

NOTICIAS del PUERTO de MONTEREY

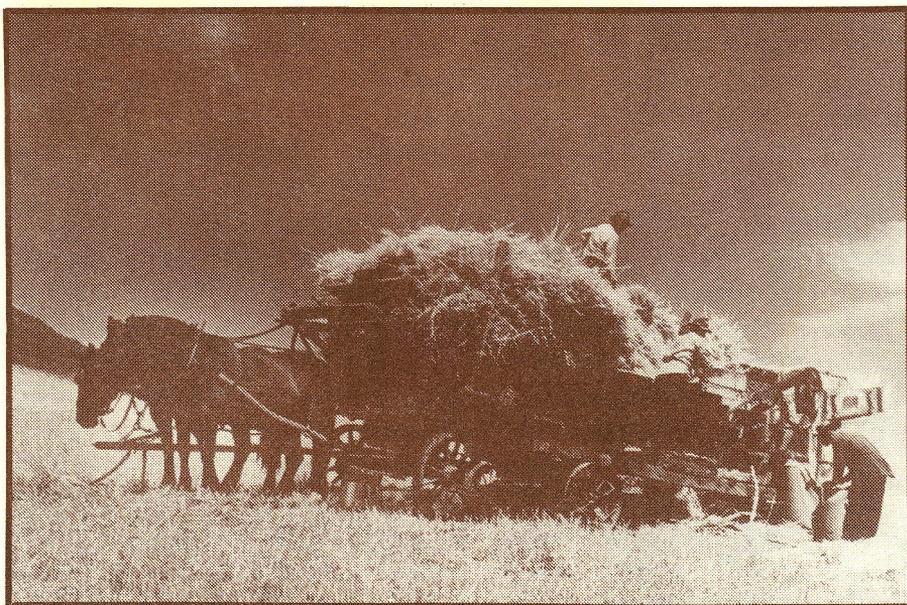
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BRINGING IN THE HARVEST - The scene, shot by George Seideneck, captures the feeling of Carmel Valley ranching in the early days, even though it was taken as recently as 1945. Urban development is now putting intense pressure on former valley ranches. (Picture courtesy Carmel Valley Historical Society)

A LOOK AT CARMEL VALLEY:

**From Costanoan Villages
To Modern Urban Pressure**

Valley Centennial Observed

In the summer and fall the golden meadows and hills of Carmel Valley provide a shimmering foil for the native oak trees. The hills turn purple in the light of the setting sun, and the grey mist at the mouth of the valley surges forward in the evening tide.

The floor of the valley is very different now from the open land the first Spanish settlers explored in the late 1700's. It has changed, too, from the pastoral setting of the late 1800's when dairying and farming were the major occupations of those scattered few fortunate enough to call the valley home.

Yet the valley geography guarantees that those who live there will maintain a special identity of their own. That is why it was only right and fitting that when Carmel Valley decided to hold a centennial celebration this year on August 4, 5, and 6, it would be such a rousing success that people are already discussing the idea of making it an annual affair.

This year was picked as the proper time to hold a celebration because it was in the fall of 1889 that Carmel Valley Village (then called Carmel) welcomed a stagecoach which had been driven from Salinas to Tassajara Hot Springs to deliver mail to the new U.S. Post Office at what is now White Oaks Plaza. Never mind that the post office only operated for four months before it closed down. Three and a half years later it reopened at the same site with Burrit E. Calhoon serving as the first postmaster.

This year on August 4, a ceremony at the Plaza commemorated this event by having Postmaster-General Anthony Frank from Washington, D.C., speak and then preside over the distribution of 1500 Centennial commemorative envelopes in the valley.

Marvin Pylate, Carmel Valley historian, who can often be found at the local history center at Rosie's Cracker Barrel just across the river from Rosie's Bridge, wrote the following article for this edition of *Noticias*. Pylate, a former soldier serving in the 11th Cavalry at the Presidio, has lived in Carmel Valley "off and on" since 1940. He, and a dedicated group of history buffs, are making a valuable contribution to preserving the story of this unique community.

Historical Society Traces Early Carmel Valley History

By Marvin Pylate

That part of the history of Carmel Valley that can be documented began May 25, 1771, when Captain Gaspar de Portola with his party of soldiers and southern neophyte Indians camped for the second time at the mouth of Carmel River. Portola had been to this location on an earlier date in a search for Monterey Bay but failed to recognize the site and returned to San Diego. This time he was to be met by Father Junipero Serra and his party who were coming by ship.

On May 30th, Portola dispatched a small party of soldiers to explore the Carmel River. It is evident that they pioneered a route far inland since soon after Serra's arrival, the good father traveled with a pack train up the river to the Arroyo Seco, through Reliz Canyon and directly to the San Antonio River in the Valley of the Oaks to establish Mission San Antonio de Padua.

For nearly a half century following the founding of Mission San Carlos de Borromeo at the mouth of the Carmel River, the valley was the source of food, building materials, and wool for the mission and for the town and Presidio of Monterey. A description of the valley first appears in a report to Governor Jose Echeandia from two Franciscans. The report reads:

The Canada of the Mission begins at the beach commonly called the Rio del Carmelo. It runs from north-west to south-east; it is more or less wide and about two and one-half leagues in length up to the so-called Corral de Padilla. In some places it is as wide as fifteen hundred paces; in others it is one thousand paces wide and in others very narrow. On reaching said corral, it meets the river which is enclosed by two ridges of craggy rocks. Following the Sierra on the north (because the southern ridge is inaccessible) one comes upon timbers, laurels, chupines, and tularcitos. This is true also of the hills on the other side which, form the mouth of the Carmelo, to the Canada of the Tularcitos, may measure about six leagues. It must be noted however that in this entire stretch of land, there are no more than three ridges (cerros), high mountains up to the Corral de Padilla which is in the near valley of the river, the Cerro de Los Laureles and the Cerro de Las Tularcitos. The remainder on either side is precipices — crags covered with brushwood or tules. In a word, the land is useless so far as cattle are concerned. Nevertheless, the horses and mares of the National Service have grazed in years of drought in the locality of the valley christened "La Segunda" even up to the one called "Palo Escrito" which is the other pasture for the horses.

Immediately in front of the Mission building one can see that the land contains fields, flocks, the river, hills, and plains from San Francisco to



PASTORAL TRANQUILITY - A view of some of the buildings on the Berta Ranch taken in late fall by George Seideneck. Picture dates from around 1940. (Courtesy of The Carmel Valley Historical Society)

San Clemente; and it is the usual place for the tamed horses. There are no neighboring ranchos in all the places which have been named; there is nothing but the high sierras some of which stop at the ocean; but the topography is one made by nature and the thickets and ravines do not inconvenience us.

San Francisquito — there is no land irrigated, nor can it be for the San Francisquito springs merely form a brook. The place is not suitable for summer planting because sufficient heat is lacking in the day. Each night of the year, be it San Juan, Santiago, etc. there is hoar frost; consequently, the corn and beans freeze. The reason is obvious — the altitude of the place is very high and the mist is entirely in the valley of the Rio Carmelo and that of San Jose. The wind passes through and above the mist and lessens the night fog and as early as seven o'clock in the morning, the corn has been dried up. This has been our experience in various years. Water cannot be led from the Rio Carmelo and Rio Monterey for the soil is not suitable. Their beds are narrow and their currents not swift enough for proper leading of water.

Useful timber is at hand. There are redwoods or larch trees, pines and some oaks. All the rest is serviceable for fuel and there is an abundance of that, for which thanks be to God! The mark or brand of this

**Mission will be sent also - but under separate cover. January 22, 1828.
is an abundance of that, for which thanks be to God!**

**Fr. Vicente de Sarria
Fr. Ramon Abella
Mission San Carlos Borromeo**

Grants of land large and small were made throughout the valley. These grants were made for the most part to retired military personnel in good standing with church and state. It is of interest that small plots of land given to Mission Indians along the lower reaches of the river were held inviolate until the U.S. conquest. Ordinary soldiers became landed gentry and the title "Don" began to appear on legal documents.

As the number of Christian Indians grew, the total number of Indians began to decline. Before the Padres, Indian women began bearing children as early as twelve years of age. With the sexes separated and formalized marriage instituted, the child-bearing years of the women declined. With the Spaniards came diseases for which the Indians had no immunity. Small pox was a scourge to Indian and Spaniard alike until Russians from the North taught vaccination.

In a few short years, with scarcely a whimper, an entire people quietly disappeared from the scene.

We know little of the valley Indian. He did not write and no one spoke for him. He left few signs of his passing and only painstaking and thorough archeological work will ever tell us any more than we know.

The life of the Indian was hard although he gave his full devotion to the Mission. This life is vividly described in the novel by Anne Fisher, *Cathedral in the Sun*. This story is based on the memories of Isabella Meadows, daughter of James and Loretta Meadows. Isabella was found to be the last to know the Costanoan language and was taken to Washington by the Smithsonian Institute where she spent the final years of her life compiling a dictionary of the language.

Mission activities and needs controlled the valley through the Spanish era and the first years of the Mexican era. No great events disturbed the even tenor of life. Some land disputes arose with no significant consequences and the few Indians with land were quietly dispossessed.

Two large grants dominated the upper valley: Los Tularcitos of Rafael Gomez and Los Laureles of Jose Manuel Boronda and his partner Vicente Blas Martinez. Manuel Boronda and his wife Juana enlarged and improved a small adobe which had been built earlier to house Indians who tended stock for the Mission. The Borondas soon were popular hosts for rodeos and fiestas and staged bull and bear fights in an above ground arena just in front of the adobe. Dona Juana was noted for her cheese which evolved into what is now known as Monterey Jack.

The Boronda adobe now stands completely restored through the efforts of a former owner, George Sims, and Malcolm Millard, the pre-



BORONDA ADOBE - before restoration. Jose Manuel Boronda and his wife were famous hosts in the early days of Carmel Valley. It is believed that the first Monterey Jack cheese was made by Juana Boronda. The term "jack" refers to the press in which the cheese was formed, rather than to a person's name. (Photo courtesy of the Carmel Valley Historical Society)

sent owner who lives there.

An adobe built by Gomez on the Tularcitos Rancho has been neglected and only a trace remains.

The American era which began on July 7, 1846, did not at first cause many changes in Carmel Valley. The holders of land grants in California were required to prove the validity of their claim before the Commission to Ascertain and Settle Private Land Claims in California. All of the land claims in Carmel Valley were sustained all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States.

This is testimony to some very adroit and timely actions on the part of some long-time citizens of Monterey: William Hartnell, Walter Colton, Thomas Larkin, David Spence, and Juan Bautista Roger Cooper. These men assured that deeds would meet the legal requirements of both Mexican and United States law. In the rest of California, many Mexican owners had their claims denied and lost their lands.

With the Americans came problems beginning with the arrival of John Fremont and his rag-tag army that raced here and there, plundering, burning, and confiscating as they went. These Americans held Mexicans in contempt and treated them accordingly. American miners who had failed in the Mother Lode country spread out over California

and began to preempt and squat on any desirable land. The citizen could offer little resistance.

Out of this situation came two of California's most famous characters — Joaquin Murietta and Tiburcio Vasquez. It is probable that Murietta visited the Monterey area on occasion to dispose of stolen horses. Vasquez came from a very highly regarded local family and so was more important to valley history.

That Vasquez was the most talked about and probably the most maligned man to come from Carmel Valley is not in doubt. That he was a blood-thirsty cutthroat is very doubtful. That he was hanged for a crime he did not commit is probable.

The Vasquez name was, and is, highly regarded in the Valley. The high grassy knoll above Robles del Rio is named 'Vasquez Knob'. If one looks from the valley road across the river to the mountain just to the left of Garzas Canyon, a very faint line can be seen running diagonally up to Snively Ridge. This is the old Vasquez trail which continued up the ridge, across Osborn Ridge and down into the gorge of the river to a point just above the present location of the San Clemente Dam.

Great droughts and floods devastated the valley from time to time. To assure a reliable source of water for the grain and hay fields on the Rancho Los Laureles, which had been bought by Nathan Spaulding in the late 1860's, a small rock and timber weir or dam was constructed on the Carmel River at a point about seven miles above the ranch headquarters. The water was conducted by ditch and flume through lands of the Rancho Tularcitos belonging to Andrew Jackson Oughletrees. Right of way was granted in return for small concessions by Spaulding. This minor project was the beginning of use and misuse of river water which is until this day the greatest problem in Carmel Valley.

In 1878, Charles Crocker, among others, found the possibilities for profitable investment in the Monterey area attractive and formed the Pacific Improvement Company. For a number of years, vast sums of money were spent building Hotel Del Monte, Del Monte Lodge, and the satellite Los Laureles Lodge. A small gravity dam was built near the site of the Spaulding structure and pipelines laid to the Monterey Peninsula. This small dam was replaced in 1921 by a unique constant angle concrete arch dam, the present San Clemente Dam.

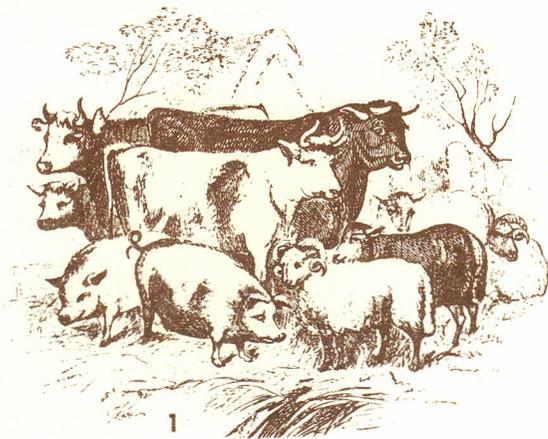
Repeated fires which damaged or destroyed the Hotel Del Monte and the ups and downs of the national economy prevented the Pacific Improvement Company from ever realizing the financial rewards expected. Finally, a new corporation called Del Monte Properties was formed which acquired all former P.I.C. property under the management of S.F. B. Morse who became known as the "Duke of Del Monte".

After the formation of Del Monte Properties, corporate interests in the valley began to shrink and subdivision and sales began to reduce the size of the great tracts. In 1935, the water system including San Clemente Dam was purchased by the California Water and Telephone Company and, with the exception of the Morse ranch at the foot of

Laureles Grade, Del Monte Properties was out of the valley to all intents and purposes.

The history of the valley following World War II has been one of confrontation — great pressure to develop and urbanize has been met with determined resistance by those wishing to retain the rural character of the valley. Out of this has come the Carmel Valley History Society. For the first time, serious efforts to identify, document and preserve sites, artifacts and documentary materials are being made.

A detailed and accurate history of Carmel has long been needed and the archives of the History Society at Rosie's Cracker Barrel can provide much of the materials needed. Unpublished written material, photographs and audio recordings of long time residents of the valley are rich resources for the serious researcher.



SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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