TWO OSUNA ADOBES: RESULTS OF RESEARCH ON CHRONOLOGY AND OWNERSHIP

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Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society
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INTRODUCTION

The community of Rancho Santa Fe, in the northwestern portion of San Diego County, developed within the former boundaries of a large rancho called San Dieguito. Remnants of the rancho, in the form of two adobe structures, are still in existence. Since the 1920s, the two buildings, known as the "Osuna Adobes", have been featured individually or jointly in periodicals and newspaper articles. The basic content of the articles is similar, leading to the conclusion that much of the information was obtained from the same source material. Over the years information about Rancho San Dieguito has been printed that is historically inaccurate. This is particularly the case regarding information relating to the adobe structures. A paucity of primary source material and the passage of time since the buildings were owned by the Osuna family may have partially contributed to this situation. Ownership of one of the structures was transferred out of the Osuna family as early as 1868 and the other was sold by a family member circa 1910.

In response to recently published material concerning the history of the adobes, the Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society initiated a study with the purpose of determining the chronological origin of the structures. Establishing a reliable and accurate history of the adobes required retrieval of supporting documentation. The results of the study are presented herein. Although the primary research goal has not been met in its entirety, the effort has resulted in an accumulation of information that provides a more thorough understanding of the history of the existing adobe structures and of Rancho San Dieguito

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The subject adobes once belonged to the family of Juan María Osuna, grantee of Rancho San Dieguito. Juan Osuna acquired the rancho, comprised of 8, 824 acres, through two grants of land issued under prevailing laws of the Mexican government in 1840 or 1841 by Governor Juan B. Alvarado and in 1845 by Governor Pio Pico (Figure 1).[1]

Historic significance of the structures relates to the association with Juan Osuna, who served in various political capacities during the formation of San Diego in the early 1800s.[2] He became the first *alcalde* , or mayor, of the newly formed pueblo of San Diego in 1834. Osuna also functioned as the *Juez de paz*, or Justice of the Peace, in 1839, 1840, and 1846. Following secularization of the missions in 1833, he served as *major domo,* or civilian administration, of the San Diego mission property. Shortly after secularization of the San Diego mission in 1833 Juan Osuna secured a provisional grant of land that included a portion of Rancho San Dieguito previously under jurisdiction of the mission.

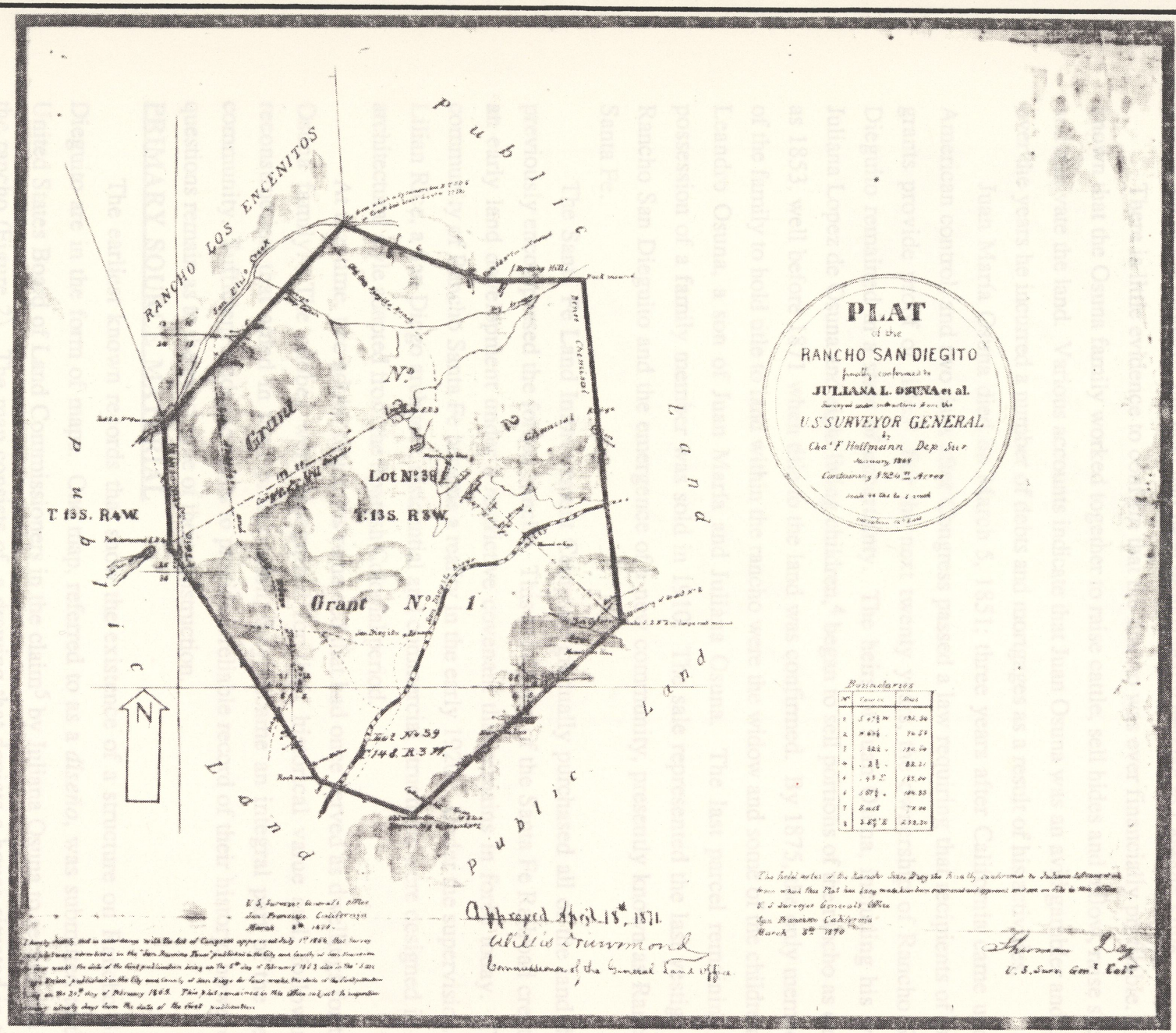


Figure 1. Plat of Rancho San Dieguito
(Courtesy of San Diego Historical Society Research Archives)

Prior to actual acquisition of the rancho property, Juan María Osuna secured permission to occupy the land. It is reported that in 1831, prior to the time that Osuna reportedly took possession of the property, the land had been provisionally granted to Lebrado Silva.

There is little evidence to confirm that the rancho was ever financially profitable. It is known that the Osuna family worked together to raise cattle, sell hides and tallow, raise sheep and cultivate the land. Various accounts indicate that Juan Osuna was an avid gambler and that over the years he incurred a number of debts and mortgages as a result of his activities.

Juan María Osuna died on March 5, 1851; three years after California came under American control, and two days after Congress passed a law requiring that recipients of land grants provide proof of title.[3] For the next twenty years, the ownership of Rancho San Dieguito remained in a state of uncertainty. The heirs of Juan Osuna, including his wife Juliana Lopez de Osuna and eight living children,[4] began to sell portions of the rancho as early as 1853, well before 1871 when title to the land was confirmed. By 1875, the only members of the family to hold title to land within the rancho were the widow and some of the children of Leandro Osuna, a son of Juan María and Juliana Osuna. The last parcel remaining in possession of a family member was sold in 1910. The sale represented the last vestige of Rancho San Dieguito and the emergence of a new community, presently known as Rancho Santa Fe.

The Santa Fe Land Improvement Company gradually purchased all of the land that previously encompassed the former rancho. This subsidiary of the Santa Fe Railroad created an early land development under a restrictive covenant that remains in force today. The community of Rancho Santa Fe became a reality in the early 1920s. Under the supervision of Lilian Rice, a San Diego architect, residential and commercial structures were designed in an architectural style adapted from the Spanish Colonial period.

At that time, two adobe structures remained that had once served as dwellings for the Osuna family. The adobes were recognized for their historical value and, following reconstruction that aided in their preservation, they became an integral part of the new community. Sufficient evidence exists to provide a reliable record of their history; however, questions remain as to the exact time of their construction.

PRIMARY SOURCE MATERIAL

The earliest known records that show the existence of a structure on Rancho San Dieguito are in the form of maps. One map, referred to as a *diseño*, was submitted to the United States Board of Land Commissioners in the claim[5] by Juliana Osuna to secure title to the rancho (Figure 2). The map consists of a drawing that depicts a house situated in the foothills above a broad river valley. Santiago Arguello verified the validity of the *diseño* and provided testimony supporting possession of the land by Juan María Osuna:



Es conforme con el original q' sirvio p.a la medicion de un Sitio de ganado Mayor en el parage de S.t Dieguito de q.e certifico S.t Dieg.o Enero 24 de 1850

S. Arguello

Translation: This conforms with the original which served for the measurement of one range for cattle in the place of San Dieguito to which I certify, San Diego, January 24, 1850. S. Arguello

Figure 2. Copy of Rancho San Dieguito Diseño

> A map is now shown me with my certificate upon it, being a paper annexed to the deposition of Abel Stearns in this case, & marked H.H. No. 4. It is a map of a tract of land called San Dieguito, granted to the late Juan M. Osuna, by Juan B. Alvarado, as Governor, I think about the year 1827 or 1828, while I was Military Commandant at San Diego Governor Eachoandea [sic] wrote me permission for said Osuna to occupy the land & he did occupy it until it was granted by Alvarado as before stated. Osuna continued to occupy the land until his decease about the year 1850, since which time it has been occupied by his widow and children. He had a house on the land before the grant by Alvarado & he lived in it a portion of the time & it was inhabited until the time of his death & to this time. He cultivated the land to a considerable extent, & had some stock on it.[6]

Although Arguello stated that he was Commandant around 1827 or 1828, in fact, he held that position from 1830 to 1835. The latter period of time is in closer agreement with testimony given by Abel Sterns, who stated in his deposition that:

> A map is shown me on which is a certificate signed by S. Arguello dated 24 January 1850...
>
> I should think the map represented the land called San Dieguito.... I have frequently been on the land. It had been occupied by Juan M. Osuna from the year 1831 up to the time of his death in 1851. He had a house on the land on which he lived or had agents or servants. The land has been considerably cultivated & has been used also for the keeping of stock. It is situated in the county of San Diego about seven leagues from San Diego in a Northerly direction. The house is about a league & a half from the sea coast.[7]

These statements provide information indicating that only one adobe was present at the time the drawing was made and that the adobe was constructed prior to 1840. An additional map, of an unknown date, also depicts the location of a single dwelling noted as Casa de Osuna (Figure 3). It is possible that this map was produced in 1843 in response to a land dispute between Juan Osuna and Andrea Ybarra, of the Los Encinitas grant.

SECONDARY SOURCE MATERIAL

A literature review of secondary sources concerning Rancho San Dieguito was conducted for this study. These sources must be considered because many articles are the result of serious inquiry. A selection of quotations from some of the articles is presented below for comparative purposes. Due to the nature of the articles, the authors have not identified their source of information.

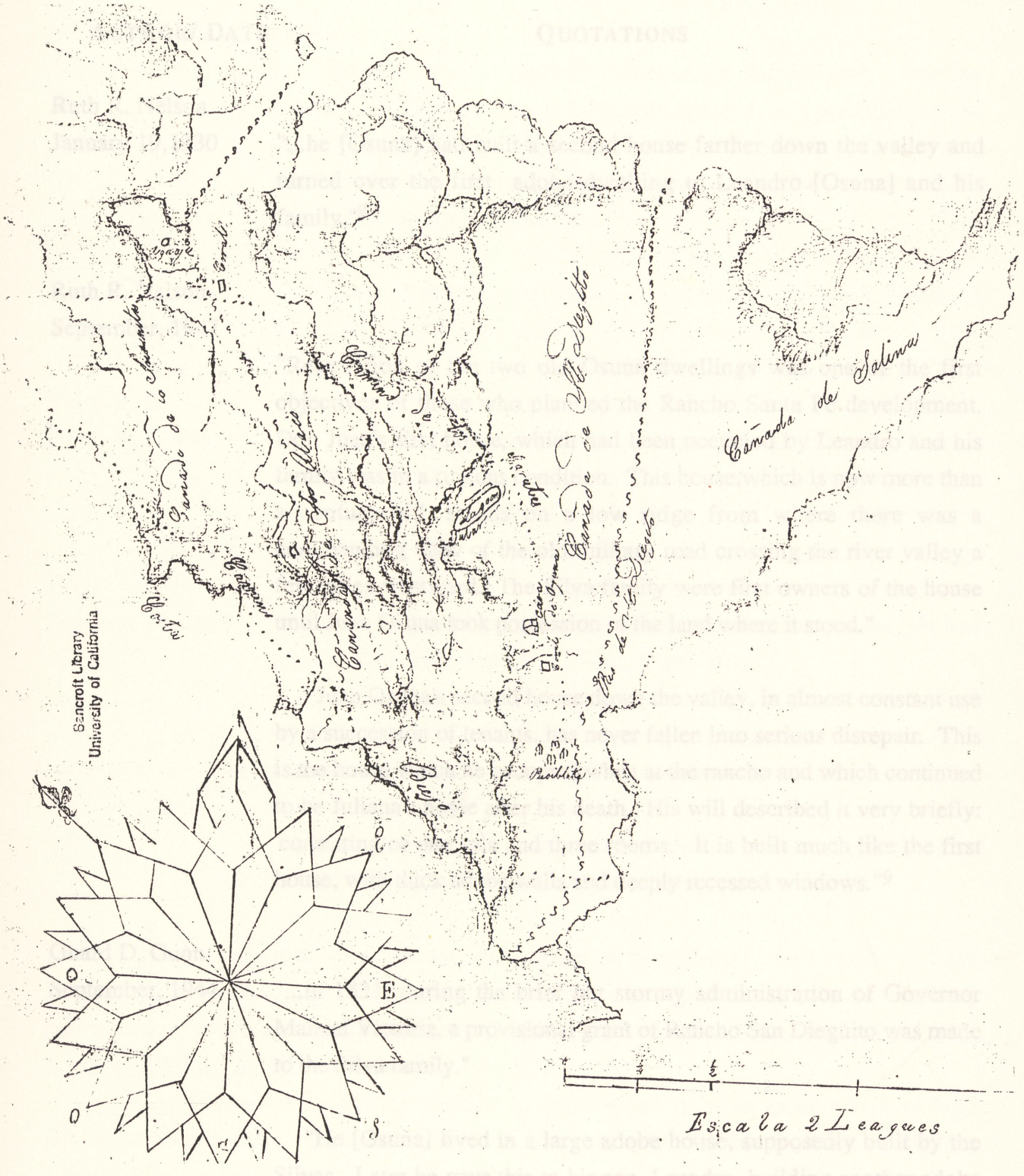


Figure 3. Undated Map of Rancho San Dieguito
(Courtesy of The Bancroft Library)

AUTHOR/ DATE	QUOTATIONS
Ruth R. Nelson January 19,1930	"...he [Osuna] had built a second house farther down the valley and turned over the first adobe dwelling to Leandro [Osuna] and his family."[8]
Ruth R. Nelson September, 1947	"Restoration of the two old Osuna dwellings was one of the first objectives of those who planned the Rancho Santa Fe development. Don Juan's first house, which had been occupied by Leandro and his family was in a ruinous condition. This house,which is now more than a century old, stands on a low ridge from where there was a commanding view of the old military road crossing the river valley a few miles westward. The Silva family were first owners of the house until Juan Osuna took possession of the land where it stood." "Juan Osuna's second house down the valley, in almost constant use by a succession of tenants, has never fallen into serious disrepair. This is the house which he occupied when at the rancho and which continued to be Juliana's home after his death. His will described it very briefly: 'consisting of one sala and three rooms.' It is built much like the first house, with thick adobe walls and deeply recessed windows."[9]
Guard D. Gunn September, 1944	"...in 1831, during the brief but stormy administration of Governor Manual Victoria, a provisional grant of Rancho San Dieguito was made to the Silva family." "He [Osuna] lived in a large adobe house, supposedly built by the Silvas. Later he gave this to his son, Leandro, building another adobe for his own family a mile or so south-west of the first home."[10]

Philip S. Rush
December, 1960 "There were once three adobes houses on San Dieguito. One has entirely melted away, but two have been restored...It is probable that the oldest was started by the Silva family when they held the grant in 1831, and it is also quite likely that the Silvas helped the Osuna family build, after the Osuna took over in 1836."

"Leandro Osuna's old home was in complete ruins when purchased by Dr. A.H. Barlow about 1926."[11]

Vern Griffin
December, 1966 "Although descendants of the old Mexican Don say the home's origin is shrouded in time, the ranch headquarters are believed to date back to at least the 1850s."[12]

Cecil C. Moyer
February 18, 1968 "Leandro Osuna's son Julio took over control of the rancho. He had married Josepha, daughter of Philip Crosthwaite..."

"Julio Osuna and his family lived in the Leandro Osuna house a short distance from the ranchhouse built by Don Juan."

"Both of these houses, restored and remodeled, remain today. That of Don Juan was at one time owned by Bing Crosby."[13]

Attempts to locate primary documentation that would verify Leandro Osuna's possession of the first adobe have been futile. Information regarding land transactions, however, tend to support statements to that effect.

LAND OWNERSHIP

There is much valuable information to be obtained from an examination of land exchange records. For this reason, a title search was initiated that centered on tracing ownership of the land on which the two adobes are located. A partial chain of title concerning relevant transactions, discussed below,is provided herein as an Appendix

1831 Librado Silva obtained a portion of Rancho San Dieguito under a provisional grant issued by Governor Manuel Victoria. The same year, a revolt against Victoria ended when Victoria fled to Mexico. Silva reportedly continued to occupy the land for a period of time and it is probable, although unverified, that he built a dwelling on the land.

1832-36 Juan María Osuna took possession of a portion of Rancho San Dieguito under a provisional grant made by Governor Gutierrez. Osuna received permission to occupy the land during the time that Arguello was Military Commandant (1830-1835) and Jose M. Echeandia was governor (1815-1832). As the political scene was in turmoil in 1831, it is most likely that permission was granted during the final year of Echeandia's administration.

1840 Possession of the southern half of the rancho was obtained by Juan Osuna through a land grant made by Governor Alvarado. There was a house on the land before the grant was issued.

1851 On January 12, 1851, Juan María Osuna wrote a will in which he stated that he had a house in the Pueblo of San Diego and another house at Rancho San Dieguito, that had one hall and three rooms. Osuna died on March 5th of the same year.

1852 Juliana Lopez de Osuna filed a claim for title to the rancho with the U. S. Land Commission on behalf of herself and her eight living children.

1853-75 Family members proceed to sell portions of the rancho prior to receiving a patent to the land (See Appendix). It is not known exactly how the land was iniatially divided among members of the family, however, many transactions involved sale or transfer of 1/9th portions.

The portions held during this time by Juliana Osuna and her daughter Leonora (wife of Silvestre Marron) are particularly relevant to this study. A selection of the transactions involving the land and structures thereon are provided below:

Juliana Osuna

1868 Grants "all her rights, title, interest and estate in and to the Rancho San Dieguito"(see Appendix) to Lewis and D.W. Branson.

1874 Louis Branson and Nancy Jane Branson, grant 5,000 acres undivided more or less to Alfred H. Smith.

Leonora Marron de Osuna

1853 Silvestre Marron and wife, Leonora Osuna, grant to Lorenzo Soto, "one house with sitting room and bedroom situated in Rancho San Dieguito, one-half corral for cattle, one corral for sheep, a garden of the extent of 1 acre of land, and one undivided interest of three" (see Appendix) that were purchased earlier by Juliana Osuna, Ylario Osuna [son] and Silvestre Marron.

1855 Lorenzo Soto transfers the land to María Marron de Barker [wife of John S. Barker] A two-room house, a small garden and a corral of poles are on the land.

1865 John S. Barker and Marie Marron de Barker grant to Francisca Marron de Osuna [widow of Leandro Osuna] "a certain adobe house containing two rooms situated in the Valley of San Dieguito."(see Appendix)

1875 Rancho San Dieguito was partitioned (Figure 4; Figure 5)[14] under The District Court of the 18th Judicial District, State of California as follows:

A.H. Smith - 2864 acres
J.S. Mannasse and Marcus Schiller - 5268 acres
Maggie Branson - 258 acres
Julio Osuna 2nd - 189.25 acres
Luz Osuna de Arguello and Francisco Arguello - 77 acres
Ramón Osuna - 52.50 acres
Francisco M. de Osuna - 116 acres

Land transactions between 1877 and 1906, noted below, involved land originally owned by Juliana Osuna.

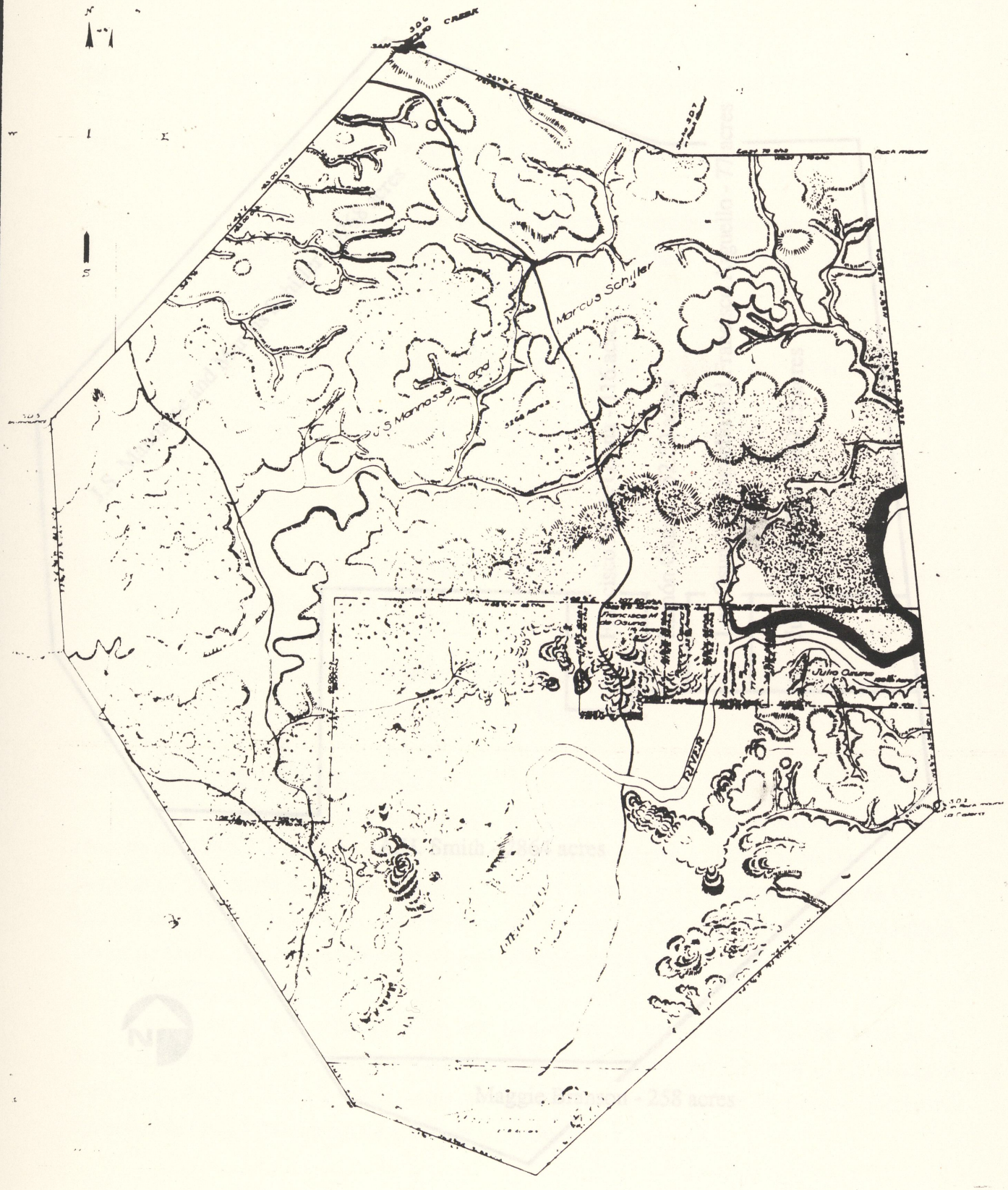


Figure 4. Map Showing Partition of Rancho San Dieguito in 1875

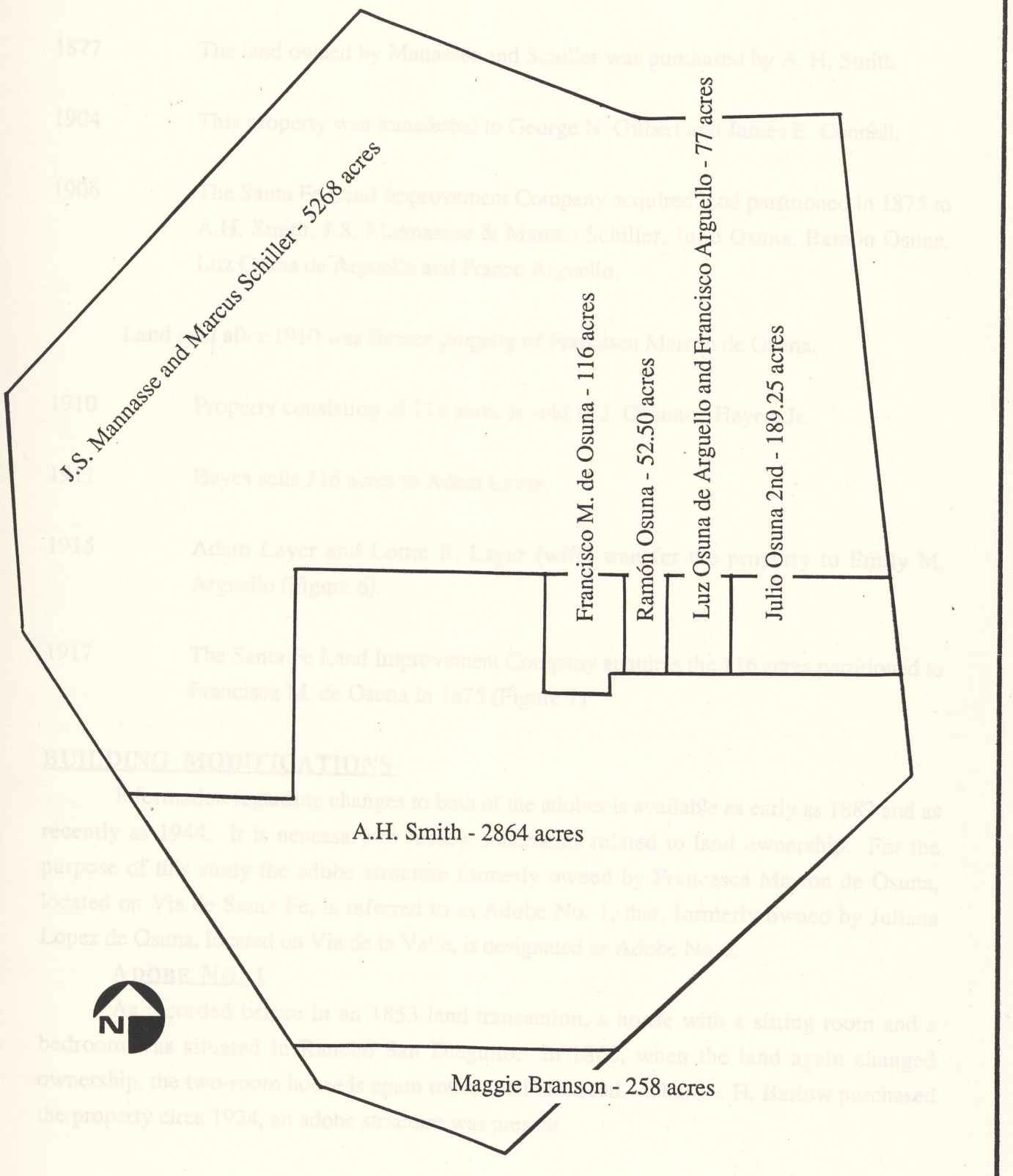


Figure 5. Land Ownership After the Partition of 1875

1877 The land owned by Manassee and Schiller was purchased by A. H. Smith

1904 This property was transferred to George N. Gilbert and James E. Connell.

1906 The Santa Fe Land Improvement Company acquired land partitioned in 1875 to A.H. Smith, J.S. Mannassee & Marcus Schiller, Julio Osuna, Ramón Osuna, Luz Osuna de Arguello and Franco Arguello.

Land sold after 1910 was former property of Francisca Marron de Osuna.

1910 Property consisting of 116 acres is sold to J. Chauncy Hayes, Jr.

1911 Hayes sells 116 acres to Adam Layer.

1915 Adam Layer and Lottie R. Layer (wife) transfer the property to Emily M. Arguello (Figure 6).

1917 The Santa Fe Land Improvement Company acquires the 116 acres partitioned to Francisca M. de Osuna in 1875 (Figure 7).

BUILDING MODIFICATIONS

Information regarding changes to both of the adobes is available as early as 1883 and as recently as 1944. It is necessary to review statements related to land ownership. For the purpose of this study the adobe structure formerly owned by Francesca Marron de Osuna, located on Via de Santa Fe, is referred to as Adobe No. 1; that, formerly owned by Juliana Lopez de Osuna, located on Via de la Valle, is designated as Adobe No. 2.

ADOBE NO. 1

As recorded before in an 1853 land transaction, a house with a sitting room and a bedroom was situated in Rancho San Dieguito. In 1865, when the land again changed ownership, the two-room house is again mentioned in a deed. When A. H. Barlow purchased the property circa 1924, an adobe structure was present.

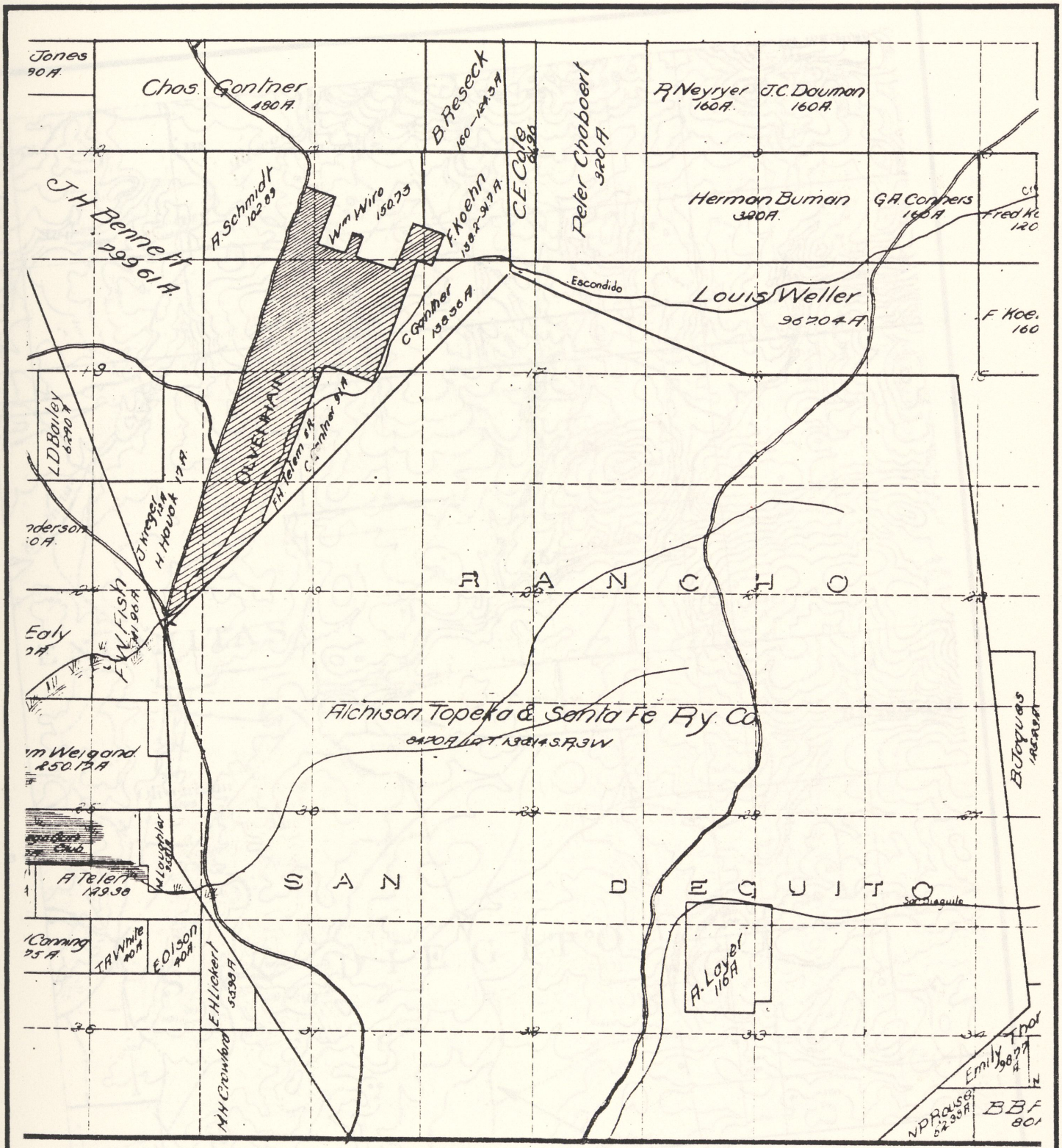


Figure 6. Alexander Plat Map, circa 1913, Showing Parcel Owned by A. Layer

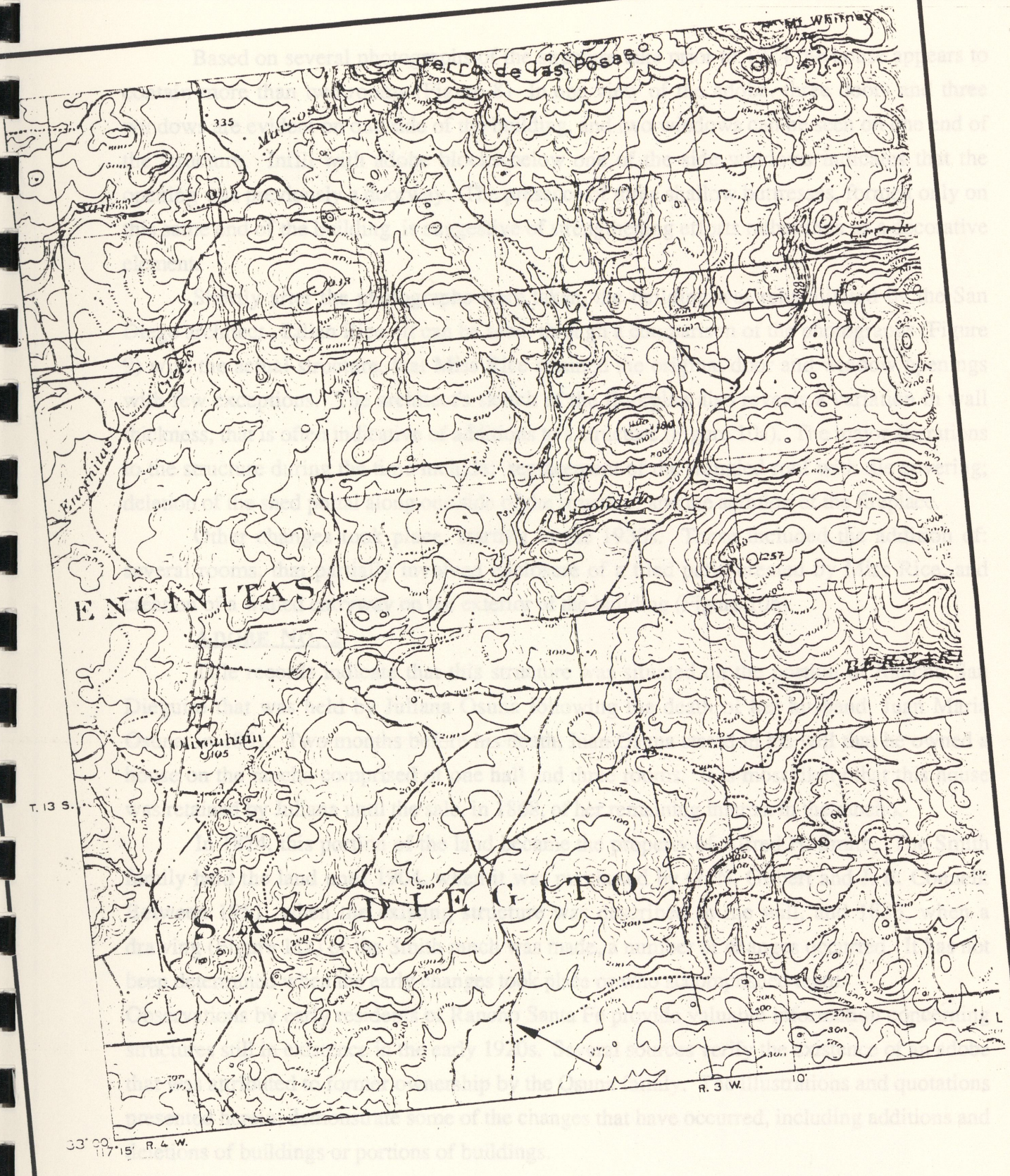


Figure 7. 15' U.S.G.S. Escondido Quadrangle; Showing Location of Adobe No. 1 in 1901

Based on several photographs of the structure take prior to 1924 the house appears to contain more than two rooms (Figure 8) In one view of the adobe, three doors and three windows are evident on one side of the building, and two windows can be seen on one end of the structure. Infill with adobe blocks below one of the side windows indicates that the opening was previously a doorway. The presence of three shallow buttresses, formed only on this same end of the building, is suggestive of strengthening efforts rather than as a decorative element.

Shortly after the photographs were taken, the building was rehabilitated by the San Diego architect , Lilian Rice. It can be seen, through a comparison of the photographs (Figure 9) with the actual structure, that Miss Rice retained the original door and window openings with few exceptions. The architect's sketch of the floorplan also reveals a variation in wall thickness, that is often indicative of additions to a structure (Figure 10a). The major alterations to the structure during the time include: replacement of the shingled roof with tile covering; deletion of the shed portal along one side of the structure; and the addition of the fireplace.

Other changes took place, starting in the 1930s. These included the addition of: several rooms, that partially involved enclosure of a tiled patio created by Miss Rice, and creation of a walled entryway on the exterior of the building (Figure 10b).

ADOBE NO. 2

Title records indicate that this structure was situated on the portion of Rancho San Dieguito that was held by Juliana Osuna following the death of her husband, Juan Maria Osuna, in 1851. Two months before his death, Juan Osuna stated in his will that he owned a house on the rancho comprised of one hall and three rooms. It is most likely that this house was retained by Juliana until the sale, in 1868, of her remaining interest in the rancho.

In 1874, this portion of the land became the property of Alfred H. Smith. The Smith family held the land until 1904, when it was purchased by G. N. Gilbert and J. E. Connell. Between 1951, when the existing structure was described in the will, and 1883, when a drawing (Figure 11a) of the Smith ranch was made, a number of changes occurred. It has not been determined when the early changes took place or who accomplished them.

Observations by early residents of Rancho Santa Fe provide valuable information concerning structures still in existence in the early 1920s. Several sources verify the existence of an adobe that was attributed to former ownership by the Osuna family. The illustrations and quotations presented herein, demonstrate some of the changes that have occurred, including additions and deletions of buildings or portions of buildings.



Figure 8. View of Osuna Adobe No. 1, circa 1924 (Courtesy of San Diego Historical Society Research Archives)



Figure 9. View of Osuna Adobe No. 1, After Rehabilitation in 1925
(Courtesy of San Diego Historical Society Research Archives)

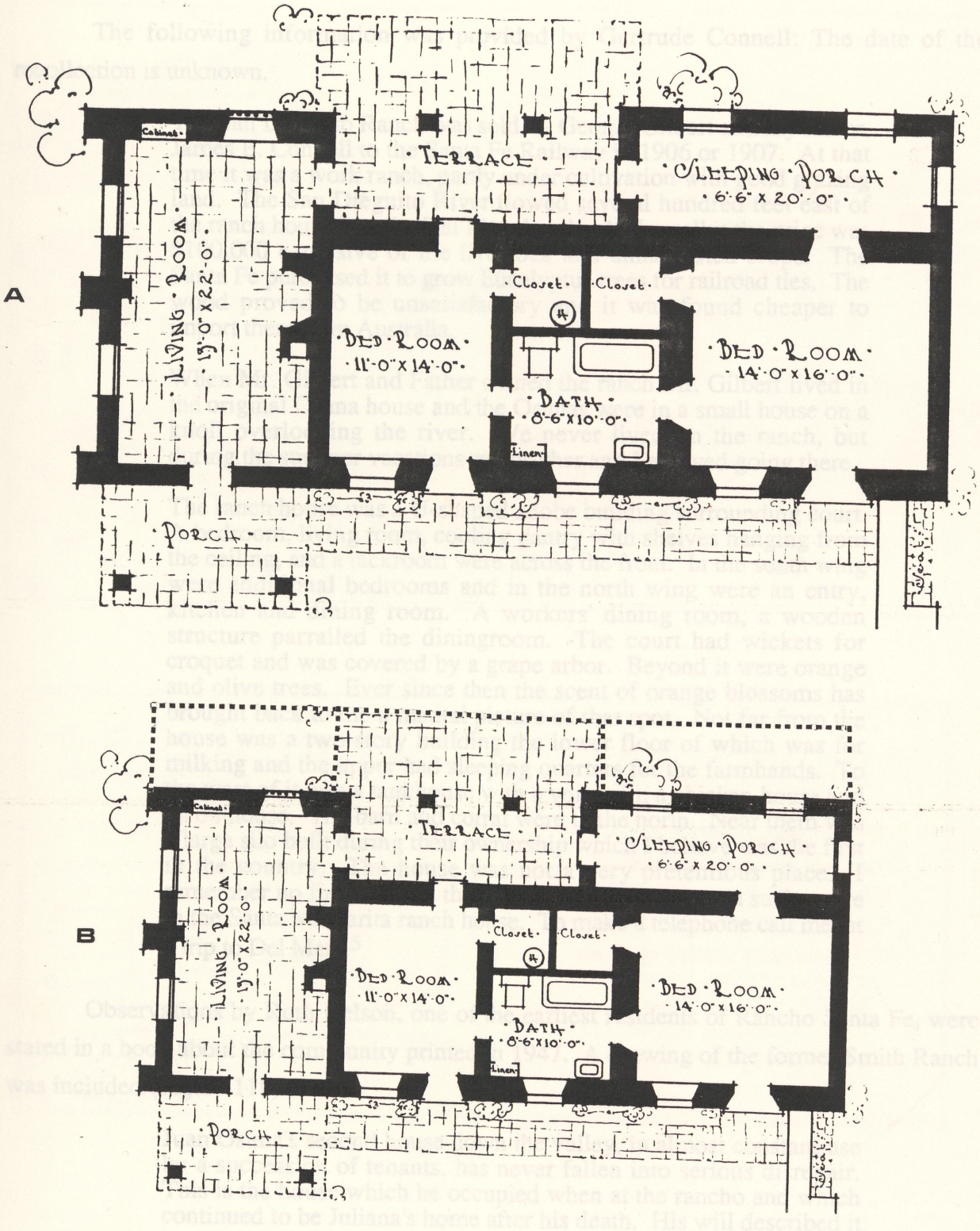


Figure 10. a. Floorplan of Adobe No.1 by Lilian Rice
(Courtesy of San Diego Historical Society Research Archives)
b. Addition to the Structure, Shown with dashed lines

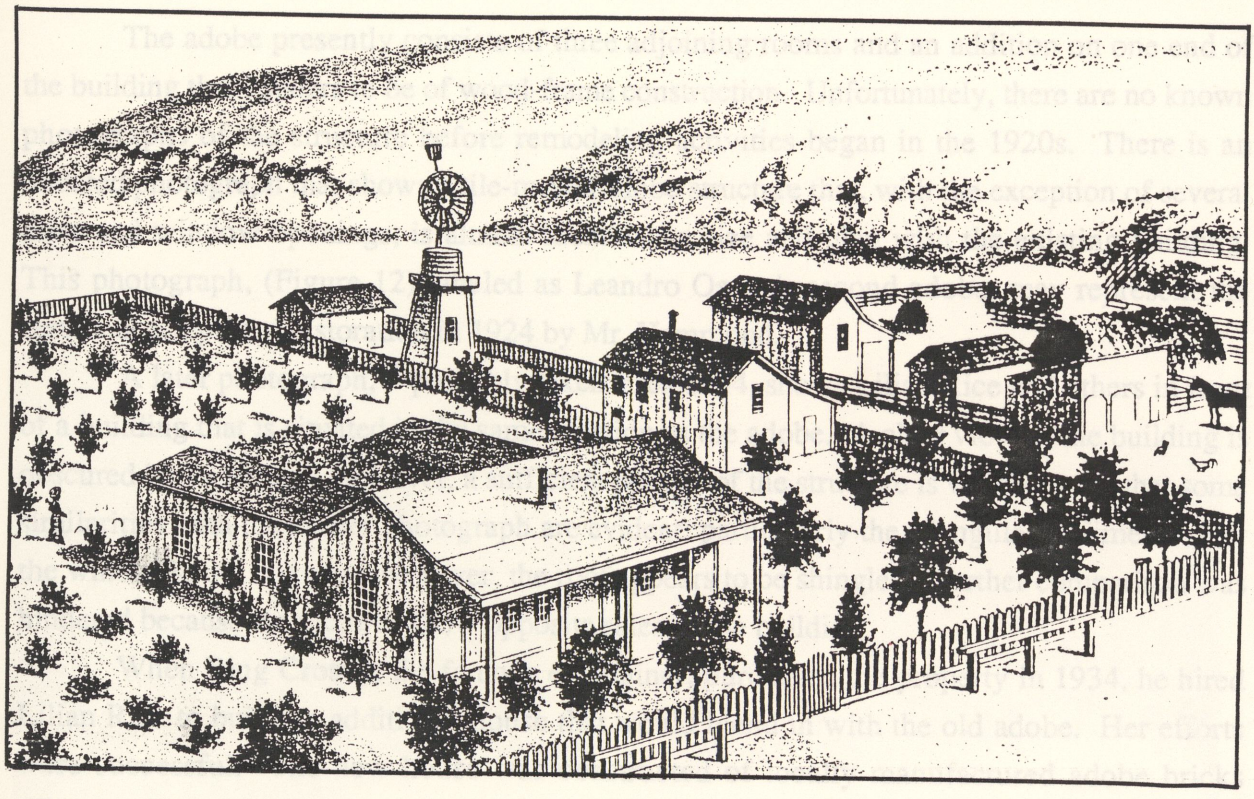
The following information was provided by Gertrude Connell: The date of the recollection is unknown.

> The San Dieguito Ranch was sold by George Gilbert and my father, James E. Connell to the Santa Fe Railway in 1906 or 1907. At that time it was a work ranch, partly under cultivation with good grazing land. The San Dieguito River flowed several hundred feet east of the ranch house into the Del Mar slough. As I recall it the price was $100,000 exclusive of the livestock and unharvested crops. The Santa Fe purchased it to grow Eucalyptus trees for railroad ties. The wood proved to be unsatisfactory and it was found cheaper to import them from Australia.
>
> When Mr. Gilbert and Father owned the ranch Mr. Gilbert lived in the original Osuna house and the Osunas were in a small house on a knoll overlooking the river. We never lived on the ranch, but during.the summer vacations my brother and I enjoyed going there.
>
> The ranch house was a U-shaped adobe building surrounding court. A bedroom, living room, cooling pantry with shelves hanging from the ceiling, and a tackroom were across the front. In the south wing were additional bedrooms and in the north wing were an entry, kitchen and dining room. A workers' dining room, a wooden structure parralled the diningroom. The court had wickets for croquet and was covered by a grape arbor. Beyond it were orange and olive trees. Ever since then the scent of orange blossoms has brought back to me a mental picture of that spot. Not far from the house was a two-story building the lower floor of which was for milking and the upper had sleeping quarters for the farmhands. To the west of it was a tankhouse with a windmill, a chicken house and an outhouse. The barn and corral were to the north. Near them was a large silo built during their ownership which I believe was the first in the country. The house was not a very pretentious place. I remember no fireplaces in the bedrooms or dining room such as are in the Santa Margarita ranch house. To make a telephone call meant a trip to Del Mar.[15]

Observations by Ruth Nelson, one of the earliest residents of Rancho Santa Fe, were stated in a book about the community printed in 1947. A drawing of the former Smith Ranch was included (Figure 11b).

> Juan Osuna's second house down the valley, in almost constant use by a succession of tenants, has never fallen into serious disrepair. This is the house which he occupied when at the rancho and which continued to be Juliana's home after his death. His will described it very briefly: "consisting of one sala and three rooms." It is built much like the first house, with thick adobe walls and deeply recessed windows. As Donna Señora Juliana lived on there for many years, the old house gradually became surrounded by smaller buildings which were used by the Indian servants and other necessary workers at the old rancho.[16]

A



B

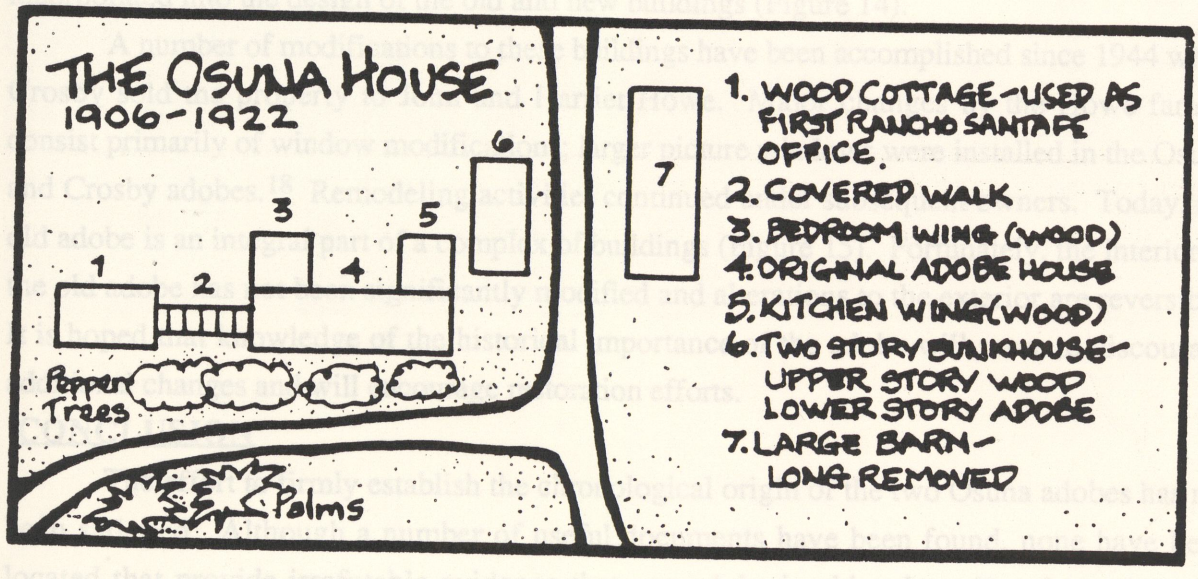


Figure 11. a. Portion of a Drawing Made in 1883 of the A.H. Smith Ranch at San Dieguito (Taken from Elliott 1883)
b. Groundplan of A.H. Smith Ranch (Taken from Nelson 1947)

The adobe presently consists of three adjoining rooms and an addition on one end of the building that appears to be of wood-frame construction. Unfortunately, there are no known photographs of the structure before remodeling activities began in the 1920s. There is an undated photograph that shows a tile-roofed adobe structure that, with the exception of several door and window openings, is almost identical in size and plan with the existing building. This photograph, (Figure 12) labeled as Leandro Osuna's second adobe, may represent the results of a reported restoration in 1924 by Mr. Hammond.

A later photograph,[17] probably taken circa 1934, shows Lilian Rice and others in front of a building that is situated in the same location as the adobe. A clear view of the building is obscured by vegetation, however, a sufficient portion of the structure is visible to see that some similarities with the earlier photograph are evident; particularly the triangular pediments over the windows. At this time, however, the roof appears to be shingled. Further comparison was hindered because the pictures show opposite sides of the building.

When Bing Crosby, the famous entertainer, purchased the property in 1934, he hired Lilian Rice to build an additional house that would blend in with the old adobe. Her efforts were successful. The new house was constructed of locally manufactured adobe bricks (Figure 13). Full width portals, similar to the original shed portal on Adobe No.1, were incorporated into the design of the old and new buildings (Figure 14).

A number of modifications to these buildings have been accomplished since 1944 when Crosby sold the property to John and Harriet Howe. Major changes by the Howe family consist primarily of window modifications; larger picture windows were installed in the Osuna and Crosby adobes.[18] Remodeling activities continued under subsequent owners. Today, the old adobe is an integral part of a complex of buildings (Figure 15). Fortunately, the interior of the old adobe has not been significantly modified and alterations to the exterior are reversible. It is hoped that knowledge of the historical importance of the adobe will serve to discourage additional changes and will encourage restoration efforts.

CONCLUSION

The effort to firmly establish the chronological origin of the two Osuna adobes has not been satisfied. Although a number of useful documents have been found, none have been located that provide irrefutable evidence that one adobe is older than the other. A major limitation in the use of land ownership records as conclusive evidence is the uncertainty as to which dwelling was occupied by, and in the possession of Leandro Osuna.



Figure 12. Undated Photograph of Structure Titled as "Leandro's Adobe," (San Diego Historical Photograph Archives, Geddes Collection)

A



B



Figure 13. a. Site of Adobe Brick Making Activity in Rancho Santa Fe, 1934
b. Sun Drying Adobe Bricks, 1934
(Photographs from the Mushet Collection)





Figure 14. Two Views of Osuna Adobe on the Estate of Bing Crosby, circa 1945 (Source: Paramount Studios)





Figure 15. View of Various Buildings on the Crosby Estate, circa 1945
(Source: Paramount Studios)

If, in fact, Leandro Osuna was given the original adobe, that existed on the property prior to 1940, then ownership records support the common belief that Adobe No. 1 represents the earliest adobe on Rancho San Dieguito. Through a series of land transaction, involving members of the Osuna and Marron family, a portion of the rancho where an adobe was situated remained under the ownership of Leandro Osuna's family until 1910. A photograph, showing some members of the Osuna family, is labeled as taken in 1904 when the Osuna's left Rancho San Dieguito (Figure 16). The people shown are associated with the Leandro Osuna family.

It is postulated ,that Juan Maria and Juliana Osuna lived in an adobe structure that was situated on the land sold by Juliana in 1868, which later became the property of A.H. Smith, and eventually was purchased by Bing Crosby. It is unlikely, but possible, that the grantee of the rancho, Juan Maria Osuna, would turn over the most agriculturally productive land to his son when he personally relied on the income for his support. Accounts provided during the proceedings to procure title to the rancho indicate that cultivation was more extensive than the reliance on cattle raising.



1- Lucy Osuna
2- Johnny Osuna
3- Lee Osuna (Mrs. George Smith)
4- Frank Osuna
5- Mary Osuna (Mrs. George Bates)
6- Ruth Osuna (Bertonicini, Del Mar)
7- Marcus Osuna (son of Julio)
8- Josefa (Crosthwaite) Osuna
(daughter of Philip Crosthwaite, and wife of Julio Osuna who was the son of Leandro Osuna and Francisca Marron de Osuna)
9- Henry Bates (son of George and Mary)
10- Julio, Jr.(Charley)Osuna (son of Julio and Josefa)
11- Bertha Smith (daughter of Lee Osuna Smith)
12- Elsie Bates
13- Johnny Bates

Note: Names taken from information provided with photograph.

Figure 16. Members of the Leandro Osuna Family, circa 1904
(San Diego Historical Society Photograph Archives, Ticor Collection)

FOOTNOTES

1. For additional background an the life of Juan Osuna and his acquisition of Rancho San Dieguito, see: Roxana L. Phillips, "Survivor From the Past: A History of the First Osuna Adobe on Rancho San Dieguito, San Diego, 1985. Manuscript on file, Rancho Santa Fe Community Foundation.

2. Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of California, Vol. IV (San Francisco, The History Company, 1886; reprinted, Santa Barbara, Wallace Hebberd, 1969), p. 762.

3. An Act to Ascertain and Settle the Private Land Claims in the State of California, established by Congress on March 3, 1851, required grant holders to submit a petition for verification of legal title to the land.

4. The children of Juan Maria and Juliana Osuna that were listed as claimants include: Julio, Ramon, Leandro, Juan Maria, Hilario, Felipa, Lugarda, and I eanor.

5. "Transcript of the Proceedings in Case No. 411, Juliana Lopez Osuna, Claimant, vs. The United States, Defendant; for the Place Named San Dieguito." (The Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley).

6. Ibid, pp. 8, 9.

7. Ibid, pp. 7, 8.

8. Nelson, "Ancient House of Osunas Still Stands on Hill," San Diego Union. Ruth R. Nelson was among the earliest residents of Rancho Santa Fe, along with her husband, S.R. Nelson, a sales manager for the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company in the early 1920s.

9. Nelson, Rancho Santa Fe: Yesterday and Today, 1947, pp. 15, 16.

10. Gunn, Rancho San Dieguito," The Southern California Rancher, p. 12.

11. Rush, "San Dieguito," The Southern California Rancher. Philip S. Rush is the author of Some Old Rancho and Adobes (San Diego, Neyenesch Printers, 1964).

12. "Rancho Hacienda to be Auctioned," San Diego Evening Tribune, p. C-7.

13. Moyer, "Rancho - Old and Modern," San Diego Union.

14. Microform of map available in Survey Records Department, San Diego County Operations Center, under U.S. District Court.

15. The 1-page manuscript, provided herein in its entirety , was given to the Rancho Santa Fe Association by Gertrude Connell. According to her sister, C. Connell, whom the author communicated with in April 1987, the reminiscence was provided at the request of Frank L. Hope, Sr., a San Diego Architect, to enhance the knowledge of history in San Diego County.

16. Nelson, Rancho Santa Fe, p. 16.

17. Available in the San Diego Historical Society Photograph Collection.

18. A record of alterations, that took place under ownership of Mr. & Mrs. Howe, was provided by Helen Thompson Evans, a close friend and frequent guest of the Howe family, when they resided in Rancho Santa Fe. The author interviewed Helen Evans, at her home in Pacific Beach, in April 1987, and acquired various photographs of the Howe family and their former home in Rancho Santa Fe.

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APPENDIX

RANCHO SAN DIEGUITO LAND TRANSACTIONS

Contributed by Karna Webster

In the 1830s and 1840s, Juan Maria Osuna received from Mexican officials two adjacent land grants. This property became known as Rancho San Dieguito. After his death on Mar 5. 1851, Juan Maria's heirs divided and sold portions of the estate to each other and to outsiders. Deeds of these early transactions are sometimes difficult to read on the microfilm at the San Diego County Recorder's office and also often hard to interpret. The documents refer to shares in the property and do not specify legal boundaries. For example someone might have purchased "an undivided 1/9 share in the rancho known as Rancho San Dieguito."

The lack of property descriptions caused disputes between the various owners, and finally, a court case in 1875 determined who owned what and provided legal boundaries for each parcel. As a result of this partition of Rancho San Dieguito, Alfred H. Smith and the partnership J. S. Mannasse & Marcus Schiller, each obtained large portions of the ranch. Maggie Brandon received a smaller portion, with the widow and heirs of Leandro Osuna (one of Juan Maria's sons) keeping only a small fraction of the total property. Alfred Smith then purchased Mannasse & Schiller's portion at public auction in 1877. In the early 1900s, George Gilbert and James E. Connell began to buy the various parcels and sold most of it in 1906 to the Santa Fe Land and Improvement Company. Santa Fe acquired the final portion in 1917.

Although this appendix does not provide a complete chain of title for every parcel, many of the significant transactions are summarized here. The notation "DB" followed by the book and page numbers indicates where these documents can be found at the County Recorder's Office. For example, DB 204:75 would be a document found on page 75 in Deed Book 204. Deeds found in the Official Records books are designated OR.

EARLY TRANSACTIONS

DB 00:127 (Dec 12, 1853) A translation.
For $880, Silvestre Marron and wife, Leonora Osuna, grant to Lorenzo Soto, one house with sitting room and bedroom situated in Rancho San Dieguito, one half corral in which large cattle are shut up, a corral for sheep, a garden of the extent of 1 acre of land more or less fenced in, one undivided interest of three that we have bought between Dona Juliana Lopez de Osuna, Ylario Osuna, and Silvestre Marron of which interest or shares I own one which I hereby sell to said Soto. Said rights were purchased of Ramon Osuna.

DB 00 - Feb 20, 1855
(#238 in transcription at the San Diego Historical Society)
Lorenzo Soto to Maria Marron de Barker, wife of John S. Barker for $1,000, part of Rancho San Dieguito, purchased by me from

Sylvestre Marron & Leonora, his wife, Dec 12, 1853. It being the 1/3 part of the land purchased by Juliana Lopez Osuna, Sulvestre Marron & Jose Ylario Osuna from Ramon Osuna. On said land is a 2-room house, a small garden, and a corral of poles.

(SDHS Document)
Sylvestre Marron and wife, Leonora Osuna de Marron have sold for $450, which we have received, to J. S. Mannasse and Marcus Schiller "all our rights and interest of in and to the Rancho of San Dieguito, ... and that this delay in making conveyance to them of said interest is caused by not being in possession of facts descriptive of said property, which, when received either by them or the undersigned we promise to make and deliver to said parties a conveyance of said property." June 2, 1864.

DB 3:331 (Nov 21, 1868)
Juliana Osuna (Juan Maria Osuna's widow) for $10,000 gold coin, grants to Lewis and D. W. Branson "all her rights, title, interest and estate in and to the rancho San Dieguito." ($5,500 has been paid, and $4,700 to be paid on or before Dec 26, 1868.)

DB 4:50 (Dec 22, 1868)
Juliana Lopez de Osuna transfers all her interest etc in Rancho San Dieguito to Lewis Branson and David W. Branson.

DB 6:100 (July 13, 1869)
Donaciano Osuna and Leandro Osuna grant to Lewis Branson for $405 dollars gold coin "all and each of their right, title and interest" in Rancho San Dieguito that parties of the first part have "as the heirs at law to the late Leandro Osuna, deceased."

DB 21:9 (Jun 29, 1865)
John S. Barker and Maria Marron de Barker, his wife, grant to Francisco Marron de Osuna "a certain adobe house containing two rooms situated in the Valley of San Dieguito." This is the same house mentioned in the deed from Lorenzo Soto to Maria Marron de Barker, Feb 20, 1855, DB E:215.

DB 22:248 (Dec 6, 1873)
Juan Diego Osuna for $200 grants to Caroline Suverkruse "the undivided one-ninth part of Rancho San Dieguito" described as portion sold by Juliana Lopez de Osuna to Juan Diego Osuna in 1858 (DB 1:246)

DB 23:72 (Mar 23, 1874)
Henry and Caroline Suverkruse, his wife, both of San Bernardino sell to J. S. Mannasee and Marcus Schiller for $1500: Lot 3, Blk 371 in Old Town; Lot E, Blk 788 New Town and also the undivided 1/9 interest in Rancho San Dieguito sold by Juliana L. de Osuna to Juan Diego Osuna.

DB 23:249 (May 15, 1874)
Louis Branson and Nancy Jane Branson (wife) grant to Alfred H. Smith of San Jose for $6,250 gold coin, all their rights to and interest in San Dieguito Ranch being 5,000 acres undivided more or less.

DB 26:151 (June 1, 1875)
J. S. Mannasee, plaintiff, vs Lion Osuna et al, defendants, in the District Court, 18th Judicial District. Court decides that the said defendants do now hold the legal title to all of the real property as described herein, in trust for J. S. Mannasee & Marcus Schiller and the defendants now do convey all of their rights etc to the plaintiffs.

PARTITION OF RANCHO SAN DIEGUITO

DB 1328:229 (Oct 30, 1875)
The District Court of the 18th Judicial District, State of California, A. H. Smith, plaintiff vs. J. S. Mannasse, Marcus Schiller, D. W. Branson and Maggie Branson, the heirs of Leonardo Osuna et al, defendants. Rancho San Dieguito is partitioned as follows:

A. H. Smith - 2864 acres
J. S. Mannasse and Marcus Schiller - 5268 acres
Maggie Branson - 258 acres
Julio Osuna 2nd - 189.25 acres
Luz Osuna de Arguello and Francisco Arguello - 77 acres
Ramon Osuna - 52.50 acres
Francisco M. de Osuna - 116 acres

A partition map with legal descriptions of each parcel was prepared by surveyors.

A. H. SMITH

DB 29:302 (Jan 2, 1877)
The J. S. Mannasee & Marcus Schiller portion (5268 acres) of Rancho San Dieguito is sold at public auction by the sheriff to Alfred H. Smith, the highest bidder, for $4870.85.

DB 33:312 (Oct 9, 1878)
A. H. Smith acquires from Wallace Leach "all the rights, title and interests of the party of the first part (Leach) in and to that certain piece, parcel or tract of land ... known as the Rancho San Dieguito" for the sum of five dollars, silver coin.

DB 150:369 (July 12, 1889)
Nicholas Crannell grants to A. H. Smith and others for $5.00 a 40ft roadway across Lot 1, Sec 6 T14S R3W. Description begins "commencing at the southwest corner of Lot 1 where the road leading to the house of said A. H. Smith branches off the public road...."

DB 270:17 (Dec 11, 1895)
A. H. Smith grants to wife, Jennie E. Smith, a 1/3 interest in his holdings in Rancho San Dieguito (2,711 acres).

DB 270:18 (Dec 11, 1895)
A. H. Smith and wife grant to Jennie May Goodwin (daughter) a 2/9 interest (1,807 acres) of their holdings in Rancho San Dieguito.

DB 270:19 (Dec 11, 1895)
A. H. Smith and wife grant to Claude V. Smith (son) a 2/9 interest (1,807 acres) of their holdings in Rancho San Dieguito.

DB 270:20 (Dec 11, 1895)
A. H. Smith and wife grant to Claude V. Smith and Jennie May Goodwin as trustees a 2/9 interest (1,807 acres) of their holdings in Rancho San Dieguito. Another document (DB 269:168 Dec. 11, 1895) explains that this interest is intended for Percy A. Goodwin, a minor.

DB 306:293 (Jan 10, 1901)
This document states that the A. H. Smith property was mortgaged (Mortgages 99:147 on Jan 14, 1898), and there is a threat of foreclosure. Jennie E. Smith et al lease the land to George N. Gilbert and W. B. Hage for four years from Nov 15, 1900 with the sole and exclusive right and option to buy. This property contains the parcels partitioned to A. H. Smith (2864 acres) and to J. S. Mannasee & Marcus Schiller (5268 acres) in 1875.

DB 355:355 (Oct 20, 1904)
Jennie E. Smith et al grant to George N. Gilbert and James E. Connell all the property partitioned in 1875 to A. H. Smith (2864 acres) and J. S. Mannasse & Marcus Schiller (5268 acres). Property has mortgage held by German-American Savings Bank of Los Angeles which the grantees assume and agree to pay.

DB 369:125 (Aug 8, 1905)
Jennie Smith (widow) et al conveys parcel for road (originally purchased from Nicholas Crandall DB 150:369) to Gilbert and Connell.

MAGGIE BRANSON

DB 27:25 (Dec 7, 1875)
Maggie Branson and D. W. Branson (her husband) for $2580 grant to John Judson 258 acres which is the same property partitioned to her in 1875.

DB 31:401 (Feb 28, 1878)
John Judson for $3000 grants to George Franklin Judson (Frank Judson) of Sonoma county, California, the same 258 acres sold by Maggie Branson to John Judson (above).

JULIO OSUNA

DB 260:448 (May 24, 1897)
Julio Osuna grants to Josefa Crosthwaite de Osuna (his wife) all that portion (189.25 acres) of Rancho San Dieguito partitioned to "Julio Osuna."

DB 304:50 (Nov 2, 1900)
Julio Osuna and Josefa (his wife) for $500.00 grant to L. A. Blochman that portion of Rancho San Dieguito partitioned to "Julio Osuna."

Note: On April 6, 1904, L. A. Blochman sells this parcel to Gilbert & Connell with other parcels (DB 341:269) and the parcel is sold by Gilbert & Connell to Santa Fe in 1906 (DB 399:49). See below.

LUZ OSUNA DE ARGUELLO

DB 395:353 (Date ?)
Marie Blochman et al quitclaims to Gilbert and Connell the land partitioned to Luz Osuna de Arguello in 1875.

Note: On April 6, 1904, L. A. Blochman sells this parcel to Gilbert & Connell with other parcels (DB 341:269), and the parcel is sold by Gilbert & Connell to Santa Fe in 1906 (DB 399:49). See below.

RAMON OSUNA

DB 49:186 (Mar 3, 1885)
Ramon Osuna grants to S. S. Smith and M. Blochman for $700 the portion of Rancho San Dieguito set aside for "Ramon Osuna" on the partition map 1875.

Note: On April 6, 1904, L. A. Blochman sells this parcel to Gilbert & Connell with other parcels (DB 341:269) and the parcel is sold by Gilbert & Connell to Santa Fe in 1906 (DB 399:49). See below.

FRANCISCO M DE OSUNA

DB 274:449 (Nov 22, 1898)
Francisco M Osuna (widow) to Willard N Fos Tr. property near Rancho San Dieguito: E 1/2 of SEQ and Lots 3 & 4 in Sec 27 and NEQ of NEQ and Lot 1 of Sec 34 all in T13S R3W. Land recorded in Vol 2 p.44 U.S. Land Office.

DB 290:135 (Apr 12, 1900)
Francisca M Osuna (widow) grants same land as in deed above to L. A. Blochman, contains 155.46 acres.

DB 509:421 (ca 1910)
Francisca M de Osuna (widow) Lionor P. Osuna and Ramon Osuna, wife and husband, sell to J. Chauncey Hayes Jr. all right and interest in Rancho San Dieguito, the land partitioned to her in 1875 and being in Sec 28, T13S R3W, containing 116 acres more or less. Property has mortgage of $1500 dated Oct 8, 1910 which grantee assumes.

DB 522:359 (14 June 1911)
J. Chauncey Hayes sells the land partitioned to Francisca M de Osuna to Adam Layer.

DB 688:153 (Mar 4, 1915)
Adam Layer and Lottie R. Layer (wife) grant to Emily M. Arguello that portion of Rancho San Dieguito partitioned to "Francisco M

de Osuna" in 1875 (116 acres).

DB 688:153-154 (May 29, 1915)
Emily M. Arguello and William Arguello (husband) grant to Southern Title Guaranty Co. the 116 acres partitioned to Francisco M. de Osuna in 1875.

DB 723:456 Jan 8, 1917
Southern Title Guaranty Co. grants to the Santa Fe Land Imp. Co. the 116 acres partitioned to "Francisco M. de Osuna" in 1875.

BLOCHMAN FAMILY

DB 341:269 (Apr 6, 1904)
L. A. Blochman and Haidee O. Blochman, husband and wife, sell the following portions of Rancho San Dieguito to George N. Gilbert and James E. Connell: land partitioned to Julio Osuna (189 acres), Luz Osuna de Arguello (77 acres), and Ramon Osuna (52.50 acres). They also sold the E 1/2 of the SEQ and Lots 3 & 4, Sec 27 and NEQ of NEQ and Lot 1 of Sec 34, T13S R3W.

SANTA FE LAND IMPROVEMENT COMPANY

DB 399:49 Oct 22, 1906
George N. Gilbert, a single man and James E. Connell and Marie L. Connell, his wife for $100,000 grant to the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company the following tracts of land partitioned in 1875 to A. H. Smith, J. S. Mannasse & Marcus Schiller, Julio Osuna, Ramon Osuna, Luz Osuna de Arguello and Franco Arguello. The sale also included the E 1/2 of the SEQ and Lots 3 and 4 of Sec 27, the NEQ of the NEQ and Lot 1 of Sec 34, T13S R3W and a 40ft wide strip of land for a roadway running over and through Lot 1, Sec 6, T14S R3W (described). Also included: "all and singular the tenements, hereditsments and appurtenances unto said lands and premises" and all water and water rights.

OR 294:327 (May 2, 1934)
This grant deed records the sale of Lot 4, Block 43 and Lot 2, Block 43, Rancho Santa Fe, map No. 1742, by the Santa Fe Land Improvement Company to Bing Crosby Limited, Inc., a corporation.

OR 1610:465 (Jan 27, 1944)
Harry L. Crosby, Jr. and Wilma W. Crosby (wife) grant an undivided one-half interest in Lot 1, portions of Lot 2, and Lot 4, all in Block 43 (in two parcels) to John Edward Howe and Harriet Copeland Howe.