions. The day which they had chosen for the occasion was March 19, 1838, the festival of San José, for which reason the new grant was dedicated by Padre Zalvidea as the "Rancho San José."

It was agreed between the men that the rancho should be held by them both as an undivided property but that Ygnacio Palomares should have for his use the northern part, while Ricardo Vejar should take the southern part. So Señor Palomares and his wife chose for the site of their home the place east of the San José Hills where upon their adobe was later built. The

location is between the two old adobes on "Cactus Lodge" Park Ave. Pomona (still standing). Señor Vejar selected his home site by the southern hills farther down the valley—east of what was later the home place of Louis Phillips, another beautiful spot—by the arroyo Pedregoso. Then to determine the boundaries of the ranchos so that they might send to the Commissioner the description to be used in the official grant, landmarks were selected as corners of the rancho as to include, as nearly as they could judge, the two square leagues allowed them and the distances measured off. No accurate survey was then possible or required. This is the way it was done as described by Don Ramon, son of this early Ricardo Vejar; starting at one of the corner landmarks, two men on horseback rode toward one of the other corners, each carrying a long pole to which was fastened one end of a reata of perhaps a hundred vara's length (a vara = 33 inches) one held his pole to the ground while the other galloped to the end of the reata and drove his pole into the ground. Then the first coiling up the reata as he rode, overtook the other and paying out the rope galloped on another length, drove his pole in turn into the ground and waited until the other end was carried forward and set. So they rode passing and re-passing each other till the course was run. The first grant ceding to Palomares and Vejar "the place called San José" was dated the 15th of April A.D. 1837, and was issued by Juan B. Alvarado, then governor *ad interim* of California. By the time the official document reached the grantees, their vaqueros had driven their cattle and flocks of sheep to the new pastures, corrals had been built for them by the streams and the adobe blocks for their houses were baking in the sun. Other houses followed—houses for the vaqueros and helpers—storehouses for hides, for wool and dried meats. Soon the two partners, Palomares and Vejar, were joined by a third—Luis Arenas, who had married a sister of Palomares. An extra league was petitioned for and the three men, Palomares, Vejar, and Arenas, were equal owners of three leagues of land. Arenas was not satisfied with a third-interest in the land and wanted more—so he petitioned for an extra league of land for himself (Azusa). All of Arenas' holdings were bought in the early forties by Henry Dalton. The first deed was not recorded but the sale was judicially confirmed on December 24, 1844. The San José Rancho contained 22,340 acres. In 1846, the problem of division of the Rancho among its owners first took definite shape. Between the original owners there had been no trouble, no thought of separation, no question of boundaries. There were no fences, and the cattle were separated from time to time by their brands. But after Arenas sold his portion to Dalton, the question of division arose. That division is a story in itself. These grants were made by Mexico—so later there was much trouble about titles by the United States government. The owners of the Rancho San José received a patent from the government in 1875.

When the Palomares heirs wanted an abstract of title, a force of six abstracters worked for the space of ninety working days in preparing this document, which is said to be the largest, longest and heaviest abstract of title in all this country, if not the world. I forget how many volumes it fills—and it must have been very expensive.

San Dimas is located on that part of the Rancho San José known as the Addition—being the last of the three leagues granted.

History of Rancho San José by F.P. Brackett, M.A.

P.S. The abstract fills 38 volumes.

A square league equals 5.760 acres for the English land league; about 4.409 acres for the old Spanish land league.

The Palomares Oak

After the Palomares family came to this valley to live, the water of the spring near the foot of the big oak tree was utilized for the Palomares household. The younger members of the Palomares family scrambled up and down the trunk of the tree out and back upon its broad limbs. They grew to maturity and their children in turn knew the shelter of the vast limbed growth, the coolness of its shadow, the strength of its massive trunk.

There are legends about the old tree—shadowy and uncertain of fact, as are many other legends—one is that of an Indian being hanged from the tree. Another of an elderly priest—or trader, no one is certain which—who became ill while camped under the big tree. He sent his Indian servant for aid—when the Indian returned, he noted that his master's many boxes, which he afterward declared were filled with gold and silver coins, and held costly gold vessels and ornaments, had disappeared. Dying a few days later, the trader-priest, whatever he may have been, declared his wealth was buried near the old oak. For many years afterwards scores of persons dug and excavated—even daring to dig around the roots of the oak itself, in search of the treasure. None has ever been found. Even after the Thomas Palomares home was erected, treasure seekers came and sought permission to dig for the buried wealth.

Prior to 1849, El Toro, Chief of the San Antonio Indians who with a group of his warriors assaulted a camp of San Gabriel Indians at this tree and slew many of them, taking prisoner their leader, Padre Sanchez of the Mission San Gabriel. The good Father was not prisoner long. Juan Antonio, by some said to have been a San Gabriel and by others declared a Soboba Indian, organized a troop from the valley tribes and raiding the San Antonio camp that very night liberated their beloved padre and killed many of his captors. The old tree, once the shelter for the valley Indians who gathered its acorns and ground them to meal in their *metates* beneath its branches, continued to grow throughout the years of the Palomares-Vejar reign over their vast estate.

The tree, because of the consecration of the great ranch on the fiesta of San José—and the rancho there for being called the “Rancho San José”—has often been called the San José Oak. However the tree has been more often termed the Palomares Oak, though neither name was inscribed to the photograph of the historic tree which is in the Hall of Fame at Washington D.C. The photograph was placed in the Hall of Fame May 15, 1921. The D.A.R.'s marked this tree with a bronze tablet in 1922, bearing the following inscription, “Under this tree was held the first Christian services in Pomona Valley, March 19, 1837.”

Mr. Ygnacio Palomares built a house for his son, Thomas, under this tree—it was the first two story house in the valley, the first story was adobe, the second story, frame. It was later known as the Alkire House. It was still standing when the present subdivision was made. Long after the two Dons established their houses, their lands were sold and resold, in time being given over to orange groves. Despite the groves, however, and the many plantings which increased with the years, successive owners of the property allowed the tree to stand. In time, as the City of Pomona expanded, the orange trees around the oak were removed and the land was subdivided, being sold as residence sites. Still the tree was retained by successive owners. In 1928, very heavy rains swept the valley and loosened the ground around the old tree's roots—with its vast bulk, and its enormous dead weight, the tree threatened to fall, particularly if other big storms came. Davey Tree Surgeons examined it, and all that was possible was done to save it. How long it will remain as one of our very earliest landmarks is difficult to say, but we all

hope that it will be spared for many years to come. It is located east of Ganesha Park—at 458 Kenoak Drive, Pomona, California.

Genevieve R. Walker

Information received from many different sources. *Historical History of San José Rancho* by F.P. Brackett, M.A. and others.

Thomas Palomares

Thomas Palomares, son of Ygnacio Palomares, married Madelena Vejar, daughter of Ricardo Vejar. The home of Thomas Palomares was situated—as has been stated—near the San José Oak, in a two story adobe house, long known as the “Alkire Place.”

Don Thomas was a large man, stout and hearty, with a kind heart and a cherry laugh. He wore a full beard and was a good looking man. Quiet and retiring in disposition, he was thoroughly honest but not shrewd and, because he was not more aggressive, he lost much of the land he inherited.

The Palomares Adobes

When the San José Rancho was divided, Señor Ygnacio Palomares chose for his use the upper part—known as San José de Arriba.

He and his wife chose for the site of their home a beautiful spot east of the San José hills—where they built their adobe in 1837 or 1838. This home was later enlarged and here the hospitality for which the early Spanish settlers were noted, was dispensed.

This adobe is still standing at 1569 N. Park Ave., Pomona, California. It is now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Kennedy. At one time it was much larger than it is now. There are now three rooms facing east—once there were five—and the outside stairway at the north end of the house once went up from the inside.

The adobe was occupied by Ygnacio Palomares until 1857 or 1858, when he moved to the new T shaped adobe he had built on what is now Cucamonga Rd. and Orange Grove. Francisco (Pancho) Palomares, son of Ygnacio, lived in the original adobe. He was born there and so were all of his children, and he and his wife died there. The original zanja is still to be seen back of the house and I think is still in use. A large ailanthus tree and an immense magnolia tree stand near the old water ditch. Some of the planting is very old—there are immense pomegranate bushes and a few old cypress.

The Second Palomares Adobe

The Palomares adobe—later known as the Meserve Place—was built by Ygnacio Palomares on the Camino Real de San Bernardino—now Cucamonga Road and Orange Grove Avenue—in 1855. He built it for his daughter Therese who that year married Ramon Vejar. But Ramon Vejar had other plans—and built a home on land set aside for him by his father Don Ricardo Vejar on what is now the Diamond Bar Ranch.

Don Ygnacio himself moved into the new house—a large T-shaped adobe building. He planted trees and vines and proceeded to hold open house there. Later it was a stopping place for the stages and was used as a tavern. An old wisteria vine is still clinging to the ruins, which was planted when the house was young and, until recently, a very old pepper tree was still standing.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF
POMONA VALLEY
(Incorporated)
Pomona, California

November 23, 1937

Mr. Harry E. Walker
Walnut Street
San Dimas, California

My Dear Sir:

The City of Pomona recently purchased property on which now stands the ruins of the left wing of what four-score years ago was considered one of the finest mansions in Southern California.

The white-walled adobe was built in the usual California manner, around a beautiful courtyard, and stood in all its glory on the old pathway known as the San Bernardino Stage Road. It was the home of Don Ygnacio Palomares.

Don Ygnacio, one of the original grantees of Rancho San Jose, was whole-souled, generous and hospitable. He kept open house for every American passing his door. His hearty greetings awaited every comer. Many an exhausted immigrant party halted here and many a foot-sore wanderer found a resting place.

If the remaining walls of this old adobe could talk they could tell the march of early days, from the swift, silent tread of barefoot Indians, the patient beat of the padres sandaled feet, the swift staccato of the horses of the caballeros, the rumbling of the wooden-wheeled ox-drawn carretas, the complaining roll of the covered wagons, the glamour of the six-house Concord stage coaches to the picturesque and almost forgotten twenty mule freighters that passed that way.

A most capable and efficient research engineer could not have turned in a more complete, accurate and authentic report than did our townsman, Frank Pedley. His plans show within a fraction of an inch the location of every door and window and the location of every tree, bush and vine.

Pomona has an historic background, holding exceptional interest for the tourist and visitor. An old historic adobe in a little Spanish garden will attract many tourists to our city.

Here they can see handsome caballeros and beautiful senoritas, elaborately costumed, revealing the picturesque life reminiscent of the gracious hospitality of olden days. From these descendants of early Californians, visitors can hear firsthand the romantic Spanish traditions handed down to them by their ancestors, hear the story of the rancho, hear how the hides and tallow were transported to San Pedro on the wooden-wheeled carretas, hear the tragic story of American pioneers who wended their way behind sturdy oxen across the vast plains and cruel trackless deserts to the West and found in this old adobe a hearty welcome.

The reconstruction of this historic landmark presents a unique opportunity for our public spirited citizens to join with the civic groups who are endeavoring with enthusiasm, courage and

cooperation to foster a civic pride in the splendid traditions, romance and color of our local background.

The flow of visitors to our city, who get a glimpse of early California, will develop a rapidly growing increase in the commercial life of our city. This period of development should be an additional reason for supporting this great civic enterprise.

The ownership of this property is vested in the City of Pomona.

The management of the property will be handled by the Historical Society of Pomona Valley.

The planning and construction will be in the hands of the following committee: Honorable Charles Short, Mayor; Fred C. Froehde, City Engineer; Frank Pedley, Research Engineer; Clyde Paige, Architect; and C.B. Afflerbaugh, Secretary of the Los Angeles County Fair and Landscape Artist.

The financing will be furthered by the following committee: Hugh A. Thatcher, President of the Chamber of Commerce; Raymond E. Smith, Vice-President of the First National Bank; A.J. Stinton, Manager of the Bank of America; Frank Bayham, Assemblyman and Councilman; Hugh W. Stiles, Secretary of the Home Builders Loan Association; Fred Palmer, President of the Mutual Building and Loan Association; and John A. Evans, Merchant.

We hope you will look with favor upon this worthy endeavor.

Yours sincerely,
Historical Society of Pomona Valley
By

Homer L. Duffy

Chairman, Campaign Committee

HLDuffy:bh

Campaign Committee
Chairman, Homer L. Duffy

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**Casa Alvarado
“Cactus Lodge”
Rancho San José**

The Alvarado Adobe was built by Ygnacio Alvarado and his wife, Doña Luisa Arvila de Alvarado in 1838. This fine adobe east of the San José hills and about three hundred yards southwest of the Palomares adobe—at 1475 N. Park Avenue, Pomona California—was the home of Ygnacio Alvarado, the close friend of Ygnacio Palomares. In those days when neighbors lived miles apart, the hospitality of Spanish settlers was proverbial, but in few other instances it was expressed in so friendly and intimate a manner as in the case of Ygnacio Palomares and Ygnacio Alvarado.

At the urgent invitation of the former, Alvarado came to Rancho San José and built his home within a stones throw of his friend, the only stipulation in the arrangement being that Alvarado should build a chapel in his house, an agreement which was accordingly fulfilled. The chapel room is still an interesting part of the old house. This room was used for worship but was never dedicated as a chapel. [Mrs. Lucretia (Burdick) Brackett was baptized in this room.] Don Francisco Palomares II said that, “people from all over the valley came to services held at the Alvarado adobe. Food was provided at the Palomares home, and there was also a room set aside for the priest in the Palomares house.

During the later years of his life Ygnacio Alvarado was confined to his bed, stricken with paralysis but the house continued to be a center of attraction in the community because of its location and roominess and because of Doña Luisa Alvarado, his wife, whose quiet hospitality stood out in contrast to the brusqueness of the paralytic.

“The picture of ‘Tia Luisa,’ as recalled by one who knew her, is that of a lady in black, dressed always in a loose waist, buttoned in front like a smock, and full pleated skirt with a large white neck scarf over the shoulders, pinned at the throat with a brooch of jet or Spanish gold and with white stockings and black cloth slippers on her feet.”

Her kindness and generosity are well remembered.

The adobe house of Ygnacio Alvarado, with its one spacious room, was always the gathering place for any social or religious occasion.

The Alvarado dances were gay affairs. Sometimes the Mexican caballeros were dressed as of old in velvet knickerbockers, long silk hose and silver-buckled pumps, embroidered jackets and bright-colored waist and sashes, but usually riding in from neighboring ranches, they would doff their sombreros and neckerchiefs and dance in their leather boots and clanking spurs which sometimes, in spite of their easy grace, wrought havoc with the rich silk dresses of their partners. And those dresses of the señoritas, heirlooms from generations of Spanish ancestry, and the Chinese shawls of silk and gold, the lace and the mantillas, were lovely.

To the music of fiddle or guitar or accordion, and with clapping of hands, while someone called the changes, they danced the quadrilles, the schottische, and the polka. Or they sat around the room on the benches against the walls, while someone more graceful than the rest danced. The young men bought casearoues from the old Indians who made them, and the belle of the evening was the señorita, or señora, whose hair was most filled with the sparkling confetti from casearoues broken over her head. Here also, at the Alvarado house, services were held once a month on Sunday when the padres came out from the mission. And the old adobe house has witnessed a number of weddings, which among the Spaniards were great events. No money was

spared to make the day as joyous as possible. However poor the family, the bride must have a fine silk dress, with a veil and wreath of wax flowers in her hair, white kid gloves and slippers—all paid for by the groom. Her mother must prepare a sumptuous dinner at whatever cost. Weeks beforehand the preparations began, canning fruit and chilies, pickling olives and drying meat which later would be pounded fine and served with gravy. Hogs were fattened for bacon and tamales. When at last the wedding day approached, everyone was invited.

The marriage ceremony, following confession, was for the most part in Latin. Arising from their knees with the benediction of the padre upon them, the gay company went to the wedding dinner. Sometimes as many as a hundred guests sat down to one of these feasts. And the Spanish housekeeper made the most of this chance to show her skill. Indians were hired to help, a large beef was killed and broiled on the coals, fried chickens and other meats were served for variety. There were steaming bowls of sopa—a Mexican dish of boiled rice with onions and garlic and seasoned with chilies, and with olives scattered through it like plums in a pudding, the whole fried to a delicious brown. Of course there were no end of sweets, like cakes, jellies, fruits, and conserves. But the most delicious dish of all, the *piece de resistance* was the juicy roast of young pig stuffed with spices and beautifully crispy brown. Of course there was always the dance, much as we have described it above, but with even more gallantry and fine dress.

The house is now the house of the Fred Reynolds family and they have preserved much of the old atmosphere—both in furnishings and charming hospitality. The east side of the house is as it was originally—the rest of it has been remodeled to some extent—it is smaller than it was in former years.

In the patio is a ninety year old lemon verbena, and on the north side of the house a marvelous old mulberry tree with a tremendous spread, making a lovely outdoor living spot in the summer.

The Vejar Adobes

Señor Ricardo Vejar selected his home site by the Spadra Hills farther down the valley than Señor Palomares—a beautiful spot by the Arroyo Pedrogoso east of what was later the Louis Phillips home place and south of the boulevard. This house was built in 1837. It has entirely disappeared.

The Indians were very troublesome—their occasional attacks and thieving depredations persisted throughout the forties. Even as late as 1844, the Ricardo Vejar family moved on this account to a place north of what is now Walnut—where they built a large one story adobe house—more pretentious than the first—surrounding it with a high wall, or “*trascorral*”. There Ricardo Vejar developed a small community and planted orchards and vineyards. The many rooms of the house were arranged in a rectangular plan—surrounding a large patio. One wing, at the southwest corner of the old ranch house, being used as a chapel and on a pepper tree, which is still standing, there hung a bell brought from Spain. This bell, which could be heard for a long distance, is one of numerous treasured historical possessions of descendants of this pioneer family. Another heirloom of this family is a statue of St. Joseph that Ricardo Vejar had secured from Italy and placed in a niche of this little chapel.

All traces of the houses, barns, servant quarters, and other buildings which stood there are gone. This hacienda remained the family home until after the death of both Ricardo Vejar and his wife. Don Ricardo Vejar died in 1879 and was buried in the Palomares burying grounds northeast of LaVerne. The home of E.R. Forster now stands on about the same spot as did the old adobe.

The “pepper tree” is still standing despite the fact they have tried to destroy it, both by cutting and burning, in years past. It is an interesting fact that this tree, planted in 1847, was a slip from the first pepper tree in California, planted at San Luis Rey Mission in 1797. A grandson of Ricardo Vejar (José Vejar) has a map of the hacienda as it was in 1847, at the time of the planting of the tree. At the time of its planting, this tree grew outside the only authorized place of religious worship between San Bernardino and San Gabriel.

The first school was held in the Vejar adobe, later in the Martinez adobe in 18__

Mud Springs

Read by Mrs. Harry E. Walker, November 13, 1937

Mud Springs was definitely mentioned when the San Gabriel Mission was being built in 1771. Some of the timbers for the mission were brought from the San Antonio Canyon and the Indians made Mud Springs one of their stopping places—both going and coming. However there is every evidence that the Indians used it as a camping place for years prior to the building of the mission. For 60 years the flocks and herds of the San Gabriel Mission grazed over the valley—yet neither church nor padre held any grant or title to its acres. There is no doubt that Juan Bautista de Anza on both of his treks from Mexico in 1774 and 1775-76 stopped here. Father Font in his complete diary describes entering this valley “with the skirts of the Sierra Nevada’s on the right and on the left by some low hills which turn to the west and at whose foot there is a lagoon when it rains.” The next mention we have of it is in 1826, when Jedediah Strong Smith, the first white man to force his way overland to California, camped here on the night of November 12, 1826—going on to San Gabriel Mission the next day.

Some ten years later two young Mexican officers, intimate friends, left San Gabriel Mission one morning with a half dozen soldiers and a number of Indian followers riding east, sunset found them at the eastern end of the hills where a generous stream flowed around the point. Here they camped for the night. This place is now known as Ganesha Park. Mounting the hill the next morning a wondrous scene of beauty greeted their eyes. League upon league of virgin country lay before them—they were entranced and later petitioned their friend Commissioner Alvarado for a grant of this land, which in due time was received and the Rancho San José was dedicated March 12, 1837. These young men were Don Ygnacio Palomares, born in Monterey, and Don Ricardo Vejar, born in San Diego. The families of both of these young men came from Spain to Mexico. Near Barcelona, Spain are two small towns, Vejar and Palomares, named for the ancestors of these families. Soon after these two received their grant, they were joined by a third, Don Luis Arenas, who had married a sister of Ygnacio Palomares. They were granted an extra league of land and the three were equal owners of the three leagues. Don Luis was born in the northern part of Spain. In the early forties all of Don Luis Arenas’ holdings were bought by Henry Dalton. In 1846, the problem of division of the rancho took definite shape. The division is a story in itself. When the division was made, Henry Dalton was given the part upon which Mud Springs was located.

Our next interest in Mud Springs is the purchase of 160 acres of land, including the springs, by Denis S. Clancy, an Irishman, in 1863. He purchased it from F.L.A. Pioche and paid \$10,000 for it—so the story goes. He settled here with his family and built a house and corrals. His place was a stop for the stages running between Los Angeles and San Bernardino. It was also a stopping place for the soldiers en route to Yuma and he had a government contract to furnish food and hay for the horses. The Clancy’s lived there until 1870, when Henry Dalton arrived upon the scene and claimed that Clancy had no right to the property; lawyers advised Clancy to give it up as he could never get a clear title to the land. This he did—losing all he had put in it. There were evidently others who had lived at Mud Springs before the Clancy’s although we cannot find out anything definitely. When Roy Fryer of Spadra was looking up data about the Butterfield Stage Line, he found in the county records the following, “September 16, 1863 – I.D. Mott and James A. Cattick to Denis Clancy—consideration \$1,000 Mud Springs

station with houses, stables, corrals, etc. and about 160 acres of land.” Also the following “Paulo Navarro to Dennis S. Clancy—owned formerly by Ive White and before Michael White—160 acres in Potrero of San Jose Rancho of Los Angeles County, book 8, page 332, Deeds, January 16, 1867.” In 1878, Mr. Crawford Pinkney Teague and his sons, Jasper Newton Teague and David Clinton Teague, purchased from J.S. Slauson, who had taken over Daltons holdings, a tract of land including Mud Springs. They were the first permanent settlers and their descendents are still living there or near there. With the coming of the railroad the town of San Dimas was born. The San José Land Company was incorporated February 28, 1887, and this company put San Dimas on the market on May 1, 1887. The first train ran through the town site and through Mud Springs itself. Since then the history of this section is much the same of the other towns of the period.

The first mention we have of schools in connection with Mud Springs is in 1870. The San José School District was formed in 1867. In 1870, a petition was sent the Supervisors of L.A. County asking that a division of the school district be made from north to south forming the Palomares District so as to include the families of Saturino Carrion, Mr. Wright and Mr. Clancy on the western boundary of said district. In 1868, three families came to this district—they were Cyrus Burdick, Charley Cunningham and W.T. Martin—their homes were at the foot of the mountains from San Dimas Canyon west. In 1875, the Cunningham’s were still living there and W.C. Martin was instrumental in having a school district formed. It was called the San Dimas District, named for the canyon, and extended as far east as what is known as Indian Hill-C Claremont. The first school building was built on the east side of Cunningham Canyon (now Ham Canyon) in a clump of sycamores. The building was about 12 x 12, with seats all around the walls. Mr. W.C. (Uncle Billy) Martin was one of the first trustees. And the first teacher was A.A. Green. The school which was started in 1875, was closed in 1883.

For the next two years school was held in a little building, a 12 x 20 shanty, built with a lean-to roof which was located just east of the present La Verne Heights school building, across a little wash. The building had seats with a place for books and an inkwell which the pupils thought was wonderful. The first teacher was Robert Sallee who lived in Live Oak Canyon. In 1885, a school building was erected on the present La Verne Heights site—this building was used until 1903. In 1890, the Mud Springs District was formed and school was held in the Mills building (cor. Bonita and Exchange Place). The children up until this time attended what is now known as the La Verne Heights School on Base Line Road, which was in what was then the San Dimas School District. In 1891, the San Dimas Grammar School was erected on Cataract St.

Written by Mrs. Harry E. Walker and read at the annual autumn session of the San Antonio Library Association held at La Verne—November 13, 1937

[A square league is 5.760 acres for the English land league; about 4.409 acres for the old Spanish land league.]

Some reminiscences of Ramon de Jesus Vejar as related to Mrs. J. W. Wilkinson and Miss S.M. Jacobus.

January 29, 1914

My name is Ramon de Jesus Vejar. I was born December 23, 1830, at what is now Hollywood on the Rodeo de las Aguas Rancho. The land was a grant to us. My father was Ricardo Vejar. He was born (in or near) San Diego. He died November 29, 1879. My mother was Maria (Soto) de Vejar. She died in 1863. Her parents were Juana de Soto and José Soto. Salvador de Vejar, my grandfather, came to Mexico from Spain—he came from Mexico to California. Ygnacio de Vejar stayed in Mexico. He was my grandfather Salvador's brother.

Salvador Vejar made the plans for and directed the building of San Gabriel Mission.

My wife is Teresa de Jesus (Palomares) de Vejar. She was born October 14, 1838.

One of the Palomares ancestors defended a fortress in Old Spain against the Moors and finally destroyed it to keep it from falling into the hands of the enemy.

We were married by Padre Amabile June 19, 1855, at San Bernardino. The wedding festivities lasted a week. One of the amusements was a bull fight. The extemporized ring was between the house, now known as the Nichols house, and the old adobe that stood to the south, later known as the Alkire place. This latter is now torn down. We had no professional bull-fighters. The men were all used to handling horses and cattle, and many of us went into the ring. I myself did so once, at least on this occasion. We had a ramada for the dancing, etc.

My wife and I were both educated by private teachers in our homes. The younger members of our families were educated at Santa Maria Convent in Los Angeles. The Indians and the half-breed children were forced to attend school at the Mission. The mission schools were not for children of gente de razon.

The Mexican government gave the grant for the San José Rancho to my father and my wife's father—Palomares. It was a cattle ranch. When we killed, there would be 200 head killed at one time. The tallow was melted into bags of skins and the beef was dried. The dried meat is called carnes seca, or jerked beef, or jerky. We milked 40 cows and made cheese and butter. Some of the prices I remember were as follows:

We sold our hides for \$1.25 a piece

Zapatos cost \$6.00 per pair (Zapatos were heavy boots)

Muslin was \$1.00 per yard

Broadcloth was \$16.00 per yd.

Women's dress goods was \$4.00 per yard.

I was not in the war as I was too young, but I saw something of it, especially of the battle of Bartolo. Ramon Carrillo was a brave man who fought against the Americans, killing 14 of them. He had 30 men himself. Some of the Americans reported the engagement to Fremont, then at Sacramento. At another time we were returning from Redondo by ox cart and stopped on the way at Los Angeles to fight. We had been on business, teaming goods or something of that sort. Redondo and San Pedro were ports we used to travel to by ox carts when necessary.

The Indians used to come down from the hills and steal. Once they came and took Palomares' horses. Then they came to the house and asked if he was man enough to follow them. Palomares got the neighbors together, with friendly Indians, and followed them to the San

Bernardino Mts. Finally they found a deserted camp, with one old woman eating a horse's leg. Palomares, angry, took the horse's leg and beat the old woman, leaving her unconscious. He did not recover the horses.

On one occasion (probably not that related in the last paragraph) they captured three adult Indians and one child and kept them as family servants. They tried to keep them in a corral, but the Indians would jump out and run away.

One of the songs we sang was in English. "The Tear of First Love" (we did not get the Spanish title complete—"Lagrima de Primer Amor").

As far as I can remember the first American to hold land in the vicinity of Pomona was Cyrus Burdick. Theo Ruth had a drugstore in the early history of Pomona.

The Vejar Family 1925

Ramon Vejar – 1830 to 1925

Quietly slipping away just three days before his 95th birthday, Ramon J. Vejar, a figure identified with the Southland years before there was more than wandering bands of Indians in this region, died at his home on La Verne Road, just outside the limits of La Verne, on the night of Sunday, December 20, 1925.

Born at the San Gabriel Mission, he was a grandson of Salvador Vejar, founder in California of the noted circle of that name, and who aided in the construction of that mission and other church structures. Ramon Vejar had never lived elsewhere than San Gabriel Valley and came within the area of the portion called Pomona Valley in 1872.

The lineage of this family began in Spain, from which country Salvador went to Mexico, and then to California to assist in the building of missions. His children were 1) Magdalena, 2) Pablo, 3) Ricardo, 4) Emilio, 5) Crisostomo, 6) Lazaro, 7) Francisco, 8) Nazaria, 9) Ramona, and 10) José Manuel. (13 children in all)

The father of Ramon Vejar was Ricardo, a native of San Diego, who became a wealthy cattle and land owner, accumulating 13,000 acres and hundreds of cattle and horses in Pomona Valley. His house stood near the site of the Louis Phillips homestead, built of adobe as was then the style.

Ricardo Vejar married Maria Soto, and to them came eight children in the following order: Maria, Pilar Francisco, Ramon, Josefa, Antonio, Concepcion, Magdalena, and Ygnacio.

Ramon received as his share of the estate, 278 acres, part of which he developed into a first-class vineyard.

His wife was Teresa Palomares, daughter of Ygnacio Palomares, distinguished in the annals of that family which also played a part in Pomona's birth. There was another child, Zolio, who died a number of years ago, and another daughter, Carolina, also deceased.

[Copied from the *La Verne Leader*, Dec. 20, 1925]

Don Ricardo Vejar, Rancho San Jose

Don Ricardo Vejar was born in San Diego, Calif. and died at the family home near Walnut (which was built in 1847) November 29, 1879, and is buried in the Old Palomares Cemetery northeast of La Verne, Cal. He was the son of Salvador Vejar and Josepha Lopez de Vejar. The lineage of this family began in Spain, from which country Salvador Vejar came to Mexico. He came to California from Mexico in 1791, with the third expedition of Father Junipero Serra to assist in the building of the missions.

Salvador married Josepha Lopez in 1800. They were the parents of thirteen children of whom Ricardo was the second son. Every five years this family had a reunion and a record was kept of these gatherings up until 1857. There was another reunion in 1862, and Josepha was in poor health and died the following year. There is no record of that last gathering. In the last record, October 1857, there were thirteen children, eighty-two grandchildren, fifty-seven great grandchildren and one great, great grandchild, making one hundred and fifty-three descendents. Hosea Vejar was the great, great grandchild—he is the grandson of Ramon Vejar and is still living at the family home on La Verne Ave. (1936). Ricardo Vejar married Maria Soto, she died

in 1863. They were the parents of eight children, Ramon Vejar the fourth child, passed away a few days before his ninety-fifth birthday, at his home on the Lordsburg Road (La Verne Ave.) in 1925.

[Information received from Ramon Vejar and Senator R.L. del Valle. I knew Mr. Ramon Vejar for 30 years before he passed away in 1925. – Genevieve R. Walker]

Told by Senator R.L. del Valle – February 19, 1934, to members of the Pomona Valley Historical Society at the J. F. Forster home which is built on the site of the old Vejar home.

(Parents of Ricardo Vejar, Grandparents of Ramon Vejar, Great Grandparents of Jose, Francisco, Manuel, Stella, Carrie, etc.)

Salvador Vejar came to California from Mexico in 1791 with the third expedition of Father Junipero Serra. In 1800, he married Josepha Lopez—she died in 1863. They had 13 children. Pablo was the elder son and Ricardo was the second son. Every five years they had a family reunion, and a record was kept of these gatherings up until 1857. There was another reunion in 1862 and Josepha was in poor health and died the following year. There is no record of that last gathering. In the last record, October 1857, there were 13 children, 82 grandchildren, 57 great grandchildren and 1 great, great grandchild—making 153 descendants. Hosea Vejar was the great, great grandchild.

Ricardo Vejar, second son of Salvador and Josepha Vejar, was one of the original grantees of the Rancho San Jose in 1836. His first home was east of what is now Spadra, near Valley Boulevard—that was from 1837 to 1844. In 1847, he built a home northeast of Walnut Station. It was a Rancheria with many buildings for servants. The house was quadrangular in form as most of the better houses were at that time. On the southwest corner was a chapel, the only one between San Gabriel and San Bernardino. All the inhabitants from near and far came there to worship and when the priests came there were the christenings, weddings, and so on.

A pepper tree was planted outside the chapel—it was a sprout from the first pepper tree brought to California and planted at San Luis Rey Mission in 1798. The chapel bell hung in this pepper tree, and could be heard for a long distance. The pepper tree is still standing at this date (February 19, 1934) even though they have tried to burn it out in years gone by. The bell which hung in this pepper tree is still in the possession of the Vejar family at the old Vejar home on Lordsburg Road, and is one of their most cherished possessions. The first school in the Walnut district was in the Vejar home. Later (in 1863) there was a school on the Martinez place a little west of the Vejars.

Gold was discovered in the Placerita Canyon near Newhall March 9, 1842. The Donner Party, or the remains of the party, were rescued within a mile or two of this point on the del Valle San Fernando Rancho, February 12, 1849 (this was the grandfather of Senator R.L. del Valle). Two historical spots of more than passing interest. The remains of the old del Valle home is still standing on the hill near the above mentioned points.

Note: Roger P. Dalton of Azusa has in his possession a letter from a man in Tepic, Mexico written to his grandfather, Henry Dalton, dated 1843, asking for information in regards to the gold discovered in the Placerita—he makes many inquiries. I saw this letter August 31, 1935. — G.R.W.

Notes taken by Mrs. Harry E. Walker, Feb. 14, 1934.

The Palomares Family 1900

The ancestor of all the Palomares of Alta California was Cristobal Palomares, a native of Spain, who came to Alamo, Mexico, with his father. From there Cristobal came as a soldier to Monterey in the early part of this century.

A daughter of this patriarch, the venerable Doña Josefa Palomares de Arenas, now 85 years of age, is still (March, 1900) a resident of this city. From her I have lately obtained interesting data relating to the family, which is numerous under the same and other names, both here and in Santa Clara County; and also concerning her somewhat romantic life.

Cristobal Palomares was married in Monterey to Benedita Sainz. Afterwards he removed to Santa Barbara and later to Los Angeles where he resided until his death. The following is a list of the children of Cristobal Palomares and of the persons to whom they were married, as given to me by Doña Josefa:

1. Barbara – married P. Alvarado
2. Concepcion – married Antonio Lopez
3. Rosaria – married Bernado Higuera
4. Dolores – married José Ramirez
5. Estefana – married Ygnacio Machado
6. Josefa (still living) – married first to José M. Abila, and second to Luis Arenas
7. Pilar – died young
8. Maria de Jesus – married F. Figueroa
9. Ygnacio – married Concepcion Lopez
10. Francisco – married Margarita Pacheco
11. Luis –
12. Cristobal, born 1836

Ygnacio, who lived many years on his rancho, San José, which included the site of the present town of Pomona, and who died there in 1864, was one of Doña Josefa's brothers. He was also grantee of Rancho Azusa. Doña Josefa, who is a native of Los Angeles, was born in 1815. She was married when fifteen years of age to José Maria Abila (who in 1825 was alcalde of Los Angeles) the chivalrous young Californian whom Professor Polley has not inaptly called a modern "Alcibiades," and who was killed in the encounter between the forces of San Diego and Los Angeles with Governor Victoria at Cahuenga in 1831, when, at the same time, Captain Romualdo Pacheco (father of Governor Romualdo Pacheco) was also killed, both good and valuable citizens. The people of this part of the territory, feeling that they had abundant cause to resist the oppressive acts of Victoria, had risen in rebellion and, as a result of the hostile meeting at Cahuenga, Governor Victoria was driven out of the country.

Señora Palomares de Arenas retains a very vivid remembrance of the exciting events of that day, nearly 70 years ago, when she, then only sixteen years of age, lost within a few hours both her dashing, chivalrous husband, and her aged father; for her father was at the time very ill, and the shock he received from hearing of the tragic end of his son-in-law, caused his own death the same day.

Shortly, or two or three months after their death, the bereaved young widow gave birth to a posthumous child.

Governor Victoria was seriously wounded at Cahuenga and he retired to San Gabriel, where he voluntarily resigned his office and left the country, and his tyrannical administration of the affairs of the country came to an end; and thus the revolution was successful, Pio Pico becoming Victoria's successor.

Four years after the death of Señora Abila's first husband, she married Luis Arenas. The children of this second marriage are:

1. Josefa – married to J.M. Miller;
2. Ampara – married to L. Schiappa Pietra;
3. Luisa – married to L. Stanchfield;
4. Amelia – married to Charley Ross.

Although Mrs. Abila-Arenas from advanced age is quite infirm, as is natural, she is still a fine looking woman. She retains the clear use of her mental faculties; her reminiscences of the olden times of fifty, sixty and seventy years ago are exceedingly interesting.

By H. D. Barrows. pp. 254-255, Annual publication of the Historical Society of Southern California and of the "Pioneers of Los Angeles County," 1902, Vol. 5, Part 3.

Some of the information received from Don Francisco Palomares II – June 15, 1933

Given at the old Palomares Adobe – before members of the Southern California and Pomona Valley Historical Societies. Don Francisco Palomares II, of Fresno delighted the assemblage of approximately eighty people with a series of anecdotes centered around his home where he played as a little boy.

In the group of visitors were representatives of a number of the old Spanish California families and people prominent in the states' historical circles. Thus the tales told by Don Francisco Palomares, who came here from Fresno especially give the society intimate glimpses into the historical background of the Rancho San José, which embraced all of present-day Pomona, La Verne and San Dimas, were of special interest to the organization which aims to preserve the early history of Southern California.

His memory still keen as to the stories his father had told him about the old rancho. Don Francisco, who has an inimitable way of relating anecdotes, gave information about the old rancho and the Palomares homestead which will go down in history. The setting was ideal for such a meeting, the graciousness of the host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Kennedy, immediately recalled the hospitality of those old Spanish days to which Don Francisco referred from time to time.

He made no attempt at formality, but related little stories that were refreshing. The old adobe house which is the main portion of the Kennedy home was built in 1837 or 1838 by Don Ygnacio Palomares. "My father and all his children were born here." Don Francisco said in recalling that Saturday marked his second visit in fifty years.

"No one was permitted to pass through the rancho without stopping for repose and refreshments," Don Francisco stated, and in this connection he told the story of a journey made by John Wolfskill and Frank Sabachi with intention of purchasing some land where San Bernardino is now located.

Mr. Wolfskill, one of California's first senators and one of the early American trappers to come to California, and Mr. Sabachi were passing thru the San José Rancho when some of the Palomares' Indians stopped them and asked them to go to the ranch house. The travelers explained they were in a hurry, but to this the Indians replied, "If you don't come we will take you." The visitors were entertained for two weeks at the Palomares' home, Don Francisco recalled. Since, at the end of that time, Mr. Wolfskill had lost the opportunity to purchase land at San Bernardino, Don Francisco's father took them to San Diego County where Mr. Wolfskill bought some land (about where Escondido now stands).

The high regard the Indians had for the grandfather of Don Francisco was revealed in the story the speaker told as to the homage the 200 Indians paid him at his death. The Indians wanted to view the remains—they chanted over the body and strewed pine nuts over the casket—also placing strings of pine nuts over it, then surrounded the casket with Indian baskets. They asked to see the mother who was ill—they performed a similar ceremony over her. After Don Ygnacio was buried they asked permission to perform another ceremony at the grave. The next morning all the Indians with the exception of a half dozen were gone and never returned. The others remained until after the death of the mother—when after duplicating ceremonies performed at the death of his father, they too left and did not return.

They always kept many Indian servants and Indians always acted as nurses for the children.

Then he told about the fiestas and the subtle way the Indians had of asking for steers. Once a year the Indians on the rancho would ask “permission” to hold a fiesta, but by “permission” they meant they wanted a gift of steers. Don Francisco added, “As long as the beeves lasted, the fiesta would continue and that was usually at least a week.”

“There were no banks in California in the early days, and hides were the medium of exchange. As long as there were plenty of cattle everything was alright.” Don Francisco stated his grandfather, Don Ygnacio, was what was known as judge of the plains—or field judge, and noted for the originality of his decisions in the days when justice was invoked always. He also told about the horse races and chicken fights held at what is now Spadra. The speaker provoked laughter when he told how Saturino Carrion, unable to speak English with ease, had a horse which he named “Horse” because he could not think of a better word in the English tongue.

Scarcity of money was revealed when Don Francisco told of the sale of a portion of Rancho San José, where La Verne is now located for \$1.50 per acre. Even at that price, four years passed by before the money was paid and the purchaser, J. W. Lord, was not sure he could raise the money. The “boom days” of the ‘80’s however, enabled him to consummate the deal.

“My father had a large winery here. Wine was never sold. At no time did I ever see anyone on the ranch under the influence of drink.” There was little if any profanity, he said, and explained the punishment dealt out to those who did use profane or vulgar language. A salt bit was put in their mouths which they were unable to remove.

Ygnacio Palomares gave twenty-five acres of his land to his friend Ygnacio Alvarado, so he might have a neighbor. These two houses, the Palomares adobe and the Alvarado adobe, are still standing close together on Park Avenue. One of the stipulations was that Alvarado was to build a chapel. Don Francisco mentioned that people from all over the valley came to church services held at the Alvarado home adjoining the Palomares place. Foods were provided at the Palomares home, which was also headquarters for the priest.

When Don Francisco was a child, for punishment he was sometimes sent into a room which contained a picture of St. John with his finger pointing toward heaven. His mother would say, “You may come out when St. John puts his finger down.” He hated this picture—he would stay as long as he could, then would come out and tell his mother that St. John had put his finger down. The old zanja still runs by the old home and he told of how when he was a child and needed to be punished he would get in the middle of the zanja (which was much larger then) so his mother could not get to him—but he said if he heard or saw his father coming, he lost no time in getting out of it. Don Francisco stood by this same zanja—in the shadow of a huge shade tree known as the “tree of heaven” in the garden of the old Palomares home—the first house to be built in the valley almost 100 years ago—when he gave this talk.

Some of those present are as follows:

H.W. Wagner, San Marino – President of the S.C. Historical Society

Charles G. Adams – Vice President—who was the master of ceremonies

Dr. Owen Coy – curator from the University of California

Frank Rolfe – Treasurer

Miss Marion Parks – Secretary

J. Gregg Layne – a past president of the society—he lived in Pomona, as a boy. He is

one of the directors of the society. He is a noted collector of early California books. His collection of books known as *Californiana* was recently secured for the Doheny Library at the University of Southern California.

Mr. F. W. Hodge – director of the Southwest Museum

Mr. Robert E. Cowan – head of the W.K. Clark Library in Los Angeles

Mrs. Florence Dodson Shoneman (old Spanish families) – who has been prominent for many years in California history work with the California Federation of Woman's Clubs

Mr. W. O. Waters – of the Huntington Library

Mr. Lindley Bynum – of the Huntington Library

“The Historical Society of Southern California is the oldest in point of continuous activity west of St. Louis and next November it will be 50 years old.”

Marcella Wolfskill – a great, granddaughter of the Wolfskill previously mentioned, was among those in the party.

Mrs. Malin and her daughter Dolores – descendants of the Alvarado family were here. Also representatives of the Garcia-Lopez, Sepulveda and De la Ossa families.

Pictures

I have snap shots of “The Palomares Adobe”

“The Alvarado Adobe”

“Ignacio Palomares” and “Jose Vejar” – grandsons of the original grantees

“Mrs. Ignacio Palomares” who was an Alvarado

“Don Francisco Palomares II”

“Mrs. Christina Palomares de Garcia”

“Porfirio R. Palomares and son”

“Marcella Wolfskill” – great, granddaughter of John Wolfskill

“Mrs. Lucy Malin” – descendent of the Alvarado family

“Miss Dolores Malin” – descendent of the Alvarado family

“Mr. Ygnacio Garcia”

—all taken June 12, 1933 at the old Casa Palomares Park

Don Ygnacio Palomares
Rancho San Jose

The ancestor of all the Palomares of Alta California was Cristobal Palomares, a native of Spain, who came to Alamo, Mexico, with his father. From there Cristobal came as a soldier to Monterey, California in the early part of 1800, during the Spanish era and had been loyal to the Crown of Spain in the days of Governor Arrillaga and the later years when Pablo Vicente de Sola, last of the line of Spanish governors in California fought his losing fight to hold the new province for his own country, Spain, to which he was so loyal.

Don Ignacio Palomares was born in Monterey in 1811, and died on the Rancho San José November 2, 1864, and is buried in the Palomares burying ground northeast of La Verne.

It is doubtless true, and will probably continue to be true historically, that the interest of the people will generally center about this one of the two first owners of the land in the San José Valley more than in any other of its worthy pioneers.

Rancho San José

Occupation of the “Rancho” by the Palomares and Vejar Families

Bracket’s History

After the adobe houses of Palomares and Vejar had been completed, and those of their overseers and vaqueros, after the stock had been driven to the rancho and pastured there, after the corn and potatoes, the beans and peppers and other necessities of life had been planted and brought to harvest—when all was in readiness, the men transferred their families to their new houses. There had been various journeys to Los Angeles before, for stock and seed, for building materials, lumber, doors and windows, tools and other hardware. Everything that was needed for the simple construction of their adobe houses had been brought from Los Angeles, then a pueblo of two or three hundred Mexican population. Now came the household goods, some on pack animals and some in carretas drawn by oxen. In this fashion too came Doña Maria Soto de Vejar, wife of Ricardo Vejar, and Doña Concepcion Lopez de Palomares, wife of Ygnacio Palomares, with their children.

Primitive as it was, the carreta was the most luxurious vehicle of the time. The carreta was a two wheeled cart, whose wheels were made either of a single block of wood or of solid planks placed edge to edge to make a piece broad enough to saw out a circular disk three or four feet in diameter. These turn upon a heavy wooden axle, six or eight inches thick, to which was fastened and braced the long log or trunk of a small tree, which reached forward to serve as the tongue. Upon these two logs, the tongue and the axle, with no intervening springs, rested the floor of the cart, four or five feet wide and seven or eight feet long, made of heavy boards or logs hewn flat and framed together by end pieces which, like the edges, were extra thick. Driven into this frame were upright sticks framed together at the top to make sides and ends, resembling a hay wagon, rising two or three feet above the bottom.

The oxen were fastened to the tongue by reatas or hair ropes bound to the horns, and mounted riders guiding them with goads and shouts. Women and children rode in these carretas, seated on a blanket or hide, or squatting on the floor.

The appearance of a carreta on the Camino Real was more of a novelty then than an airplane in the sky today, and a ride in one almost as rare. Moreover the loud shouting of the drivers and the screams of laughter (and pain) from the passengers as they jounced and bounded along over the rough road, together with the piercing squeak of the wheels, despite frequent oilings with soap, would proclaim quite effectively their approach.

Nor were the elements of excitement and danger wanting, for an ox would sometimes pull to one side and overturn the load, or an ox would break or the wheels would bog to the axle in adobe mud.

Luis Arenas
1805 – 1863

[Records of Pomona Cemetery, Luis Arenas born 1796, died 1869—Roy M. Fryer]

Luis Arenas was born in 1805, in the province of Santander, northern part of Spain, family originating in Las Asturias, a principality of the kingdom of Spain. A distinguished and educated gentleman of wealth and prominence familiar with state affairs long before his activities as a politician and ranchero in Southern California.

In the year 1834, he met his bride to be, Josefa Palomares de Avila, through his association with Juan Bandini, his daughter Arcadia and Josefa being friends from childhood until the closing of their lives. Josefa Palomares, born in 1815 in Los Angeles, was also from a distinguished family from Madrid Spain; daughter of Cristobal and sister of Ignacio Palomares. She married Juan Maria Avila in 1830. He was killed in the battle of the Cahuenga Revolution against Governor Manuel Victoria. As the Captain of the forces against the Governor, he shot and killed Romualdo Pacheco of the Governor's forces, receiving a fatal bullet in his own body.

Her father, Cristobal, having been in ill health dropped dead with the news of the death of his son-in-law. They and Captain Pacheco were buried in the little churchyard of our Mission Queen of the Angels at the Plaza. With the double bereavement, Josefa has the anticipation of motherhood. Six months later a daughter, Mercedes, was born.

With the marriage of Don Luis and Doña Josefa in 1835, were united two figures interwoven with early California history. Don Luis little realized his destiny as his life unfolded from year to year.

Believing in a just cause to escape the terrible consequences of revolt against Mexico, he was prominent in the latter part of 1836 as one of the leaders, as Captain under Juan B. Alvarado, ad interim until he learned of the Governor's true motives, and in 1837 became his ardent supporter. He was elected Alcalde, in 1838, of the Ayuntamiento, and his staunch upholding of Alvarado's administration made him a few political enemies amongst his associates in Southern California. The Governor, grateful for his loyalty through the internal quarreling in the south, in 1838 wrote to Ignacio Palomares and Ricardo Vejar, grantees, in 1837, of San José Rancho consisting of two leagues, stating that, if they would admit Luis Arenas as equal partner in the San José Rancho an additional league of land would be granted them. In 1840, he became associate owner of the San José Rancho and San José Addition. In the latter part of 1841, he was granted Rancho de Azusa, lying west of San José Rancho, originally consisting of four leagues. He took possession in the early part of 1842, when he built a palatial adobe of that period. To square his land he was also granted in 1842 nine more leagues, referred to as Los Huecos Rancho La Puente. In December 19, 1844, he sold Rancho de Azusa with all improvements and cattle and other personal property and his one-third interest in Rancho San José to Enrique Dalton for \$7,000. A copy of the original Spanish Deed, translated, is on record. It is interesting to note the names of the witnesses on same—all connected with early California history. The sale proved to be very unfortunate for Enrique Dalton and Don Luis. As was stated he was an ardent supporter of Governor Alvarado, for the grants alluded to will bear out this fact. With the return to power of the old regime of 1836, of the south in 1844, "somewhat tricky for their own interests," in the early part of December, called upon Don Luis for funds; he, stating that his only means of raising funds was through the sale of his ranchos. (Alvarado and Vallejo claim that the Pico's and

Carrillo's brought, in presence of threats to choose between holding office as patriots, or being shot at once as adherents of tyranny). Don Luis was one of the regidores of the Ayuntamiento of that year, however his political enemies lost no time in locating Mr. Henry Dalton and the sale was made. Pio Pico was declared Governor in 1844. The battle of Cahuenga, of 1845, was fought—on his own rancho, referred to as Cahuenga Rancho—Rancho La Providencia a part of which is now Burbank. He owned one-third interest in this rancho, with Comandante J. Castro and Vicente de la Ossa, consisting of 4,603.35 acres, which they sold for 37 ½ cents an acre to Bell and Alexander.

Under the alleged Pico sale of missions, he bought for \$1,200 with Juan Castaneda and Bonita Diaz, the orchard of Santa Clara and buildings pertaining to it. In his claim for the same, before representatives of the United States, with the grant signed by Pio Pico and Jose Matias Moreno, appended to it was a receipt of articles furnished to the government. The receipt referred to was given for security of note for \$3,200 and read, "Those interested in the city of Los Angeles, on the second of July 1846" signed by Pio Pico; also 200 head of cattle, which Don Luis stated when his case was heard, "My cattle are on Pico's ranch today." United States decision: that grant was made subsequently to the conquest of the country and is antedated.

The years of Emanuel Micheltorena's and Pio Pico's rule are known to be the most fraudulent, pertaining to forgery of titles and land grants. He did not file a claim for Rancho La Puente, knowing too well the laws on these old grants, denounced if not cultivated, claimed by John Rowland and William Workman, before United States Commissioners and confirmed.

Also, his Panba Rancho of six leagues, San Diego County, was claimed by Luis Vignes. Don Luis was a man above medium stature, fair complexion, affable manners, adventurous and aggressive. The losing of his land did not spell doom for him. He went north to San José, thence to Stockton, and became active in gold digging of the El Dorado. So plentiful was the coin of the realm before the days of the banks that silver dollars and Spanish doubloons were stored under his home in sacks, for safe keeping, and given to his children with which to build play-houses. Returning to San José Rancho, he built a spacious adobe on the Aguaje Ranch, so called because of a beautiful spring with large pond and weeping willows which confronted the patio of his home. It was located at Old San Bernardino Road, or old original El Camino Real and Pomona Road, a short distance east of what are now Garey and Holt Avenues. He also acquired land in San Buena Ventura and built a home on the hill over-looking the mouth of Ventura River. He spent his few remaining years between these two ranchos. After the American occupation, it was difficult for him to adopt the vogue of attire. His last request of his wife was to be laid away in his Spanish custom of dress. He died at the Aguaje, in 1863, and is buried in the old Pomona Cemetery.

Besides his widow, he left a son, Francisco, and four daughters. After the death of Don Luis, his wife Josefa continued to fulfill his plans. She retained and improved both ranches. Her heart full of sorrow, she moved to the home in Ventura, where her children attended school and were married.

Between these places she divided her efforts. With artesian wells on the Aguaje to irrigate her orange grove, she developed it into one of the most beautiful ranches of Pomona Valley. Three grandchildren, the children of Mrs. Luisa Arenas de Stanchfield, were born there 1881 – 1888. During this period three of the eldest attended the Kingsley Tract School in Claremont. She sold this vast tract of land, first in acreage and the last in town lots, including the Ventura property. Doña Josefa had witnessed the passing of her son, Francisco, and her

daughter, Mrs. Aurelia de Ross. When she bid this world good-bye, she had lived through the romantic and picturesque past of California and into the practical and progressive era. She was the last member of her generation, and died in 1901, at her home, 1212 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, and buried in Calvary Cemetery. Three daughters survived her, Mrs. Josephine de Miller, Luisa de Stanchfield, and Mrs. Ampara de Schiappa Pietra. Her daughter, Luisa, is the only living member of her generation.

Compiled by Mrs. Adeline Lemieux—granddaughter of Luis Arenas, 1934.

A few notes found on the records of Ignacio Palomares.

Palomares—prospering, his herds grew to thousands, his family to hundreds. He gave away a good deal of land. In one case he gave to a friend a plot of ground, specifying only that the adobe, when built, should contain a chapel where priests, passing on El Camino Real, could worship. He made gifts so he would be protected from wild Indians, from the north, east, south and west. He had difficulty in getting his friends to accept land. He gave Pomuseno Alvarado 1800 varas square, but he was not content, so Ignacio gave him 500 head of cattle, which was still not enough and Ignacio added all his small herd of cattle on his rancho. Alvarado had no record of the same and when Ignacio was an aged gentleman, Alvarado made him ride his horse to swear before a judge, that he owned it by virtue of grant. Judge gave Alvarado decree, made him swear never to revoke same.

Of this period deeds were kept in a box in the vestry of the church.

—Adeline Lemieux, 1934

Copied from a paper in possession of the Pomona Valley Historical Society. September, 1935

Henry Dalton

1917

Born October 8, 1803, died January 21, 1884. Taken from an article by C.C. Baker

Henry Dalton, or Don Enrique Dalton as he was called in Pioneer days, was born in the city of London, England, October 8, 1803, the son of Winnall Trobally and Anna Dalton. Henry and his brother George came to the United States, both being Los Angeles Co. pioneers. Another brother, John, died of fever at Panama on his way to California.

The Dalton family claims descent from Sir Walter Alton of the time of the conqueror. A large estate was claimed by the family during the late eighteenth century and, in lengthy chancery proceedings, was proved that the recognized heir had taken passage for America in a sailing ship of which nothing was ever after heard. The inability to prove the death of this heir without issue caused the estate to revert to the crown.

Henry Dalton was early apprenticed to an elder brother, a merchant tailor, and became a member of the Tailor's Guild, one of the successors of those early craft guilds which had exerted such an influence in the city of London. Such occupation must have seemed prosaic to him, for he was of an adventurous spirit, as he later proved. Other fields seemed to offer him greater opportunities, and he left England for Peru at the age of fourteen. Only once, in 1832, did he revisit England. During his visit his elder brother pointed out to him Victoria, then Duchess of Kent, remarking, "There goes our future queen." However the land of his nativity was always the land of his allegiance for Henry Dalton died, as he had lived, a subject of Great Britain.

In the city of Lima, Peru, Dalton lived for twenty-five years, building up an extensive general merchandising trade. He was also for a time British Consular Agent at Lima. His chief associate was James Bowman, later a San Francisco merchant. They owned several ships trading up the west coast. It may readily be supposed that information brought by these ships caused Dalton to come to investigate California's possibilities. Dalton came to California as super cargo of Mexican brig "Soledad" of 105 tons, from Mazatlan, which was on the coast from October to December, 1843. He settled in Los Angeles and bought property in 1844.

Pertaining to the San José—on March 24, 1837, Ygnacio Palomares and Ricardo Vejar petitioned for the grant of "the place known as San José." They were described in the report of the committee of the Ayuntamiento as native Mexicans who had rendered personal services to the government and had sufficient cattle to cover the land requested. Juan B. Alvarado, Governor ad interim, approved the grant April 15, 1837. Judicial possession was given by Alcalde Don José Sepulveda, father of the late Judge Ygnacio Sepulveda, August 3, 1837. It seems that Gov. Alvarado must have given Luis Arenas some promise in regards to these same lands for sometime in 1838, Governor Alvarado wrote Ygnacio Palomares stating that if he and Vejar would admit Luis Arenas as an equal partner in the San José an additional league of land would be granted the three. Palomares and Vejar agreed to this proposition, and they together with Arenas, signed the petition for the new grant December 16, 1839. When this petition was referred to Juan Bandini, then administrator of Mission San Gabriel, he very tersely stated that the land "has belonged and now belongs to Mission San Gabriel." The effect of this statement was doubtless overcome by the statement of the prefect of the district that this, as well as other land claimed by the mission, was not occupied by it. On March 14, 1840, Gov. Alvarado

approved the grant to Palomares, Vejar and Arenas, in common, of the old San José and of an additional league, henceforth called the San José Addition. Judicial possession with reference to the Addition was given May 7, 1840, by Alcalde Don Felipe Lugo.

On August 14, 1841, Arenas again petitioned for a grant, this time for land lying west of the San José Addition, called "El Susa" or The Azusa. The grant was approved by Manuel Jimeno on November 8, 1841. Judicial possession was given April 26, 1842, either by Alcalde Don Ygnacio or Don Felipe Lugo, which one is not certain.

When Vejar signified his satisfaction with the sale of Arenas' interests in the ranchos to Dalton, he also asked that the San José and Addition be partitioned between the three owners. This partition was made February 11, 1846. This partition was respected till American officials disregarded it. A survey and map according to this partition were made by Jasper O'Farrell, and the map is of record.

The original grantees of these ranchos, Palomares, Vejar and Arenas, were related. Palomares, a member of that family prominent since Spanish times, was an alcalde of Los Angeles. His daughter Teresa married Ramon Vejar, while his sister Josefa, married as her second husband, Luis Arenas. Vejar, though grantee of a principality, died poor at Spadra. Luis Arenas, a native of Hermosillo, Sonora, came to Los Angeles in 1834, where he held several offices including that of alcalde. He was seized by the "gold fever" in later years and went north to the mines. He acquired some gold by "digging" but more by gambling. It is said he would wager his gold by the hatful. An affidavit with his signature, dated October 15, 1852, is of record. He died poor at San José.

Early in 1845, Dalton petitioned for the grant of the San Francisquito. The grant was approved by Pio Pico, governor ad interim May 26, 1845, but not by the Departmental Assembly until June 9, 1846. This rancho contained two leagues and was bounded on the east by the San Gabriel River, across which lay the Azusa.

The petition of Dalton for lands lying north of Azusa was made March 12, 1845. The committee of the Ayuntamiento reported favorable that he be granted "the mountains and cañons of Azusa stream and Boca Negra, excepting the San Dimas." Why the grant was never made does not appear.

Dalton was administrator of Mission San Gabriel in 1846. In December, 1846, when Gen. José Maria Flores began preparations for his last attempt to save California to Mexico he obtained his supplies from Dalton.

Dalton purchased May 29, 1847, for \$2,000, from Perfecto Hugo Reid the great Santa Anita Rancho, containing three square leagues. The Santa Anita adjoined the San Francisquito on the north, there by making the Dalton ranchos continuous property. On July 31, 1847, Henry Dalton was baptized at Mission San Gabriel, Perfecto Hugo Reid standing with him. This ceremony shortly preceded his marriage to Maria Guadalupe Zamorano, daughter of Augustin Vicente Zamorano and his wife, formerly Maria Luisa Arguello, two family names prominent in California history. Henry Dalton and Maria Guadalupe Zamorano were married August 14, 1847.

Señora Dalton was born in Monterey, December 18, 1832. Her beauty is often mentioned. I have the word of a pioneer, a squatter at Azusa who knew her after middle age, who spoke of her fine appearance. A bell, given by a priest to Señora Dalton at her wedding is now in the possession of her son Joseph of Azusa. To the great ranch house on Azusa Hill the young bride came.

The District Court made final approval June 4, 1857 to Dalton's claims for the Azusa and his portion of the San José and Addition, making Palomares, Vejar and Dalton tenants in common each having an undivided one-third of the San José and Addition, as shown by the O'Farrell map.

The validity of the grants having been upheld, the surveys were in order. These were costly. In October and November, 1858, Henry Hancock ran his survey of the San José, Addition and Azusa. He testified that he paid no attention to the O'Farrell map, and he would not consult the witnesses by whom Dalton expected to prove location of landmarks. Angry words passed between them. These things made of pointed value the words of Bancroft who said, speaking of the surveyors, that their "judgment was often more or less influenced by the guidance of interested parties." These parties, it appears, came later. The striking errors of Hancock's survey were many, excluding some of the finest land while including in its place parts of the bed of the river not to this day under cultivation. He excluded about 18,000 acres from the three grants. Much of this land was actually under tillage, some fenced, and a portion formed Dalton's rodeo grounds. Shortly after the Hancock survey, squatters began to appear. Dalton's fight to save his rightful property merits a separate paper.

The course of Dalton's finances is strewn with mortgages due to the absolute necessity of obtaining money to prosecute the litigation thru the years. The Azusa was lost to him by foreclosure. The San José and the Addition shared the same fate. Interest was often at two, three and four percent per month, sometimes payable monthly or quarterly in advance. He seems to have had little justice shown him by our government. Dalton was described as the "beneficiary of two governments," but the attorney must have been of keen vision to discover wherein the land litigation with the United States was beneficial to Dalton. There is an entry in Dalton's diary of May 28, 1881, reading, "At midnight Henry brought news that the case in Washington had been decided in favor of the squatters." He lost absolutely all in twenty-nine years of litigation to obtain a title which was guaranteed to him by treaty.

The Azusa had passed to other hands. After thirty-four years in the homestead on Azusa Hill, he left it on January 10, 1881, to spend the remainder of his years in an adobe house built in 1862 near the northern end of the present Azusa Avenue and still standing until 1913.

In 1851, the town of Benton was laid out by Dalton to the south of Azusa Hill. It became but a memory.

Dalton in 1876, signed an agreement to sell the Azusa to General Boschke for \$100,000 but the sale did not materialize.

On July 25, 1878, were signed the articles of incorporation of the Mound City Land and Water Association. This company had already bought from Dalton the Azusa, San José and Addition for \$140,000, \$10,000 of which had been paid partly in stock. Mound City was to be built near the western edge of the present Azusa, and a few buildings were actually erected there. The balance of the ranchos were to be sold as small farms. Had this company been able to make its payments, Dalton would have been saved. But the incorporators had no capitol and they and Dalton both lost out completely when their prospective city failed to develop. The prices they asked for farms were prohibitive and there were therefore no sales.

When a new suit over water rights at Azusa was about to be instituted in January 1884, an application was made to the court to perpetuate the testimony of Dalton by obtaining a deposition from him. Dalton was described as "old, sick and infirm, and in a dying condition." The deposition was taken on January 12, 1884, at the home for Frank Sabichi in Los Angeles

where Dalton passed his last days. He was asked, "Were you formerly the owner of said ranch (The Azusa)?" His answer was characteristic of him, "I purchased it in 1844 in December, and ought to own it at this present day." He died January 21st, 1884, in his eighty-first year. Of a family of eleven children, his brother George alone survived him. Mrs. Dalton survived her husband thirty years, dying September 1, 1914. To this union were born eleven children, four of whom died in infancy. Of the others Winnall Augustin married and is living in Tucson, Arizona; Luisa married Lewis Wolfskill and died in 1887; Soyla married William Cardwell and lives at Azusa; Henry married and lives at Caborca, Mexico; Elena married J.L. Plummer and lives at San Fernando, this county; Valentine married and is dead; and Joseph married and lives at Azusa.

Though Henry Dalton was a prominent pioneer and one of the largest land holders in the county, very little has been written of him. The newspaper accounts are generally of no value, containing what were perhaps the results of the wildest flights of the reporters' fancy. It is peculiar that these myths have gained such acceptance. The family has many valuable papers of his. The most important of these are the volumes containing his diary, called by him "Daily Occurrences at the Azusa." This diary covers part of the year 1845 and is unbroken from October 1856 to September 1883. Each day an entry was made, by Dalton when he was on the rancho, in his absence by the mayordomo, by Mrs. Dalton, or by W.A. Dalton, the oldest son. The entries are in both Spanish and English, and cover in detail all the varied activities of the rancho and its owner. Dalton's correspondence, comprised of both letters received by him and copies of letters he wrote, is invaluable.

The county records show that Henry Dalton received five patents from the United States, was a party to 118 deeds and thirty-six real estate mortgages besides numerous miscellaneous documents, and figures in sixty cases in the various county courts.

P.S. I have copy of a picture of "Henry Dalton's great ranch house on Azusa Hill" showing winery and mill. Picture taken about 1860—house built 1847. Given to me September 1935. Roger Dalton has a plot of the rancho and floor plans of the house. Very interesting. I have a snap shot of Mrs. Henry Dalton and one of her daughter-in-laws—Mrs. Joe Dalton.

P.S. November 1935 – Have just received a picture of Henry Dalton and one of his wife—from Mr. Roger Dalton, copies of his originals.

El Dorado Visioned by Spanish Pioneers

“Pomona’s History is Colorful” recital, 1925

First Rancho San José grant issued in 1831. Marked coming of first white men to valley for settlement:

Mandolins, castanets, fandangos, señoritas, dons and caballeros—these were all part of the El Dorado of long ago, of the Mission San Gabriel and its thousands of rolling acres with their herds of wild horses and coyotes. A part of this was a pleasant little valley, uninhabited except for a settlement of Indians nestled close to the hills beside a clear water stream.

Differing only from Los Espanoles in that their siestas were several hours longer each day, the valley was seldom disturbed from its dormant state by activity of any variety.

To this veritable El Dorado came a Spaniard, Don Alvarado, and in his eye flashed the light of conquest, the desire for possession. This was 94 years ago in 1831. Influential, and the subject of his request considered of little value, he was granted lands in what is now Claremont. Five years later he returned to Mexico, strengthened by his rest, to become a dominating figure in politics.

Attracted Others

Probably as a result of what they had heard from Don Alvarado, there came to this valley two others of high standing in Mexico and Spain. In 1836 Don Ygnacio Palomares, a full blooded Spaniard, and Ricardo Vejar, a Mexican of the upper class, glimpsed the verdant lands and the following year petitioned Senor J.B. Alvarado, now gobernador de California, Arriba y California Abajo, for title. It was granted, and El Rancho San José, some 22,380 acres, became their property, together with judicial possession.

Several years later, an additional portion to the west was added to the grant and Don Luis Arenas named as a third part-owner, all holding undivided interest.

So for years these men continued, contentedly playing the part of the ranchers whose majordomo supervised all the work.

Years of Conflict

In 1846, the peaceful partnership brought upon itself years of conflict—in the courts of law. Don Luis Arenas sold his share of the property to Henry Dalton and, in spite of the vigorous objections of Palomares, a division of the land was made. Lines established by surveyors were unrecognized by the Spaniard, and subsequent resale thru subdivision of this portion was carried on without his consent. Years later, the heirs of Francisco Palomares, a son, were victorious in the courts, which ruled an undivided portion of the original acreage as theirs.

Early residents and those who had followed buying small parcels in good faith, were consternated. Hundreds had deeds and had paid for their property, but now could not dispose of it because of the blot on the title, nor could they hope to hold it long.

Widow Generous

With such a fortune involved, Mrs. Palomares granted freely the necessary documents—which surrendered her claim to the settled lands, declaring that her right was only legal and not a moral one, and on such grounds she would not dispossess local residents.

To follow in sequence the events which led up to the birth of Pomona, one must go to Spadra, where Ricardo Vejar owned large herds of mustangs, sheep and cattle. Because he was wealthy and influential he was carefree, and this later trait was responsible for a change in his fortunes which left him penniless.

Two stories are told of the way Vejar lost his property to Hyman Tischler and I. Schlesinger, two Germans who owned a large stock of cattle and sold supplies to other ranchers.

Paid High Interest

One has it that Vejar made purchases on credit. That this was not necessary but was largely due to his indifferent methods of business, was shown by the fact that in 1850 a son, Chico, drove a herd of cattle to Sacramento selling them to the butchers in the mining districts for \$40,000. He left a few hours later without a cent in his pocket, having lost the fortune at the gaming tables. Following this Vejar's account had less frequent payments of cash. When the old grantee could not meet the merchant's bills, they pressed him to sign a note for \$600 at an interest rate of 8 percent per month. Annually this called for 72 percent, and when the bill reached \$16,000 the dealers foreclosed. Sheriff and deputies came to dispossess the family but were driven off. Tischler was killed at Cucamonga by a sympathetic Mexican and his partner thereafter conducted all negotiations from a distance. He finally obtained the land, selling it to Louis Phillips, his superintendent, for \$29,000 in easy payments. The ranch covered 1200 acres.

The second story of the occurrence is that in April, 1864, Vejar had sold his interest in the Rancho San José to Tischler and Schlesinger for \$8,000. They had a large stock of cattle on it for a year or more but got into difficulty with their vaqueros and one dark night, in 1865, attempt was made to murder Tischler at a point between Pomona and Ontario. The assassin's bullet missed the intended victim and killed a companion. Fearing subsequent attempts, the Germans left the ranch and went back to Germany. Phillips bought their interests.

Abstracts Gigantic

At this time the two-thirds of the original grant were held by Phillips from the Vejar share, Francisco Palomares, son, and other heirs of Ygnacio; and the third portion was held by the Mound City Land and Water Association from the Arenas portion thru Dalton. Mr. Slauson of the Los Angeles County Bank was considered the real owner. A complete abstract of the Rancho San José, consisting of 38 volumes, is on file in the hall of records, Los Angeles. It took six men ninety days to translate it and is one of the longest in the world.

With the coming of white settlers, the possibility of the land as a town site was realized. In 1874 Cyrus Burdick, P.C. Tonner and Francisco Palomares secured by contract and purchase joint control of 3,000 acres. On January 27, 1875 they got control of water rights around the base of the San José Hills, all for the purpose of selling orchard land and water for its irrigation.

Soft-Voices Sing

This land included what is now Ganesha Park as well as the city proper and first attracted the attention of Palomares and Vejar, who had camped at the beautiful spot before applying for the grant of the land from Governor Alvarado. Tho mandolins, castanets, fandangos, señoritas, dons and caballeros continued after the coming of the white settlers, the early policy of "Manana" and the siesta lost its charm thru conflict with the Americans. Even today soft voices, accompanied by the guitar can be heard singing.

“La boca de me Rosita
Es mas dulce que un panel,
Ysus labios que son de rosa
Ay, non son para mi!”

Adios, mis amigos! Voy como los hombres brouze! (Farewell, my friends! I go as the red man.)

Copied from the *Pomona Progress* September 22, 1925

Clancy
First American Settlers at Mud Springs
1863 to 1870

Information received from Mary E. Clancy March 5, 1934 and March 16, 1934. Daughter of Denis Clancy.

Denis S. Clancy bought a tract of land at Mud Spring from the F.L.A. Pioche estate in 1862 or 1863.

He built a seven room house in the midst of a sycamore grove, enclosed it with a fence. A stream of water from the spring ran by the house. His nearest neighbors were the Palomares at Pomona. His home became the stopping place for the soldiers on their way to the front—by way of and to Yuma, Arizona. He furnished hay and food for the horses. Later his place became a stage stop for the stages en route from Los Angeles to San Bernardino. This line was owned by Phineas Banning, his wife sometimes made the trip with him, stopping with the Clancy's. Denis Clancy and his family lived here until 1870 when Henry Dalton, who had purchased the share of Don Luis Arenas in the San Jose Rancho, arrived upon the scene and claimed that Mr. Clancy had no right to the property upon which he was living, and which he had purchased in good faith from the F.L.A. Pioche estate, having paid \$10,000 for the same. Mr. Clancy consulted a lawyer in regards to it, but the lawyer advised him to give it up as it would only mean long and expensive litigation, and he could never get a clear title to it. So Mr. Clancy gave up the ranch, upon which he had spent his entire fortune. He did not get anything in return for this property. That was in 1870.

He went to Los Angeles where he had a little property. He was broken in health and discouraged, as he had lost everything he possessed through no fault of his own. Billy Rowland was then sheriff of Los Angeles Co. and a friend of Mr. Clancy—he gave him a deputyship—his health continued to fail and he passed away in 1878. Denis S. Clancy was Irish, having been born in Limerick, Ireland. He came to the U.S.A. with relatives and went to Memphis, Tennessee; from there he went to San Francisco, later coming to Southern California because his health was not of the best. His wife's name was Margret. They had seven children—Thomas Francis was born in San Francisco in 1857 died in Los Angeles in 1882; John H.; Mary E.; Catherine; Robert; Elizabeth and Anna. Catherine was born at Mud Springs in 1864 and Robert was born at Mud Springs in 1866. These two died in childhood. John died in Los Angeles in 1925 or 1926. Mary, Elizabeth and Anna are living at 155 South Harvard Blvd., Los Angeles. Mary was employed in the County Records office from 1908 to 1929. Denis S. Clancy died in Los Angeles in 1878, his wife died in Los Angeles in 1905.

March 16, 1934 by Helen Reese & Mrs. H.E. Walker.

P.S. I have pictures of Denis S. Clancy and his wife Margret, and their sons Thomas Francis and John—they are copies—Miss Reese at the library has the originals.

G.R.W.

Copy of letter received from Mary E. Clancy, 1934

Clancy

Los Angeles, Calif.
March 5, 1934

Miss H.A. Reese
R.F.D. Box 10,
San Dimas, Calif.

Dear Madam:

Your letter of inquiry as to the early history of San Dimas received and evidently my friend and schoolmate Mr. Fred Potts directed you to the right person. My father (Denis S. Clancy) and mother bought the land you refer to and were, I believe, the first white settlers on this property.

If my brother John H. Clancy were living he could probably give you more information in regard to this place than I, as he was older and kept in touch with many of the old settlers or their descendants. As for me, I was a very young child when we left the ranch—but I have tried to do the best I can by calculating backwards, as it were, and trying to remember what was told me in later years. I think it must have been in the year 1862 or 1863, that my parents located on this property, then called "Mud Springs." Why this name was given it, I do not know, unless somewhere on the land was a muddy spring of water.

My father came to San Francisco in 1854 from Memphis, Tennessee, but not liking the northern city, he and my mother came to Los Angeles the following year. He was employed as a bookkeeper for a Matthew Keller, one of the large vinyardists in this section. His health, not of the best, induced him to change to some outdoor occupation and he built a home on this land and proceeded to improve his holdings. After a time, through some friends in the U.S. Army, one of whom was Major McCormick afterwards Governor of Arizona, he secured a contract with the Government to supply hay and grain, horses, etc. to the troops passing through on their way to Arizona—and in this way, the ranch developed into a way station for them and the stage coaches.

Time went on and when my parents had been living there seven or eight years, a man by the name of Dalton came to my father claiming he owned this property under a Spanish grant. My father bought the property in good faith and supposed he had a perfectly good title to it. His attorneys in Los Angeles, however, advised him that a contest meant a long and expensive litigation as the matter would have to be taken up with the land office in Washington. My father having already suffered losses in the dry years then prevailing and also, through the failure in business of a friend in Los Angeles to whom he had entrusted some ten thousand dollars, almost his entire fortune, found himself in no position to carry on an expensive lawsuit and left the place in 1870. A few years previously my parents bought some property in Los Angeles where we moved when leaving the ranch.

A friend of my father, Wm. R. Rowland then sheriff of Los Angeles Co., gave my father a deputyship, but his health gradually failed and he passed away a few years later. If what I have written will be of any assistance to you I shall be pleased to have helped, even a little.

Sincerely Yours,

Mary E. Clancy

The original of this letter is in the possession of Miss Reese at the Library. – G.R.W.

Note – Denis S. Clancy always kept a diary—this, his son John loaned to a friend and never got it back. So it may come to light someday.

“Tooch” Martin Supervisor, then Hermit

Copied from the *Los Angeles Times*, June 13, 1909

W.T. (“Tooch”) Martin was the first white man to settle on what is the present site of Claremont and Pomona College. He moved, in the winter of 1871-1872, to a location southwest of Indian Hill, near what is now the corner of Indian Hill Boulevard and Mesa Avenue, and there preempted 160 acres of government land in order to have room for his many hives of bees. There were then no other white men in the immediate vicinity, the country still being practically all desert.

On Indian Hill was a large Indian Rancheria with about forty-five brush tepees and a population of about two hundred. These were mission Indians who worked in the fields on the big ranches at Spadra and Puente for 50 cents a day. Later, when the white men began to fill the country, the demand for help increased and the wages rose to a dollar a day. The Indians had no horses but made the long journey to their places of work on foot. The community owned one yoke of oxen and a big-wheeled carretta.

Every Saturday night a big pow-wow was held on the hill, wine and whisky having been secured from Puente. The nearest store was at Spadra, where there was a small white settlement. The Indians all spoke Spanish as well as their own dialect, but no English.

Rancheria Dirty Place

This Indian Hill Rancheria was a dirty place, and suffered in every epidemic of disease that swept over the country. The Indians got their water from a waterhole beside the hill, which is said never to have gone dry. But during the dry weather this water got so strong that even the red-men were glad enough to pack fluid from the canons in the hills, two miles away. The smallpox epidemic of 1863 fell on the Indians and Whites alike, but that of 1873 was almost confined to the Indians and Mexicans, among whom it played terrible havoc.

The Indian burying ground was at the southeast corner of Indian Hill and there were laid away the large number, swept from the Rancheria by the disease. Hardly a trace of this burying-ground is now left and every week picnic parties romp over the spot on their way to the oak grove just beyond.

Thinned out by the ravages of smallpox, the last of the Indians disappeared within a decade leaving the land clear for the Whites about 1883. It is interesting that within five years, Pomona College opened its doors in Pomona, September 12, 1888, and moved to Claremont in January 1889, where five years before there had been only a few degenerate Indians. There grew in the winter of 1888-1889 a strong young congregational institution that by the end of the year had an enrollment of fifty students, with a faculty of six. This pioneer faculty consisted of S.H. Brackett, E.C. Norton—the present Dean of the College, Mrs. H.A. Storrs, Miss Edith Blades—later Mrs. Walter Lewis, Miss C. Stiles and Miss M. Caldwell.

The town of Claremont then consisted of three or four small houses which, in addition to the big hotel, Sumner Hall, had been built by the Pacific Land Improvement Company. Students and faculty of the college lived and boarded during that first winter in Pomona, already a town of considerable importance, and made the trip to and from Claremont in a single big bus.

“Desert” Now Blooms

Since then, both town and college have grown steadily, until today the old claim of Martin is cut into prosperous small orchards and homes, while the “desert” has receded to the strip of country adjoining the foothills.

Seeking the rough life that he loves, the old man has again located at the base of the hills, where the sage brush still stretches away toward the green orchards in the center of the valley below, where the towns and cities lie. Out in the foothills, surrounded by the hum of his bees “Tooch” will sketch for you the whole history of Los Angeles County which has been so closely joined with his own life.

His connection with the west began in 1853, when his father, smitten with the gold fever, moved to the “Country of the Golden West” by ox-train, over the southern route. Martin was himself only a boy at the time, but remembers the long trip well. The southern trail was first blazed by his Uncle, Harvey Davis, whose tracks his father followed.

Later the government survey was run, following the Harvey Davis Trail, and still later, the Southern Pacific was laid in almost the identical trail.

In 1853, the trip by emigrant wagons took months and was accompanied by all manner of dangers. There were sixty wagons in all in the train and in spite of the hardships, the travelers enjoyed many royal times. There was no lack of water on the trip, the longest stage between water places being less than sixty miles.

“Indian Attack”

Once, the train was attacked by Indians who attempted to stampede the horses and cattle. Owing to the iron hobbles with which the animals were fettered, the attempt was unsuccessful and the return sally from the camp drove off the redskins without loss of time.

When Pomona Valley was reached the emigrant train broke up, the settlers going in different directions. The valley itself was empty as the desert, with only here and there bands of horses or cattle from the old-time Spanish ranchos. Martin’s father settled, with his family, at El Monte and started to raise wheat. Wheat raising attracted most of the emigrants, as the prices for both wheat and corn seemed fabulous to those who had come from the middle-west. But so great was the immigration and so widespread the inspiration to take advantage of the prices, that when the crop was harvested it was found to exceed the demand and sold for a song.

From 1853 until 1868 Martin lived in El Monte, teaching school in that place during the last four years of his stay. In 1868, he moved out into the desert to the mouth of San Dimas Canyon, where he started a large bee ranch. Three years later, he sold out and again moved farther east to preempt his claim by Indian Hill. He saw the beginning of the town of Pomona in 1874 and ten years later, in 1884, he sold his acreage at the Claremont site and moved to a point between that place and the growing town of Pomona. Just north of the present site of Pomona, there was a second Rancheria of mission Indians, similar to that on Indian Hill, four miles to the north. These, too, were decimated by the smallpox and disappeared in 1884 or 1885.

“Last Move to Sagebrush”

Martin’s last move has been out to the sagebrush again, to his present location where he raises vegetables with the flow of surface water from one of the smaller canyons, and looks after the numerous hives of his old companions, the bees.

He has a couple of rough little broncos and a family of small shepherd dogs. With his bees, his dogs, and his violin as friends, the old man putters around his garden or dons his big mask and invades the honey kingdoms.

He has seen Los Angeles City grow from a handful of adobe huts—not a wooden nor a two-story house in the place—to a whirling city of more than three hundred thousand. He has seen the development of the California orange, from the time when those raised at the San Gabriel Mission brought from \$1.50 to \$2.50 a dozen on the premises, to the present time.

He has witnessed and taken part in one of the greatest and most rapid transformations of history.

Copied from the *Los Angeles Times*, June 13, 1909.

Reminiscences of Early Days in Pomona
by
William Martin

Mr. Martin was born in Red River County, Texas and came across the plains with his parents in a wagon train in 1853 and settled in El Monte. He said in part:

“In April, 1853, when I was a small boy, father rigged up to go to California with a caravan. There were about 60 people in the train. I remember that father had six yoke of oxen when he left and when we arrived in El Monte, he had only one.

“It took us nine months to make the trip, and my sister died on the way. We settled in El Monte instead of going on to Los Angeles for the reason that my father was a farmer and he liked the El Monte country.

“He settled on what we believed to be government land and afterwards found it to be a part of a Spanish grant, so we moved to another place near El Monte.

“San Bernardino was not much of a town then, and they were all Mormons down there. In 1868 we moved to San Dimas and to Claremont in 1871. I was living in Claremont when the Southern Pacific Railroad was built through here. A short time later I came to Pomona. There were only four adobe houses here at that time. They were the homes of Ignacio Palomares, Wm. C. Martin, Cyrus Burdick and Houston King. Cyrus Burdick came here the same year I did. Everything was adobe houses then. I saw the first brick and wooden houses built in Los Angeles.

Indians Close

“There were about 200 Indians living on the Rancherias close by and they were very peaceable neighbors. In fact, they treated us much better than many of the white folks who came later. They had their regular Saturday night Jamborees but they never bothered us.

“The winter of 1864 and 65 was the great drought. There were three dry years and each was worse than the preceding one, until in this winter there was not even precipitation enough to sprout the grass. Cattle and horses died by the thousands. There was not enough forage for jack rabbits. You could kill them with a stick.

“Then the big flood came in the winter of 1867 and 1868. The mountains and hills back of here were covered with a thick blanket of snow which had been falling for some time and on Christmas Eve it started to pour down a warm rain in torrents.

“If you can picture those mountains covered deep in snow and then pour warm dishwater on it you can imagine what happened around here.

“The Civil War didn’t affect us much. Some went to join the different sides in the struggle, but there was not much enthusiasm here.

“I remember when Cyrus Burdick and Poncho Palomares laid out the City of Pomona in 1874.

“There were many vigilantes in those early days. If the Mexicans and bad men got so we couldn’t stand it, they just went out and had an execution.”

Copied from *The Bulletin*,
January 15, 1925

"Mud springs and Environs"

Written by
Mrs. Harry E. Walker
San Dimas, California
September 1934

Mud Springs

One mile southeast of the town of San Dimas, on Cienega Avenue at its junction with Artesia Street, is the site of an ancient Indian camping place. This must have been a very desirable spot even at that time for by the quantity and variation of material found, there is no doubt that the Indian tribes in this vicinity occupied their camps for a great length of time. Mud Springs was probably depopulated, as were other areas, by the Mission Padres inducing aborigines to leave their old way of living and come near the church.

The records show that in early Mission days the Indians who frequented this spot hauled logs from the neighboring Mt. San Antonio and San Bernardino Mountains for the building of the San Gabriel Mission. Their camp ground became the stopping place for the Spaniards who called it Cienega, ("a wet place") because of the presence of natural springs which were perpetually seeping up out of the earth. Later American pathfinders and emigrants stopped there en route from San Bernardino to San Gabriel and Los Angeles and they called it Mud Springs.

Old Trails Through Mud Springs

Three old trails replete with interest passed through Mud Springs. The first of these trails to be traversed by white men was the Anza Trail, over which Juan Bautista de Anza in 1774 led the first overland party into California, and again in 1775 the first band of settlers, the founders of San Francisco and Monterey. They were the first white men to break a trail overland to California. The San Gabriel Mission Fathers used this trail as far as the Santa Ana River in order to reach their mission station in the San Bernardino Valley until a more direct route was cut after 1822.

The oldest of the three trails passing through Mud Springs, was the Mojave Indian Trail, which was well established when Father Garces traveled it in 1776. Jedediah Strong Smith followed this trail and probably Ewing Young followed the same route. The Spanish Trail, sometimes called the Santa Fe Trail, opened in 1831, made use of the line of the Mojave Indian Trail from the mouth of Cajon Canyon to San Gabriel. This Old Spanish Trail was followed by a long line of explorers, hunters and traders; of pioneer settlers of El Monte and Los Angeles who came close in the wake of these adventurers; later emigrants of covered wagon days and the gold seekers bound for the north, and last of all the daring stage coach drivers of the 60's and 70's, forerunners of the iron horse and the modern motor car.

The old Emigrant Trail, which followed Anza's route across the Colorado Desert as far as Carrizo Creek and crossed the mountains via Warner's Ranch, branched in two directions after leaving Aguanga; the San Bernardino-Sonora Road, the upper branch of the Old Emigrant Trail, came from Warner's Ranch via of Aguanga and passed down to San Jacinto Valley and across the hills to the site of what is now Beaumont in Riverside County. From there it continued

northwest and west through San Bernardino County via of Redlands and old San Bernardino, to what is now Colton. From that point the road went southwest past Slover Mountain to Agua Mansa, where it again proceeded westward to what is now Ontario, it continued west across San Bernardino County to Los Angeles County via the cienega (Mud Springs) near San Dimas. The Padres from 1822 and before 1827, were the first to use this road on their way from San Gabriel to their Mission outpost San Bernardino.

“The First American”

1826

Jedediah Strong Smith

An interest in Mud Springs was somewhat stimulated when the Valley Beautiful Association held a meeting in San Dimas on the evening of November 26, 1926, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the camping at Mud Springs of that intrepid explorer and fur trader Jedediah Strong Smith. He was the first white man to successfully brave the perils of desert, mountains and wilderness between the Mississippi and Southern California.

The story of the journey of the trail blazer was told by the late Jonathan Tibbett, who was personally acquainted with a brother of Jedediah Smith. Mr. Smith Bacon, a grand nephew of the pioneer was present and also gave a talk. He displayed several relics of Jedediah Smith's which are in possession of the family, among other things, a pistol and holster and a watch, both of which he carried when he was killed by Indians. Having been ordered to leave the country by the same way he had entered, he again passed through Mud Springs in January 1827 on his return journey. There was much enthusiasm shown at that time about marking this historic spot, but as yet no steps have been taken to that end. Jedediah Strong Smith is to the great southwest what Lewis and Clark are to the great northwest. True, Jedediah Smith had no government backing and no public support, as did Lewis and Clark, and remained practically unknown for many years. But his achievement was no less great. When one considers that all this tremendous development which we see on every hand has taken place within one hundred years. The heroic size of Smiths' achievement of blazing the first trail into Southern California, is important.

The San Jose Rancho

1837

Mud Springs is located on the San Jose Rancho, the story of which is a long and interesting one, so we can only mention it at this time. But those of us who are fortunate enough to live on a part of it have a very warm spot in our hearts for those two sons of New Spain, Don Ricardo Vejar and Don Ygnacio Palomares, who in 1837, almost a hundred years ago, chose as their own this garden spot. Many have been the changes since first they looked over its broad beautiful valleys from these same Ganesha Hills. Only the mountains remain the same, they are an inspiration and a benediction to us as they were to the Dons of other years.

Henry Dalton

In the early 40's, Henry Dalton, an English sea captain, purchased that portion of the San Jose Rancho upon which the Mud Springs were located.

General John C. Fremont

General John C. Fremont stopped near Mud Springs on one of his trips through Southern California. He camped under a great cottonwood tree east of Artesia Street. When Mr. Jasper N. Teague came to Mud Springs, that tree was still standing and the old stage road passed under it where it made the turn to the west, as it circled around the cienega.

The First Settlers 1862

In 1862 Denis S. Clancy, an Irishman who came to this country in 1854, bought in good faith from a San Francisco firm 160 acres, including Mud Springs. He selected for his home a grove of sycamores on the edge of the cienega. The cienega was so large at that time that the house was almost one-half mile from the springs. He built a house of six rooms, which was rather pretentious for that time, considering that most of the material had to be brought from Los Angeles by carreta and pack train. After building his house he surrounded it by a fence, and built his corrals using sycamore posts for them. Many of these posts took root and eventually increased the size of the sycamore grove to what it was when the Teagues came fifteen or eighteen years later. He dug a ditch through the cienega and brought the water to his house.

First White Children

He had a wife and three children when he came to Mud Springs and two children were born there, a daughter in 1864 and a son in 1866, these were the first white children born at Mud Springs.

First Stage Stop

Through some friends of Mr. Clancy's in the United States Army, one of whom was Major McCormick, later Governor of Arizona, Mr. Clancy secured a contract with the government to supply hay, grain, horses, etc., to the troops passing through on their way to Arizona and in this way the ranch developed into a station for them and the stage coaches.

Time went on and when the Clancy's had been living here seven or eight years, Captain Henry Dalton came to Mr. Clancy claiming he owned the land, having purchased it from Louis Arenas, the former owner. This was a great blow to Mr. Clancy as he supposed he had a perfectly good title to the property. Having already suffered losses in the dry years then prevailing, and also through the failure in business of a friend in Los Angeles to whom he had entrusted \$10,000, almost his entire fortune, he found himself in no position to carry on an expensive lawsuit, as his attorneys in Los Angeles advised him that contest meant a long and expensive litigation as the matter would have to be taken up with the land office in Washington

D.C., and it was a long way to Washington in those days. So, broken in health and fortune Mr. Clancy, with his family, left Mud Springs in 1870, moving to Los Angeles, where he passed away eight years later. They were the first settled inhabitants of Mud Springs that can be claimed as American.

First Stirring of Development

So it was at Mud Springs that the first stirrings of development centered between San Bernardino and San Gabriel.

The Carrion Adobe

About one half mile southeast of the Mud Springs on a direct line and about two miles southeast of the center of San Dimas on Walnut Avenue, stands the Carrion Adobe. In 1843, Don Ygnacio Palomares gave to his nephew, Saturino Carrion, a tract of three hundred eighty acres of land on the San Jose Rancho. The years 1862-63-64 were very dry years, the feed on the ranges near Los Angeles became exhausted and there was great loss of cattle. In the spring time of 1863, the livestock owners had to seek better grazing land in the surrounding country. It was then that Mr. Carrion, who until then had lived near Los Angeles where Boyle Heights now is, investigated and finding his acreage such an ideal place for grazing with plenty of water, decided to bring his herds to the Rancho San Jose. It was not until then that Mr. Carrion saw the possibilities in his land, and he decided to build a home upon it and bring his family there. He engaged a noted Italian architect and started plans for the construction of the adobe. Building material, doors, windows and such had to be brought from Los Angeles by pack animals and in carretas drawn by oxen, so it was not until 1868 that the structure was completed and Mr. Carrion moved his family to the new home. It remained their home for many years, and the family is still resident of this vicinity. This is one of several landmarks which should be reserved. It is a little gem. Pictorial records of landmarks have been ordered by Uncle Sam, pictures and architectural specifications will be placed on file in Washington as a part of a national program to compile a complete record of the habitations and utilitarian structures of Americans from the earliest times to date. Naturally Southern California's chief contributions to the record will be its famous old adobes and missions. A few have already been chosen although the list is not complete. But already scheduled for fame is the Carrion Adobe, in company with the Avila Adobe on Olvera Street, Los Angeles; El Molino, the old mill in Pasadena; Pio Pico's home and several buildings in San Diego and Santa Barbara. Wherever pictures of charming old adobes are shown, whether it be Los Angeles, San Diego or Santa Barbara, the Carrion Adobe is there. And we of the Pomona Valley are so indifferent to its charm and the necessity of preserving it that we sit placidly by and see it used for the housing of turkeys and chickens. Still it is a part of our own heritage. When we awaken to the importance of preserving this building, will it have gone the way of the glorious old Palomares adobe on Cucamonga Avenue? God Forbid!

Other Pioneers

About the time the Carrions came to live on the San Jose Rancho, there was much activity over near the mouth of the San Dimas Canyon. In 1868 Dr. Charles Cunningham “took up” a quarter section of government land, including a part of San Dimas Canyon. He and his family lived there for a number of years. In 1868 also, Mr. Cyrus Burdick “took up” a part of a section of land adjoining Dr. Cunningham, this he sold to Dr. Cunningham three years later.

In 1868 Mr. William T. Martin (better known as “Tooch Martin”) came with his family to the mouth of San Dimas Canyon, east of the Cunningham’s, where he lived for two years.

At this time teams could not drive across the cienega at Mud Springs, and if a horse got stuck in the mud or bog, a whole acre would shake with his struggles. And as late as 1887, when the Santa Fe Railway was built across the cienega, it was necessary to drive pilings deep and plentifully to secure a solid roadbed.

“The Settlers Who Remained”

In 1878, Mr. C.P. Teague became associated with the Mound City Land and Water Association. They bought Captain Henry Dalton’s interests in Azusa and in the San Jose Rancho, which included Mud Springs. His son, Jasper N. Teague, was a surveyor for this company; he also had power of attorney in all affairs pertaining to the company for his father. It was in behalf of these interests that he made Mud Springs his residence. With him came his brother David C. Teague and family. They selected for their home the very sycamore grove where Mr. Clancy had lived and, finding the chimney of the old Clancy house still standing, they built a California house up against it and lived there for two years, later they built a house a little farther to the northeast. The venture in which they were interested ended in disappointment characteristic of those days. So the Teagues turned their hand to the thing that was obviously possible, the raising of grain. The first year they plowed one thousand acres, but that is another story. In 1879, the Teagues sunk a well on the east bank of the cienega, which was the first at Mud Springs. The abandoned shaft of this well may still be seen. Here flowed the initial stream of irrigation. Mr. David C. Teague and his father Mr. Crawford P. Teague, in 1888 set out the first orange orchard at Mud Springs, which had recently acquired the new name of San Dimas. Mr. D.C. Teague and his descendants are still residents of San Dimas, as is his brother Mr. Robert M. Teague.

The last of the beautiful old sycamores surrounding these first homes at Mud Springs were dynamited out in 1895 to make way for the branch line of the Southern Pacific Railroad running from Pomona to Bassett. This line is now known as the Pacific Electric Railway.

A new Name for Mud Springs, 1887

In 1887, the San Jose Land Company was formed and a subdivision put on the market. The name of Mud Springs was then changed to San Dimas. With the sale of this acreage came the demand for water. The first water, of course, came from Mud Springs. In order to provide its first buyers with the water that was sold to them, the land company put down seventeen wells on the margin of the cienega. These were all flowing wells. Later, to increase the water supply, tunnels were driven in to tap the flowing wells. Later wells with pumps were developed; so,

Mud Springs had the first flowing wells, the first water tunnels, and the first pumped wells. The experimental school in which they all learned about the development of irrigating water was right here, in and about Mud Springs.

Our Duty to Posterity

Today the old Mud Springs are but a memory, just a slight depression in the earth by the side of the road, with not enough moisture to keep a few tules alive, a very plebian spot indeed. It is difficult to realize that it has played such an important part in the history of California. But it is more difficult to realize that being red-blooded Americans and loyal Californians we have allowed this, one of the oldest historical spots in California, to be neglected and almost forgotten.

Back in the days when it was surrounded by a famous marsh and all manner of water loving life grew in luxuriance, the Mission Padres rested there as they traveled through the valley in their efforts to Christianize the Indians, and more than one hundred fifty years ago Juan Bautista de Anza, on each of his trips to California watered his herds and refreshed his followers here. It is interesting to remember that things were beginning at Mud Springs in the days of the Boston Tea Party; when forces were stirring on the other side of the continent for the making of this nation, and that each was unaware of the other. These things alone would be sufficient cause for us to make a great effort to set aside this spot as a shrine for future Americans. But later came Jedediah Strong Smith, of all the explorers of the West there was none braver than Smith, who was not only a fur trader, but a blazer of trails who adhered to the teachings of his much thumbed Bible except in cases when necessity demanded the vigorous use of his other constant companion, the rifle. He will always be known as one of the most heroic pioneers of the nation, the explorer, trader and trapper who played a major part in the opening up of the Rocky Mountain West and an overland path to California.

In 1905, Portland staged the great Lewis and Clark exposition and invited the world, in honor of Lewis and Clark. What have we in California done to honor Jedediah Strong Smith? At the time of one hundredth anniversary recognition was given him by different historical societies and a centennial pageant was staged in Los Angeles. But to our knowledge nothing of a permanent nature has been done. Why could not this valley be the first to do him honor? Also honor Juan Bautista de Anza at the same time. Let the world know what an important part Mud Springs has played in the development of Southern California.

Mrs. Harry E. Walker.