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CARMEL VALLEY NAMES

By Jack Jarnegan

The name of places and roads in Carmel Valley constitute a sort of outline history of the Valley, if you know their origins and background. And, it is fun to search out those origins. The task is more difficult than one might think who hasn't tried it, but that only adds to the interest. Not many people took, or take, the trouble to record in writing why they bestowed a certain name on a certain place. Frequently, the name came about by accident or was given by someone who had no connection with the place. Often it was garbled in transmission over the years. The name researcher (onomatologist is the formal term) must dig and delve through many a volume and talk to many an old-timer to get his raw material. It becomes almost like a detective novel, with the detective putting a bit here and bit there together and finally coming up with the answer.

In the Carmel Valley, some of the answers remain a mystery to the writer, but with the help of the books of the real professionals in the field--Professor Erwin G. Gudde (**California Place Names**), Professor George R. Stewart (**A dictionary of American Place Names**) and Nellie Van de Grift Sanchez (**Spanish and Indian Place Names of California**) to name a few--he has come out with a reasonable approximation for most of the names in or near the Valley.

They fall into three main categories: 1) those given by the early Spanish explorers, missionaries and settlers; 2) those given by the later settlers, mostly ranchers and farmers, during the first 80 years of American control of California; and 3) those given by the developers who began in 1926 to convert the Valley into the residential and resort area that it is today.

The earliest names of all, of course, were given by the local Indians, Costanoans and Esselenes, but none of those remain in use today, so the earliest name that counts was given by the Spanish explorer, Sebastian Vizcaino, who called our enveloping mountain range "Sierra de Santa Lucia" when he first saw it from the sea on December 14, 1602. He chose the name because December 13, the preceding day, had been the feast day of St. Lucy of Syracuse, a Christian martyr of the fourth century A.D.

Vizcaino next discovered and named Monterey Bay, on whose shore he camped from December 16, 1602 to January 3, 1603, but it was only as a sort of afterthought that he extended his investigations and naming to our Valley. On the very last day of his stay, January 3, Vizcaino and ten soldiers accompanied by Fray Andres de la Asuncion, one of the three Carmelite friars in the expedition, walked over Carmel Hill and found the river, the valley and the bay. He named the river "Rio del Carmelo" in honor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, patroness of the Carmelite order and of Vizcaino's expedition. The Count of Monterrey, Viceroy of New Spain, who had sent out Vizcaino's expedition, had chosen the three Carmelite friars to go along, because it was the "turn" of the Carmelites to undertake a missionary task. He had further admonished Vizcaino to show respect for the men of religion, which he obviously did.

It is amusing to reflect what would have happened if instead of Carmelites the Viceroy had chosen Franciscans (who had been active in Mexico longer) to accompany the exploration. Is it not probable that Vizcaino would have honored them by calling the river San Francisco? (San Francisco Bay had not been named in 1603.)

One hundred and sixty three years went by before white men again set foot in Carmel Valley and gave some new names. In 1769 the first land expedition, led by Gaspar de Portola, camped for more than ten days at the mouth of the Valley, and the following year Portola returned and met Father Junipero Serra at Monterey where they established a mission and a presidio, moving the mission to its present location in the Carmel Valley a year later, in 1771.

This marked the beginning of permanent settlement, and the giving of place names continued, though it is not possible to fix the timing exactly in most cases. Some of the names applied by these first-comers were "Punta de Cipreses" (Cypress Point), "Punta de Lobos" (Point Lobos), "San Carlos Borromeo" (official name of the mission). Later, but still early, names given by the Franciscan friars and the soldiers included "San Jose Creek" and "Los Laureles", (the Laurels).

San Jose, incidentally, was the name given by the fathers to the Indian village of Ichxenta, which stood on the banks of San Jose Creek. One assumes that the Indian name was too barbarous for the Franciscan taste. "Los Laureles", too, was a Spanish name given to a place which the Indians had called "Socorrunda". It is mentioned in the mission records as early as 1776.

Beginning with the transition to Mexican rule in 1822, came the period of the valley ranchos, whose names still survive in one way or another. Next to Carmel Bay on the south side of the river was "San Jose y Sur Chiquito" ("St. Joseph and Little South", referring to San Jose Creek, which flowed through the ranch, and either the Big Sur River or El Sur Rancho, which lay just below its southern end.) Immediately inland was "El Potrero de San Carlos" (the "Pasture of St. Charles", named for the nearby mission and still operated as a cattle ranch.) On the north side of the valley stretching east from the site of present-day Carmel to the canyon of the same name was "Rancho Cañada de la Segunda" ("Canyon of the Second", perhaps a garble for "Cañada Segunda", "Second Canyon", but something of a mystery.) Then to the east was what became known as the "James Meadows Tract" but which appeared

to have no name during the Mexican period, although it was granted in 1840 to Jose Antonio Romero. In the hills just south of the valley was the "Rancho San Francisquito", ("Ranch of Little St. Francis") afterwards merged with Rancho San Carlos but still remembered by the San Francisquito Flat near the upper end of the Robinson Canyon Road.

Next to the James Meadow Tracts on the east, and on the north side of the river, was a small rancho called "Los Laureles" (The Laurels), sometimes called "Los Laurelitos" (The Little Laurels) to distinguish it from its larger eastern neighbor, also named "Los Laureles". These names, of course, are perpetuated in "Laureles Grade", the road over the ridge to the Monterey-Salinas highway, and in the resort motel "Los Laureles Lodge". Finally, beginning at the eastern end of the modern Carmel Valley Village, there stretched eastward the 26,581 acres of "Los Tularcitos". This name derives from the Spanish words "tule" for "reed" (which in turn came from an Aztec word "tullin") and "tular" for the place where reeds grow. "Tularcitos" is the diminutive plural and was given to the ranch because it had a small lake bordered with tules. Part of the original rancho is still in use as a cattle ranch bearing the original name; the ranch house can be seen from the Carmel Valley Road some six miles beyond the Village.

Still farther out the Valley are other names given during the Spanish-Mexican period: "Chupines Creek" (from "Chopo" or "chupo," black cottonwood), "Rana Creek" (frog creek), "Agua Mala Creek" (bad water creek) and "Palo Escrito Peak" (carved tree or stick peak). This last appears to come by its name legitimately, for the present owner of the Palo Escrito Ranch, John Tregea, has seen a carved stick on the summit of the mountain.

Almost all of the names of the second period, from 1846 to 1926, came from the people who gradually settled the valley and filled it with farms. One of the best known was Edward Berwick who had a farm orchard where Mid-Valley Center is today and who became mayor of Pacific Grove, which named a park after him. In the Valley, his name is remembered by Berwick Canyon, the gulch on the west side of Rancho Tierra Grande, and by Berwick Drive in Mid-Valley Center.

Another well-known settler was William Hatton who came from Ireland via South Carolina, became a successful dairy rancher, bought the Cañada de la Segunda rancho, and gave his name to Hatton Canyon--the first ravine east of Highway 1 at the mouth of the Valley--and to Hatton Fields on the west side of the highway. A little farther out is Martin Canyon, on the west side of Del Mesa Carmel, named for John Martin, who came from Scotland via Canada and homesteaded the Mission Ranch in 1856. Quite a bit farther out, James Meadows, one of the earliest Anglo-Saxons to come to California, is remembered by Meadows Canyon, beyond Mid-Valley, which marked the eastern boundary of his ranch in the old days. Meadows was born in England in 1817 and arrived in Monterey in 1837. He bought the James Meadows Tract in 1848, just after the end of the Mexican period.

Still going up the Valley, we come to Tomasini Canyon on the left of the road; it opens

into the little flat enclosed by Rancho Fiesta Road. The man responsible for both these names was Martin Tomasini, who came to this country from Canton Ticino, in southern Switzerland, in 1868 and married Concepcion Soberanes, a member of the old California family, in 1875. He also acquired 90 acres in Carmel Valley that same year, and named it "Rancho Fiesta" in allusion to the number of social gatherings, "fiestas," that characterized Valley life at that time. He had an orchard on the flat until 1911 when it was washed out by a flood.

The next significant name in this category is Boronda Road, which runs south off Carmel Valley Road at the corner where stand Los Laureles Lodge and Porter-Marquard Realty. Its name may even go back to the Mexican period, because Jose Manuel Boronda, the original grante of the larger of the Los Laureles ranchos, lived on it from 1840 onward, and his original adobe house still stands and is inhabited, substantially modernized.

Hitchcock Canyon, south of the Carmel River and southeast of Carmel Valley Village, gets its name from Joseph Hitchcock, Sr., who lived in it in the latter half of the 19th Century. He was born in Carmel Valley in 1851, his father being Isaac Hitchcock, a member of the American military force that landed in Monterey on July 7, 1846 to begin the conquest of California. Isaac obtained his discharge from the service and married an Indian, Madalena Peralta, daughter of Domingo and Loretta Peralta. (The widowed Loretta married James Meadows.) Joseph Hitchcock was married in 1880 to Anna Victorine, a native of the Azores, and they had a son, Joseph, Jr. who also lived in Carmel Valley until he died a few years ago.

Doubling back to the westward from Hitchcock Canyon we come to Snively's Ridge, the mountain that runs along the southwest side of the Valley between Robinson Canyon and Garzas Canyon. This honors Richard Snively who had a dairy and fruit orchard near the base of the ridge. He arrived in California from New York State in 1863 and died in 1896. One of his brothers, James B., was Wells Fargo and Western Union agent in Monterey for many years and was at one time president of the Monterey City Board of Trustees.

There were other settlers whose names remain in the Valley, but space does not permit listing them all. So we move to the third category: the developers' names. A great many of these are Spanish, but they must be carefully distinguished from the names bestowed by the early Spanish-Mexican settlers. Often they were given for no reason other than that they sounded pleasant and might give an "atmosphere" to a new development. Often, too, the Spanish language was very roughly handled. Del Mesa Carmel, with its masculine "Del" followed by a feminine "Mesa" is probably the best known example, but it is far from being the worst. My nomination is "Cañada Valley Drive" in the Rancho Rio Vista section. "Cañada" may be translated as "canyon," "glen," "dale," "small valley;" whichever is chosen, "cañada valley" is redundant.

Some of the developers' names were chosen from among their friends, members of their families, or from among themselves. These have greater interest from a historical point of view than the pseudo-Spanish names, because these people, in their turn, have contributed in one way or another to the history of the Valley.

To cite a few examples: Ford Road in Carmel Valley Village was named for Byington Ford, a leader in the development of the village and prominent Monterey Peninsula real estate man. De Amaral Road, an offshoot of Rancho Road in the Upper Valley, is for Frank De Amaral, who was born on Point Lobos in 1899 and became a leading contractor, building most of the roads in Carmel Highlands, the Carmel Valley Road from Laureles Grade through the Village, and did the excavation for Carmel High School. He was also well-known as a rancher in the Valley. He died in 1973.

Jet Lane, a short road off Laurel Drive in the Upper Valley, has nothing to do with airplanes. "Jet" is the first name of Jet Towt Porter, wife of Frank Porter. The Porters, both native Californians (Jet was born at a ranch on the slopes of Mt. Toro) launched in 1926 the first residential development in Carmel Valley, the section known as Robles del Rio just outside Carmel Valley Village, and they went on to develop 17 or 18 more properties in the Valley, where they still live.

Phelps Way, a short road off Carmel Valley Road just west of Rancho and Boronda Roads, commemorates a one-time resident of the Valley, Muriel Vanderbilt Phelps of the well-known Vanderbilt family of New York. Mrs. Phelps had owned the Mission Ranch at the mouth of the Valley where she raised horses. In 1936 she bought a portion of the old Los Laureles rancho, including the area where Phelps Way now runs, and moved her horse-raising activities out there. Eventually, the Porters bought the land, subdivided it and gave her name to the new street.

There remains one name category not yet mentioned, that of the mysteries. Some names seem to defy the searcher to determine their origins. The outstanding example is Robinson Canyon, one of the best-known and most attractive parts of the whole Carmel Valley area, yet I have been unable, so far, to get any convincing explanation of its origin. Some say "a family named Robinson lived there;" very probably, but what Robinsons? Where did they come from? What has become of them? Others suggest a derivation from Robert Louis Stevenson but can give no supporting evidence.

Other puzzles include Esquiline Road (yes, its the name of one of the seven hills of Rome, but what's it doing in Carmel Valley?), Roach Canyon on the east side of Del Mesa Carmel, Klondike Canyon, just east of Carmel Valley Village (some say its cold there; others say gold was found there). Also there is a dispute over the proper spelling of Garzas Canyon. Local usage is overwhelmingly in favor of Garzas, which means "herons" in Spanish, but the U.S. Geologic Survey insists on using "Gazas" on its maps, and almost all old maps that I have been able to find use this spelling, which means "loop of a bow" among other things. What is the origin of "Cañada de

la Ordena," a small Canyon on the north side of the valley between Carmel Valley Manor and mid-valley center? And how to explain the nonsensical "Cañada de la Segunda?" Perhaps the readers of "Noticias" can help resolve some of these mysteries.



JOLON REGION IN 1899

From Some By-Ways of California, an article written by Charles Franklin Carter, artist, of Waterbury, Connecticut.

Jolon is a terra incognita to many Californians; and as for the tourist--the writer doubts whether one in a thousand so much as even hears of the place, to say nothing of visiting it. The stage for Jolon starts from King's City which is (in the Salinas Valley) one hundred and sixty-four miles south from San Francisco. King's City has no distinctive features; it is simply a little town, built up as a trading center for the district round about. The view from the railroad is not an altogether common place one; mountains border the horizon to the west and south, and there is the rich California color at every hour of the day--the twenty mile stage ride from the town to Jolon is filled with pretty views of mountain and canon and low-lying land given up to grain and cattle. A mile, or so from King's City, the Salinas River is crossed. In the summer and fall this stream is, of course (like all streams in the southern half of the State) very low, but when the writer saw it in September, after three dry winters, there was not a drop of water in sight. Immense rolling beds of sand along the banks of the river showed plainly the great force of the wind when it is at its height; for the winds of the Salinas Valley are a synonym far and wide, for all that is fierce and tempestuous. There is hardly a day, the whole year through, during the afternoon of which the wind fails to blow, and blow hard. Invariably, sometime between eleven and one o'clock it begins, and in less than an hour it is a raging tornado, roaring through the trees and around buildings, and filling the air with blinding clouds of dust. Strange does it seem to have such winds with the deep blue of the unclouded sky.

But the Salinas Valley and its winds are soon left behind and forgotten as the stage rolls along toward the hills it has to climb. In September one does not find many travelers on this road. When F- and the writer made their pilgrimage to Jolon, they were the only passengers, although there was some express matter, and the daily mail, for this is a mail route. The driver--a Mexican from appearance and accent--was a pleasant young fellow, and chatted with us the whole distance, telling us everything about the country, its history, past and present, and enlivening the way so much that the twenty miles were passed over before we knew it. The road is fine, hard and smooth. For some miles before reaching the summit of the pass over the mountains, it is necessary to walk the horses, but this is the only slow part of the trip.

To be continued next issue.

COSAS DE INTERES PARA LOS SOCIOS

LIBRARY: The bronze bust of Mayo Hayes O'Donnell, executed by the eminent Carmel sculptor, Ralph Fowler, is now on display in the Library. This most generous gift of the artist may be seen Wednesday and Saturday afternoons--1 to 4. Van Buren, just north of Scott Street. Also on display, through January, a handsome collection of fans.

GIFTS: Mrs. H.N. Lyon has given the Marine General's uniform of the 1846 period which her husband used for the Sloat Landing ceremony, and from his estate we have a generous contribution which will further the development of the Maritime Museum. From the estate of Ethel Wolter Hyde we have a number of military items, Indian basket, and papers--including a rare roll of the voters of Monterey County in 1874. This is now on display in our Library.

OPEN HOUSE: The Holiday Open House for our members at Casa Serrano this month was a successful event which we hope will be repeated annually. Thanks to Mary Frances Singleton and her faithful group of ladies who not only cook so well, but are charming hostesses.

IN MEMORIAN: In recent months we have lost members who served the association and the community with distinction. Emmett McMenamin was an Honorary Lifetime Director because of his long years with us, and General H.N. Lyon will be remembered for his years on the Board of Directors and the annual Sloat Landing Ceremonies. Other members whose names will be entered in our Book of Memory include Mrs. Walter C. Adams, Mrs. Ervin A. DeLeve, Mrs. Peter Ferrante, Mrs. Margaret Hanna Lang, Mrs. Hazel Rider, Judge Raymond Baugh and Mrs. Arthur C. Wells.

NEW MEMBERS: Mrs. Harry M. Bayley, Richard Adler, Mr. and Mrs. James Brittin, Mr. and Mrs. Alan Fowler, Dr. and Mrs. A.J. Koenig, Mr. David Marhart, Mrs. H.M.M. Nicholas, Capt. and Mrs. Joseph M. Tully, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Clovis York. Mr. Harold Abbott, Mrs. Evelyn C. Bindel, Lola Bindel, Miss Kristen Brantley, Kevin Brantley, Mr. Frank E. Feliz, Jimmy E. Fordham, Mrs. Mary Gartrell, Mr. Robert Faul, Mrs. David B. Heyler, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. M.B. Hites, Mrs. H.O. Hansen, Mr. and Mrs. D.R. McKillop, Mr. Adrian Michaelis, Mrs. Joy Michaud, Mrs. Glenn Pierson, Miss Dagmar Raphael, Judge and Mrs. Donald A. Thomas, Miss Carolyn Walker, Miss Becky Walker, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Weinberg, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Weiss, Mr. George R. York.

LECTURE SERIES on California artists--particularly Monterey--by Kent Seavey. The dates are Wednesdays, from 10-12 a.m. Starts January 22nd through March 19th. The cost for members of Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art members is \$20, and for non-members it is \$25. This includes one bus trip to Oakland. Meetings will be held at Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art. Telephone number: 372-5477 for further information.

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