

NOTICIAS del PUERTO de MONTEREY

A Quarterly Bulletin of Historic Monterey Issued by
The Monterey History and Art Association

Vol. XVI, Number 1

March 1971

THE RANCHO LOS TULARCITOS ADOBE

By Donald M. Howard

Introduction

The Los Tularcitos Land Grant has had a very fascinating history, but unfortunately very little has been recorded for the historian. The author's interest was stimulated by a fascinating story which was preserved by Isabella Meadows and Joe and Isaac Hitchcock, Rumsen Indians of the Carmel Valley. When the Carmel Mission was being restored by Mr. Harry Downie, a story was reiterated by Miss Meadows which pertained to a Mission winery located at or near the site of the Tularcitos ranch house. Since Miss Meadows was known to be an excellent informant for Anne Fisher's book **Cathedral in the Sun**, the author surmised that this tradition of a winery for Mission San Carlos was true. Local ranchers in the upper Carmel Valley such as Robert Wilson and John M. Marble of Ranchos Chupines and Tularcitos, respectively, were not aware of the Mission winery story or location. However, both agreed that the Tularcitos would be a logical area to grow grape vines because of the paucity of summer fogs although no actual vines were seen in the Tularcitos Creek area.

In order to verify or disprove the existence of a winery, bodega, lagar or any facility connected with Mission period viticulture, archaeological work was conducted to clarify the story. Mr. Harry Downie, Curator of the Carmel Mission, told the author that he had seen a mention made in one of the San Carlos Annual Reports regarding a vineyard, but could not remember the specific year or location.

All that now remains of the once impressive Tularcitos Adobe is a 15 foot adobe section of the south wall. The structure is located on a hillock directly south of the John M. Marble Ranch, 19 miles up the Carmel Valley from Highway 1. On the hillock are two foundation remains composed of granite stream boulders with overlying adobe melt. The Tularcitos Ranch adobe consisted of 2 rooms downstairs and a second story of which nothing is known. Area A of this report will pertain to the ranch house adobe, and Area B will refer to the structure that was completely excavated and was 20x20 feet in dimensions. It was Area B that showed the most artifactual evidence to indicate a possible wine storage bodega.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to express gratitude to the people who gave of their time and energy to help the author excavate Area B. These people are: Richard Bucich, Peter Solt, Alex Kirkish, and Randal Reinstadt. Credit is due to Mr. Valence Heinsen of Lockwood who gave his expert opinion on vintage wines. Special gratitude goes to Mr. John M. Marble who gave the author permission to excavate.

History of the Los Tularcitos Land Grant

Nothing in the nature of an historical treatise has been done on the Tularcitos Adobe, and the chronology of occupation of the structure was unknown to local ranchers. Since archaeological technique could show what was at the site through an analysis of artifacts, a search was made in local archives to determine who lived here and when. In the Monterey County Recorder's Office the property inventory of Raphael Gómez, grantee, was found, along with various deeds of ownership and the Terrell Patent Map of 1860. The Bancroft Library has the original U.S. Land Commission Claimant Papers of 1852, and two original maps (*diseños*) of 1835. By referring to the various data sources that were available, I was able to establish a cross reference, and develop a chronology of occupation for the Tularcitos Adobe.

Original Boundaries of the Grant

Los Tularcitos consisted of a huge triangular tract of land of 6 square leagues (more or less), which amounted to 26,581 acres. The original 1835 boundaries as shown in the *diseños* are: **western area** — The Barranca Blanca (White Cliff, this is the Camp Stephani area in Carmel Valley), **eastern area** — Laguna de Los Conejos (Lagoon of the Rabbits, northeast of Jamesburg), **northern area** — Sierra Cuchilla del Tularcitos (knife of the small tules, Buck-eye Ridge and Burned Mountain), **southern area** — **Arroyo** de Tasshaguan (Cachagua Creek). Tasshaguan is undoubtedly the source of Cachagua but it is not known why the spelling was changed.

The Indians were the first people to occupy the Tularcitos. An Indian temescal or sweat house is shown near the Tularcitos Lake on the *diseño*. The author believes this may be the site of Eslenajan, an Indian Ranchería mentioned in the San Carlos records. Tularcitos means "little tules" and was named from the seven acre lake near the Marble Ranch.

The People of Los Tularcitos

Raphael Gómez, grantee, probably built the Tularcitos Adobe in 1835, but it is the author's opinion that he was not the first *gente de razón* to penetrate the area. Previous to the Hippolite Bouchard raid of 1818, Fr. Juan Amorós of San Carlos sought refuge at a place called **San Clemente** (San Carlos Ranch area), and here a baptism and a marriage of some Indians took place. San Carlos records mention a place called "**Rancho de Convaleciente**" which may have been the Los Laureles Adobe. Here the sick Indians were brought to convalesce.

Raphael Gómez received the grant on December 18, 1834 by governor José Figueroa. Gómez came to California in 1830 as a Mexican lawyer. He was a political supporter of governor Manuel Victoria, but because of his legal opinions in the criminal cases of 1831 he excited considerable opposition. He tried to escape after Victoria's downfall, was caught by the Californians but not molested. In 1832 Gómez supported Augustin Zamorano and Figueroa, and because of his support Figueroa bestowed the Tularcitos. Gómez was appointed a city official at Monterey in 1835 (this could indicate that he lived in Monterey while his adobe was being constructed in the Tularcitos). He was

accidentally killed September 18, 1838 at Tularcitos. He became entangled in the reata of a horse he was trying to drive away from his grain.

On April 20, 1852 the widow of Gómez, Josefa Antonia Gómez (formerly Josefa Estrada) and heirs filed claim before the U. S. Board of Land Commissioners for the Tularcitos lands. Josefa married Captain Charles C. Wolter January, 1843. Captain Wolter was master of several ships (Lenor, Clarita, Julia), and was owner of a 60 ton brigantine called **El Placer**. Wolter was a native of Hamburg, Germany but in 1833 obtained a Mexican citizenship as he was a citizen of Peru for two years. Wolter became administrator of the Gómez estate for his wife and children. In 1862 he received the patent for the El Toro Rancho, but died in 1856 at 65.

The Gómez children were: Marianna, Isabel, Felipe, Juan and Raphael. Perhaps Felipe plays the most illustrious part in Monterey's history. He was sent to school in Mexico and Hawaii, and was postmaster of Monterey from 1870-1887. Marianna wed Thomas W. Day, deputy tax collector in Monterey, and a partner with Joseph A. Boston in astore (now the Casa de Oro). Isabel married Charles A. Johnson.

The heirs of the Tularcitos received the Land Commission Patent in 1866. In the interim many legal litigations and property transfers were taking place within the grant boundaries. The first transfer was found in the Salinas Archives (Book B of Deeds, p. 459) quote: "... and being the fourth part of the same premises heretofore conveyed to John C. Adolph Steffins by Charles Wolter, administrator of the estate of Raphael Gómez." In 1854 Steffins sells one quarter of his interests to Edward Vischer for \$4000. Vischer was an artist and a traveling merchant for the Acapulco firm of Henry Virmond. Virmond was a German merchant and did a large business in California, and was owner of several ships, two of which (**Lenor, Clarita**) were mastered by Captain Wolter. From Vischer's letters it would seem that he was a good friend of Wolter previous to their meeting at Yerba Buena in 1842. Undoubtedly Vischer knew of the Tularcitos lands from his friend Captain Wolter. On March 16, 1854 Vischer sold his property to Julius K. Rose of San Francisco. At public auction on July 12, 1855 James Bell receives a portion of the Los Tularcitos. James Bell may be the ancestor of the Bell family which has a ranch between the Cahoon and Fitch Ranches in Upper Carmel Valley. Between 1855 and 1866 parcels were sold and the records were vaguely scanned for this period. Previous to 1866 Alexander R. Underwood left his milling business in Redwood City, bought one third interest in the Tularcitos and engaged in the sheep business. On August 18, 1866 an indenture is recorded between Daniel J. Johnson and Andrew J. Oughletree, and records show that Underwood sold an interest to Oughletree.

Alberto Trescony the illustrious tin smith from Italy, came to Monterey in 1842 and began to make tin cups and gold pans for the miners in the Mother Lode. By hard work he managed to purchase the Washington Hotel in Monterey. In 1849 he rented the hotel to delegates of the California Constitutional Convention for \$1200 a month! An excerpt from Anne Fisher's **The Salinas** epitomizes the Tularcitos in the 80's and 90's: "Next came the great Tularcitos Rancho of forty thousand acres (actually 26,581) in the Carmelo; that Trescony bought from Ogletree (an 1879 tax receipt was signed **Oughletree**). Some said he got it cheap for bad debts. Ogletree had been a smart one though, the gossipers remembered he had in the agreement that Trescony was to continue the **dairy**, and, keep on the thirty Chinese who were running the place. The tin smith had vaqueros and milkers with queues, who packed butter in firkins to ship by boat from Monterey to the mines. Yong, the Chink teamster from Tularcitos was as fine a teamster as ever drove eight horses to a plow, 'and him not bigger than half an ordinary man and not even a whisker on his face'."



Los Tularcitos adobe today — the author's right hand lies on the construction plane where Trescony built upon Gomez' adobe bricks. This remaining wall is the southwest portion of the sala.

The mention of the dairy is quite significant to the author, for the Area B structure excavated by the author was actually the creamery for the dairy complex. In Vol. 47, p. 123 (Salinas Archives) a reference to the dairy is given: "... and the northwest corner of the old **adobe** ranch house (lately used as a **dairy**) . . ." The document was dated August 28, 1895. Anne Fisher further alluded to the dairy: "A committee waited upon him and told him that unless the Chink left his **dairy** ranch of Tularcitos the place would be burned to the ground." This statement is interesting for the second story floor beams which still remain on the adobe are heavily charred on the interior side.

In 1887 the Hon. Carlyle S. Abbott returned to Monterey and leased from Alberto Trescony the Tularcitos Rancho, of thirteen thousand acres. Alberto Trescony died in 1892 at 80 and at that time owned 14,500 acres. From the records it would seem that Trescony did not continue the dairy immediately after purchase from Oughletree, and that the actual production of milk started in 1895, three years after Trescony died. It may be assumed also that since Chinese labor constructed the Tassajara road in the 1880's, that some of the labor force stayed at the Tularcitos Adobe, and also at China Camp near Chew's Ridge. Abandonment of the adobe probably took place around 1900. Mr. Roy Meadows of Carmel Valley recalls that within his lifetime the adobe has never been occupied. In 1924 the Marble family acquired a large portion of the Tularcitos and it is presently owned by John M. Marble.

Archeological Investigations

Archaeological work was conducted at the adobe site to supplement documentary evidence on the chronology of occupation. My primary interest was to archaeologically find evidence that would tie the adobe in with the history of Mission San Carlos. The small mound of adobe melt just northeast of the adobe casa was first chosen for excavation (Area B) because of the occurrence of wine bottle fragments on the surface.

Since the corroboration of Mission Period influence was of prime concern in the Tularcitos project, pertinent documents were sought in Mission San Carlos records and the Tularcitos Claimant Papers of 1852. In 1827 Governor Echeandía sent Padres Abella and Sarria a questionnaire demanding the extent

of San Carlos lands. A relevant excerpt states: "The Mission has 1800 head of cattle, more or less, in the ranch of Los Sanjones in that of Las Salinas 3300 head of sheep. The principal watering places for these flocks are: the Rio Monterey, Rio Carmelo, **the lake of the Tularisitos . . .**" Notice the original spelling, which is changed now for brevity. In the Biennial Report of 1801-1802 signed by Lasuén, mention is made of the viticulture but not specifically to San Carlos: ". . . they **raise grapes** for the table and some **wine** is made. In the other missions it is not due to lack of care and competence, for all of us missionaries are Europeans." This document tends to show that grapes were raised for San Carlos after 1802, Lasuén's further comment indicates growing difficulties: ". . . In some of them success is being achieved, in others there is sad disappointment due to the fact that either soil or climate is not suitable." The Claimant Papers of 1852 say: "Tularcitos which the Mission of Carmel recognizes as its own, although without occupation or title." The gente de razón's idea of "without occupation" is false, for the 1835 diseño shows an Indian temescal on the borders of the Tularcitos Lake. This same diseño does not show the Gómez Adobe, and the testimony of a witness for Gómez seems erroneous: "The testimony of David Spence proves the occupancy of the land by the claimant in 1834, and that he built a **house** upon it that year. . .". Since Spence was a prominent man, and since the Gómez family had the colorful Henry W. Halleck as their lawyer, their status shadowed the facts. A Zacatecan, Fr. José María del Real bitterly opposed Gómez' right to the Tularcitos lands, which he claimed along with Cruz Cervantes belonged to San Carlos (Hoffman Land Case No. 195).

Two phases of adobe construction show in the remaining casa wall. The author feels that the lower portion was built by Gómez' Indian labor (the upper adobe bricks have an abundance of feldspar crystals throughout the matrix). The casa's lower story had 2 rooms, the largest of which measures 27x19 feet (sala). A mescla lime floor covered the room, which is a mixture of sand, lime and cactus juice. It is the author's idea that the lime was quarried on the Lambert Ranch, and was laid prior to a date of 1850. From my own personal experience working at the adobe site I have developed a slightly different version than Mr. Downie's. I believe that the lower portion was constructed by Gómez, and the second story built by Trescony. During the Mexican Period the adobes were generally of one story construction, and the second story floor beams are of planed lumber and would be later. A passage from **The Salinas** tends to indicate this: "It would be a good substantial affair of adobe bricks made by Indians, a house with plenty of rooms, fine and strong and true to the bob-and-line that he (Trescony) had set with his own hands. Every morning he insisted, before he left, that Indians make a cross in the first brick to ensure blessing from the good God who had given so much to the runaway orphan boy from Dromodossola in Italy."

Artifactual Evidence and the Possibility of Viticulture

In the Salinas Archives the first clue to the early usage of Area B came to light. On December 24, 1847 an inventory of the Gómez property was done by Juan Malarin. The document is in Vol. 6, p.1272, and the second item on the list is: "**1 casa y cocina teche de tule**" (one house and kitchen roofed with tule). This cocina is undoubtedly Area B, for during the Mexican Period most of the kitchens were outside of the casa. In the archaeological context some burning pits were found and some scattered cattle bones with butcher scar marks on them. Most of the artifacts found represent the Trescony era and the activities of the dairy. However, three or four definite Mission artifacts were recovered: a blue glass faceted Indian trade bead (the author has found similar beads at the San Antonio Mission Ranchería), a piece of copper sheathing from a powder horn, a musket ball, and a bone lathed button. Artifacts

which point to the use of wine are: iron glass wine bottle pieces, metal barrel hoops both of which were common although not from the Mission Period. The author is of the opinion that Trescony used the Gómez cocina as a bodega facility for wine. This could account for Isabella Meadows' recollection of a winery here, for her lifespan fits the Trescony era; since she was born in 1846 only the post-secular events of the Mission could be recalled. Area B seems to fall into a threefold chronology: A kitchen 1835-1879(?), a bodega 1879(?)-1895, and creamery 1895-1900(?).

Three types of ceramics were found in Area B, Cantonese, Soy Sauce earthenware, and English Stoneware shards. The Cantonese wares certainly reflect the Chinese tradition at Tularcitos. All of the metal tools found (axe heads, harness rings, horseshoes etc.) were hand forged. Most of the square nails were machine cut and post date 1830, none of the hand made large head Mission nails were collected. Window pane glass was found and would date to the Area B structure post-1835. Thomas Oliver Larkin imported the first window glass in 1835.

Conclusions — Rancho Tularcitos was one of the seven Carmel Valley ranchos of Mission San Carlos Borromeo del Río Carmelo. Local tradition indicates that the Tularcitos area may have been the site of a vineyard (*candiotera*) winery for Mission San Carlos. Somewhere in the Mission records the vineyard site is mentioned according to Mr. Harry Downie. The author scanned most of the records without finding any specific location for the site, however, the 1784 report of Fr. Junipero Serra casually points to wine being a commodity at the Mission. The climate of the Tularcitos area could be conducive to viticulture because of the paucity of summer fogs. It is possible that wine was pressed at Tularcitos but that the actual fermentation process was done at the Mission. Certainly the lonely outpost of Tularcitos would have made it easy for the Indians to acquire the "fruit of the vine," a situation the Padres would not have tolerated. Archaeological evidence indicates that wine usage was much later than had been anticipated. The preponderance of glass at Area B were wine bottle pieces, which seem to date from the 70's and 80's. Wine during the Mission Period would have been transported in goat skins, as glass bottles were rare in Spanish times. Artifact evidence points toward Area B as being a wine bodega or solera at one phase in its history. In a solera one would expect to find stacked casks of New Orleans Oak; however, only redwood pieces were found. An abundance of iron piping in Area B could have been used to blend wines from cask to cask, perhaps in the manner of making rosé. None of the other typical wine making facilities were found such as: wooden bung covers, demijohns, lorry tubs, grape mats or gypsum.

The unique architectural features discovered at the Tularcitos Adobe casa were: a mescla lime floor which was derived from local limestone, lack of clay roof tiles which indicates a possible shake roof, two periods of construction (Gómez and Trescony).

Raphael Gómez does not seem to have a death entry in the San Carlos records, this may indicate he is buried somewhere near his adobe.

Bibliography

- Bancroft, Hubert Howe **History of California, Pioneer Index**, San Francisco, 1885.
Bancroft Library: Los Tularcitos Land Commission Papers, 1852.
- Hoffman, Ogden . . . **Report of Land Cases Determined in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California**. Vol. 13. 1862.
The United States, Appellants, vs. Heirs of Rafael Gomez. Case No. 195.
- Howard, Donald M. . . **The Fish Ranch Adobe**, Noticias del Puerto de Monterey. Vol. XIII, Nos. 2 and 3. June and September, 1969.
- Salinas Archives . . . **Book B of Deeds**, Vol. 6 and 47.

COSAS DE INTERES PARA LOS SOCIOS

ADOBE TOUR: The annual adobe tour will be on Saturday April 24, 1971. The grounds of the Cooper-Molera property will be open for this tour, and the tea will be served in the Stokes adobe (Gallatin's restaurant). The Cooper adobe has been a private home for over one hundred and forty years. This year will mark the first time the property has been open for a public tour, as far as we know. The Stokes adobe in its garden setting only a block away will be ideal for the tea. May we suggest this weekend for your out-of-town friends? The day after the tour, Sunday April 25th, the annual Pops Concert will be given at the Fairgrounds by the Monterey County Symphony in the early afternoon. Two fine events for a weekend visit!

GIFTS: To the DOUD-LIBRARY GARDEN — a fine yew tree from Mrs. Cyril Chappelet. To the O'DONNELL LIBRARY — monetary gifts in memory of Angela Ferrante Lucido and Alta Davis, five volumes of California from Dr. & Mrs. Arthur Rathaus, a group of albums of old valentines from Mrs. Allen Knight, and two oriental rugs from Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Bliss. To the MARITIME MUSEUM — a generous monetary gift from Mr. and Mrs. Fred R. Muhs. The Maritime Museum is now established and we particularly welcome contributions both small and large in order to maintain it adequately.

MERIENDA: Members are reminded that the Merienda will be Saturday June 5, 1971. Our Merienda chairman Raymond Smith is busy planning for the event. We wonder how many will be present this year? It seems that the walls bulge more each year as our membership grows and the fiesta expands.

**THE EDITORS
MONTEREY HISTORY
AND ART ASSOCIATION**

Post Office Box 805
Monterey, California 93940

Return Requested

Non-Profit Organization
Bulk Rate
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 88
Monterey, California

OFFICERS 1970-71

President: Edwin Bliss
First Vice President: Robert E. Ross
Second Vice President: Col. Wm. M. Chapman
Treasurer: Bertram Heckenlaible
Secretary: Mrs. A. W. Elkinton

EDITORS

Mrs. A. W. Elkinton
Mrs. Wm. O'Donnell

DIRECTORS: Joseph Ansel, Mrs. Charles Bentley, Edwin Bliss, Col. Wm. M. Chapman, George Clemens, William Concolino, Kirk Davidson, Mrs. W. W. Downer, Mrs. Donald Dubrasich, Ted Durein, Mrs. A. W. Elkinton, Kenneth Ehrman, Mrs. Peter Farmer, Mrs. George Fletcher, Mrs. Fulton Freeman, Stanley Greeb, Mrs. Thomas Hudson, Mrs. Allen Knight, Mrs. Frank La Cauza, George Leutzing, Gen. Harry N. Lyon, John Pattullo, Robert Ross, Mrs. C. T. Singleton, Mrs. Clyn Smith, Hugh Steven, RADM Earl E. Stone, Mrs. Duncan Todd, Mrs. Van Court Warren, Eben Whittlesey.