

MAYO HAYES O'DONNELL
COLLECTION

\$12.00

Pride of Place: Tales of Two Adobes

Julianne Burton-Carvajal

Casa Boronda

C

H

D

B

A

E



A PICTURE WORTH 200 YEARS

The early-summer photograph on the cover was taken in 1924 or later. The property in the foreground, currently the site of Cypress Nursery, is located off Fremont Street at the junction of Mesa Road and Perry Lane, behind Myrick's Photographic and El Estero Car Wash. Recently identified by Edna Kimbro and the author in Pat Hathaway's California Views collection (#74-20-180), this image illustrates the remarkable coexistence of elements from Monterey's Spanish, Mexican and modern American eras, as follows:

- A. Two-story stone and adobe kiln for firing clay roof tiles; built in the late 1700s, during Monterey's Spanish era (1770-1822), and left standing at least into the mid-1920s.
- B. Open shed used for drying molded roof tiles prior to firing, handsomely roofed with the finished product.
- C. Casa Barreto-Dutra, barely visible in the distance, built in the 1830s, remodeled and expanded before 1912 by artist Lester Boronda, and again in 1924 by builder J.C. Anthony; after the house was torn down in 1953, the site became a parking lot.
- D. J.C. Anthony and his family lived in this Victorian-era frame house between 1922 and 1925, while he was building and rebuilding homes on the Mesa. According to a newspaper article by daughter Joy Anthony, the house was constructed over the foundations of the second Boronda adobe.
- E. This year-round stream, one of the water sources that attracted Monterey's earliest home-builders to the lower Mesa, flowed down from Alta Mesa to El Estero and into Monterey Bay.
- F. Mesa Road was created by J.C. Anthony between 1922 and 1924, in the process of reconstructing the surviving Spanish-era homes on the Mesa and creating new ones there in a variety of Spanish styles.
- G. Chalk-rock garage built by J.C. Anthony for the Sherman Rose Adobe. In 1922, J.C. Anthony and his crew had saved this fabled Mexican-era home, also known as Casa Bonifacio, from imminent destruction by moving it from its original Alvarado Street location and reassembling it on the Mesa, brick by adobe brick.
- H. Shed and haystack on the Boronda property, clear evidence that dry-farming was still in progress on the hillside between Casa Boronda and Casa Buelna into the mid-1920s; a densely forested swath of live oaks and Monterey pines has since grown up to obscure this neighborly view.

The 3x4-inch photograph from which this digital enlargement was made forms part of a collection of 186 snapshots taken by an unidentified photographer, possibly a frequent visitor to the Monterey region during the mid-1920s. The image is unique; no other photograph of a Spanish-era tile kiln is known to exist for Monterey. The similarity to the roof tile kilns depicted by visiting Spanish sailor and artist José Cardero in his 1791 "View of the Presidio of Monterey" is unmistakable, but the photograph cannot have been taken before 1924 because the roof of the reconfigured Casa Buelna was not installed by builder J.C. Anthony until that year. Casa Buelna's roof is made of tiles produced by J.C. Anthony *in the same location and using the same materials and methods as the Spanish-era builders.*

NOTICIAS del Puerto de Monterey

Monterey History and Art Association Quarterly

Pride of Place: Tales of Two Adobes

Julianne Burton-Carvajal

Introduction and Acknowledgements.....	5
A Note on Spanish-Language Naming Practices.....	8
Part I: Unlocking the Past.....	9
Part II: The Families.....	19
Part III: The Dwellings.....	52
Part IV: Affirming Continuity and Community.....	66
Who's Who at Casa Boronda and Casa Buelna.....	76
Sources.....	80

Book Review: Charlene Duval

The Joaquin Castro Adobe in the Twentieth Century:

From Earthquake to Earthquake by Suzanne Paizis.....82

*Special support for this issue comes from Arlene and Ben Beesley,
Coldwell Banker Realty*



*Casimir Davis at the threshold of Casa Boronda, circa 1928.
Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.*

*This publication was prepared in conjunction with
the companion exhibits:*

"Tales of Two Adobes: Keepsakes of 200 Years"

July 17 through October 31, 2004

Curated by Julianne Burton-Carvajal

Sponsored by the Monterey History and Art Association
The Maritime Museum, Stanton Center, Custom House Plaza



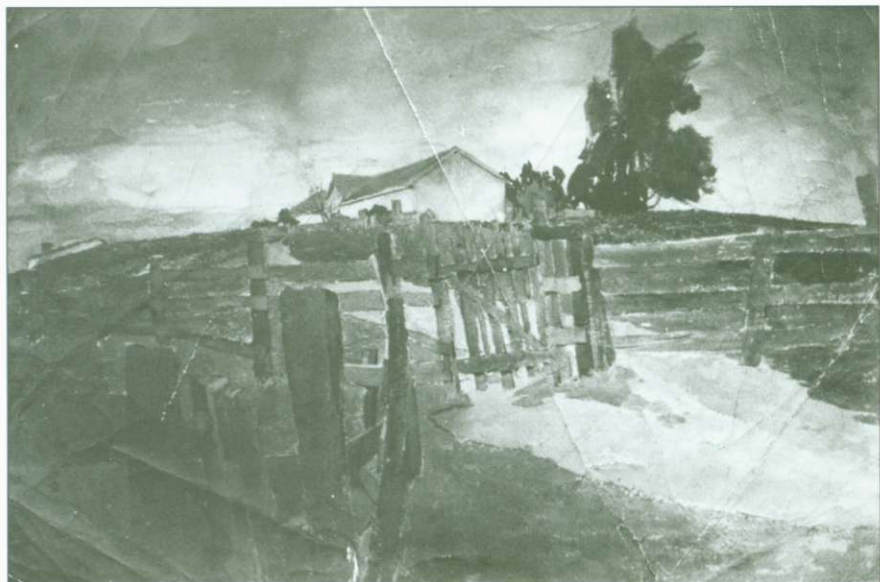
"Arc of Adobes: Santa Cruz to Monterey"

Vintage Photographs
July 10 through September 12, 2004

Curated by Julianne Burton-Carvajal and Kathleen Moodie
in Tribute to Edna Kimbro

The Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, Lezin Gallery





This shopworn photograph of a watercolor of Casa Boronda by Francis McComas belonged to Tulita Westfall. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.



*Etching by August Gay of the the west entrance to Casa Buelna.
David Kelso print; collection of Clint Selleck.*

INTRODUCTION

People who live in the many communities around Monterey Bay share an intense pride of place rooted in the region's unsurpassed natural beauty and benign climate. Our earliest buildings invoke those who preceded us in this cherished place, people who initially fashioned their homes and lifeways from materials that these surroundings so generously provided. As 21st century demographics reassert Upper California's 18th and 19th century Novohispano heritage, all Californians benefit from affirming the connections and understanding the continuities between "then" and "now."

The legacy of 18th and 19th century buildings, a non-renewable resource, is another motive for shared pride of place in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties. Only four adobe structures survive in Santa Cruz County: The **Bolcoff Adobe** at Wilder Ranch State Park, the **Mission Adobe** on School Street, the **Villa de Branciforte Adobe** on Branciforte Avenue, and the **Rancho San Andrés-Castro Adobe** on Old Adobe Road near Watsonville. Monterey City and County, capital of Monterey under the Spanish and Mexican regimes, is the fortunate home of several dozen adobes, but dozens more have been destroyed.

These buildings serve as a screen onto which particular versions of the past are projected. Some versions are based on painstaking research and reconstruction; others reflect imaginative associations and romantic nostalgia. The vintage photographs assembled in **Arc of the Adobes: Santa Cruz to Monterey** reveal how six particular earthen structures were used—and left unused—at different periods in their history. Glimpses of some of the people who lived in and gathered at these sites dramatize the almost timeless adaptiveness of buildings that remain in use today.

Tales of Two Adobes: Keepsakes of 200 Years highlights nine generations connected to what is believed to be Monterey's oldest surviving adobe, **Casa Boronda**. A photographic record of seven generations of Borondas and an emphasis on everyday artifacts and activities reveal the realities behind the romance of California's "Spanish era." In addition to unlocking the mystery behind the early 20th-century transformation of **Casa Buelna**, this multi-dimensional exhibit also spotlights the proud creation of showplace gardens at both locations. Priceless 19th century documents, publicly displayed for the first time, accompany costumes of yesterday, a fascinating array of art works connected to the adobes, and video tours of both houses as they look today.

This publication supplements and memorializes both exhibits by bringing together information culled from two years of research into Casa Boronda and Casa Buelna, the families who lived there, and the larger context of their lives in the Monterey Bay community and beyond.



Tulita Bennett Davis holds daughter Casimir in front of a "territorial style" window at Casa Boronda, 1913. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author-curator would like to extend heartfelt thanks to all those who helped bring these companion exhibits to life. Without the documents, photographs and objects loaned by Rose Marie Dunsford, Harry Parashis, Bill Evans, Jr., the senior Anthonys, and their respective families—as well as cooperating institutions near and far—these exhibits would be relegated to that “someday...maybe” realm.

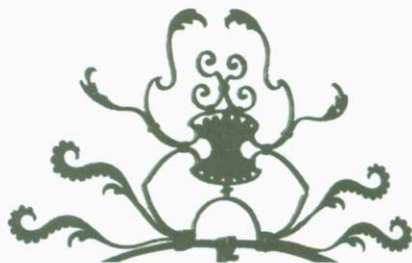
Affirming continuity and community is the theme and the goal of both exhibits. Appropriately, **Tales of Two Adobes: Keepsakes of Two Hundred Years** was made possible by monetary contributions from friends and neighbors. Sharon and Tom Maney and the folks at First National Bank led the way. Del Monte Center was pleased to support an exhibit and publication designed to highlight the historic heritage of the lower and upper Mesa neighborhoods. These names appear on the Appreciation Wall along with those of many more community-minded individuals, organizations, and businesses who, together, made it all happen. *Gracias a todos de todo corazón.*

At the Monterey History and Art Association, Exhibitions Curator Deborah Silguero, Registrar Christie Nanawa, Preparator John Jordan and their interns patiently and wondrously transformed tentative visions into engaging displays. At the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, Exhibitions Director Kathleen Moodie put her talent and energy behind a small exhibit that makes big connections around Monterey Bay. John Castagna and Pat Hathaway gave indispensable assistance, as always, with the photographic elements.

Tales of Two Adobes is dedicated to the memory of Marian D. Evans (1937-2002), President of MHAA 1993-1994, who called Casa Buelna home for almost four decades.

Arc of the Adobes: Santa Cruz to Monterey was conceived in homage to Edna Cleave Kimbro—inexhaustible font of knowledge, sounding board of first resort. A long-time resident of Santa Cruz County who was born and raised in Monterey, Edna has played a key role in the analysis and conservation of all six structures featured in the two exhibits. Indisputably, her thirty years as historian and preservationist have elevated “state of the art” building conservation to another level.

While her contribution is recognized worldwide, her commitment to our local adobe heritage has been personal as well as professional. Edna and Joe Kimbro raised their two sons and carried the mortgage at both the Branciforte and Rancho San Andrés-Castro adobes. It is thanks in large part to their efforts that the latter adobe has been purchased by California State Parks for all to enjoy. *Enhorabuena*, Edna! You have made your community proud.



A Note on Spanish-Language Naming Practices

As a sign of piety, most children born to Spanish-speaking Catholic families were given the name José in honor of Saint Joseph if they were male, or María in honor of the Virgin Mother if they were female. They were usually baptised with two additional given names—by which they were commonly known—in addition to the patronym (father's surname) followed by the matronym (mother's surname).

When a woman married, she would add the particle *de* before appending her husband's surname to the end of her list of inherited names. For example, the order of the surnames conveys that María Gertrudis Higuera Arredondo de Boronda had a father with the surname Higuera, a mother with the paternal surname Arredondo, and a husband with the surname Boronda. For convenience she could be referred to as Gertrudis Higuera Boronda or simply Gertrudis Boronda.

This apparently cumbersome system is a boon to genealogists. For example, Gertrudis's granddaughter Emma might have registered her ancestry through her chain of surnames as follows: María Emma Rosenda Butler Allen Boronda Higuera Arredondo, adding "de Bennett" and "de Ambrosio" for each of her marriages. Following the Anglo-American system, Emma Butler became Emma Bennett when she married for the first time and Emma Ambrosio when she remarried.

The deferential prefixes "*don*" and "*doña*" (not capitalized in Spanish) are only paired with given names, never with surnames. "*Tío*" and "*tía*" (uncle and aunt) are a more familiar means of addressing elders.

Above: Well-head in the garden courtyard of Casa Buelna, added by builder J.C. Anthony during the 1922-23 reconstruction. John Castagna photograph.

Right: Tulita Bennett costumed for her role in The Song of Bernadette, circa 1906. F.C. Swain studio photograph, courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

Part I: Unlocking the Past



Perspective on Early Monterey

Since the early 1800s, two modest adobe homesteads, built on a gently contoured rise within a musket shot of Monterey's original Spanish-era presidio, have faced each other across a shallow ravine. Forested hillsides loomed against the southern horizon, in the direction of the mission at Río Carmelo while Mount Toro punctuated the view to the east, toward the farming and grazing lands the belonged to the Spanish Crown.

The Mesa, as that rise was known, enjoyed a mild micro-climate, abundant water, and proximity to the center of Spanish-era Monterey. From their choice sites, Casa Boronda and Casa Buelna conveniently overlooked the entire settlement. Below them to the north, a large estuary flowed into Monterey Bay. When swollen with seasonal rains, it extended one of its arms into the ravine between the two houses, forcing horseback riders to make a detour. Just west of El Estero, military barracks, parade grounds, cramped family quarters, the governor's "palace," and the Royal Chapel all crowded within the protective Presidio walls while a few adobe buildings huddled outside the perimeter.

Beyond the garrison, the wide arc of Monterey Bay was generally so empty of vessels in those early years that the arrival of a ship was cause for celebration among soldiers and settlers alike. In 1818, however, the ships of Franco-Argentine privateer Hippolyte Bouchard provoked quite a different reaction—first consternation, then alarm, and finally panic. On the pretext of heralding the spreading movement for independence from Spain's oppressive colonial yoke, Bouchard and his men sacked and burned the small, poorly defended settlement, but not before the terrified populace had taken to the hills with the all possessions they could carry.

If Walls Could Talk

Withstanding the tests of time over nine generations, the sun-hardened mud walls of these two venerable adobes have absorbed a wealth of incident. How to gain access to their mute repository? Fortunately, in the case of this pair of buildings, pride of place has been pronounced, and before carrying all they have witnessed into oblivion, waning generations took pains to ensure that certain items were handed down. By assembling, displaying, and analyzing objects and documents that have been safeguarded by one generation after another, we can set these keepsakes in dialogue with each other and with those who view them.

The heirlooms and memorabilia that have survived the ravages of accident and disregard might arguably comprise a random and disjointed patchwork. Yet because these are the keepsakes selected to perpetuate a vanished past *by those who lived it*, this miscellany offers a unique means of recovering at least a portion of the tales absorbed by those venerable walls.

Across the long life spans of Casa Boronda and Casa Buelna, what has managed to survive into the 21st century? The answer is both pathetically little and astoundingly much. From the last will and testament of Manuel Boronda, written in January of 1826, to intermittent photo-documentation of the painstaking restoration of Casa Boronda over the past few years, the keepsakes connected to these dwellings encompass nearly two centuries. The objects that have come down to us—most of them featured in the **Tales of Two Adobes** exhibit—are both disparate and eloquent:

- A forty-pound mortar carved from volcanic Mexican stone that had to be transported thousands of miles, by boat or muleback or both, in order to guarantee women's inevitable pre-dawn ritual—the daily grinding of the corn.
- A soapstone bowl carved by the Chumash Indians of the Channel Islands, used by the Higuerras and Borondas for cooking the beans during harvest season.
- A ten-pound iron lock and eight-inch key, fashioned in some distant center of civilization, that even today makes the great wood-plank, iron-strapped entry door to Casa Buelna more imposing.
- Devotional books dating back to 1795, printed in distant Mexico City and even more distant Paris, that underline the connection between religiosity and literacy.
- An inlaid silver cross that opens to reveal six ancient religious relics, each encased in a tiny glass bead.
- Petitions spanning the early-to-mid 1800s, penned with flowing hands and flourishing rubrics, that testify to the wheels of bureaucracy and how exceedingly slow they used to grind.
- Photographic portraits from the 1860s to the present that afford us the fascinating and unanticipated satisfaction of matching names to faces.
- Fragments of pottery from Europe and the Orient recovered at Casa Boronda during the past two years that reconfirm early Monterey as a crossroads of the global sea trade.
- A set of carved ivory beads and cameos in a polished ivoroid case that conjures out-of-the-ordinary elegance—a gift from afar to some fair resident of this primitive frontier.
- A golden thimble and piles of embroidered linens that remind us of the conventional limits on female creativity—and the range achievable within those limits.
- A German violin shipped down from Alaska that sparked another career long after the untimely death of its English-born owner.
- A 1922 photo-diary of the reconstruction process, and blueprints for a 1940 remodel, that both provide unparalleled insight into how the two dwellings have been conserved and transformed over time.
- An assortment of dolls that reminds us how many generations of children entertained themselves on these premises.



Casimir Davis at the threshold of Casa Boronda with Christmas tree and gifts, circa 1917. Collection of Rose Marie Dunsford.

These documents and keepsakes have been reassembled for today's museum-goers to enjoy and learn from thanks to the care and foresight of successive owners of Casa Boronda and Casa Buelna, who made their pride of place palpable. Newly discovered and reconfigured fragments expand our understanding of a local history forged by global connections. The tales they tell shed new light on past lives and bygone eras that are still sending us signals across time.

In telling and retelling the tales from these two adobes, it is fitting to begin with the most recent ones: the background stories of how the **Tales of Two Adobes** exhibit came to be. Only *two* generations of Buelnas lived at the house that bears their name; the second generation dispersed to Santa Cruz, Palo Alto, and beyond, leaving the house to change hands many times before its eventual abandonment and 1920s rebuilding. In striking contrast, Manuel Boronda and Gertrudis Higuera would be amazed that members of the *ninth* generation of their descendants still live in the Monterey area—an astounding continuity—and that five generations were born at the home they built so very long ago. **Tales of Two Adobes** reconnects a bountiful number of dispersed fragments from the 200-year long Boronda family saga, something that would not have been possible without two recent discoveries.

The Carton that Came Back Home

Harry Parashis deserves credit for the first discovery. Enthralled with his recent purchase of Casa Boronda and anxious to learn as much as possible about its history, he resolved to retrieve a carton of miscellaneous papers that

had made its way to Southern California with other items from his predecessor's estate, papers that had reportedly been handed down from one set of owners to the next. On a Friday afternoon in the fall of 2002, Harry delivered the recovered carton to my door. By that Sunday evening, I had logged thirty hours in a *preliminary* attempt to identify and classify those assorted scraps of history—and almost as many telephone calls to State Historian Edna Kimbro to share the thrill of each successive discovery.

Property transactions dominate this cache of more than fifty items, including two hand-written petitions in Spanish followed by scores of deeds and indentures pre-printed in English. On some of the latter, certain Boronda family members, unable to sign their names, made their mark with a cross. The carton also divulged the occasional design sketch, blueprint, informal letter of agreement, photograph, and newspaper clipping. I suspect, but have not yet been able to confirm, that the contents of this carton comprise the most complete record in existence for any of Monterey's pre-American buildings.

Chance Meeting

The second discovery was more fortuitous. In the spring of 2003, I organized a "Walk Back in Time to Casa Boronda" as part of the Month of Sundays in May sponsored by the Monterey Museum of Art at La Mirada. Thanks to the cooperation of owner Harry Parashis, some five hundred people enjoyed tours of the adobe, displays of early California paintings and publications, and costumed dancers performing Spanish and Alta California dances on the lawn. Toward the end of the afternoon, Nadia and Valerio Giusi of Carmel motioned me over in order to introduce me to their friend Owen Dunsford, who immediately declared, "The person you will *really* be interested in meeting is my wife—because she is the granddaughter of the last Boronda descendant to own this property." How right he was.

My research had led me to the conclusion that the family line ended with the tragic death in Korea of seventeen year old Lester Sowell, a seventh generation Boronda descendant, born in the adobe in 1935. What I learned from Owen is that Lester's mother remarried and had four more children, three sons and one daughter. Rose Marie Timar Dunsford, Owen's wife and Lester's half-sister, is the sixth generation of females who descend directly from founding matriarch María Gertrudis Higuera Arredondo de Boronda. Some of Rose Marie's six grown sons have already made her a grandmother, in the process producing an 8th generation descended from Monterey's first Borondas. Adopted daughter Jeannie Padgett Wilhelm notwithstanding, Rose Marie is the last direct link in this matrilineal chain spanning nine generations.

"I don't know why I saved all this stuff," she told me more than once as she began unearthing family memorabilia at my request. "My mother wanted to toss it all, and my brothers weren't interested, but I just I had to hang on to it." Thanks to her instinct for safeguarding the family keepsakes, I have been able

to organize and identify photographs of five of the six generations of Boronda women who lived at the adobe—not to mention scores of descendants who settled from San Francisco to Santa Barbara, family friends whose names are still locally prominent, and relatives by marriage whose likenesses found their way to California from England and other far-off places.

In addition to this photographic treasure-trove, Rose Marie's collection includes rosaries and other devotional items, cookbooks and kitchen wares, drawings and paintings by artists Tulita Bennett Westfall and her second husband Samuel Westfall, a trunk brimming with textiles laboriously embellished by generations of Boronda women, and photographs of the house that predate previously known images. Rose Marie's generous cooperation in letting these items be studied, catalogued, and displayed has enriched **Tales of Two Adobes** in particular because, with the addition of so many long-preserved components of daily life, the exhibit took on a richly personal dimension with an emphasis on female experience—appropriate to a home that was handed down from mother to daughter across four generations.



Left to right: Casimir Davis Sowell, her grandmother Emma Butler Bennett Ambrosio, her mother Tulita Bennett Davis Westfall and, in front, her son Leser Sowell, circa 1940. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

Making Claims on History

If the dates associated with these two homes are correct, Casa Buelna would have been completed the year of Bouchard's raid on Monterey, and Casa Boronda one year earlier—in 1818 and 1817, respectively. The 1817 date for Casa Boronda is corroborated by a petition submitted to first American Alcalde Walter Colton on behalf of Manuel Boronda's widow Gertrudis, in which she gives that date for construction of the home she is asking Colton to confirm to her. Four generations later, her great-great granddaughter Tulita would go to great pains to establish Casa Boronda's preeminence as the oldest home, not only in Monterey but in all of California.

The Amelie Elkinton files at Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library include three typed letters written between January 30, 1938 and June 10, 1939, sequentially addressed to the president of the Monterey Chamber of Commerce and the founding and current presidents of the Monterey History and Art Association. The first letter, signed "Tulita Bennett Westfall y de Boronda," begins:

Dear Sir:

In the edition of the Monterey Herald of January 27, I notice with interest that you contemplate issuing a new guide to points of historic interest on the Peninsula.

In this connection, I wish to call your attention to the Boronda Adobe which is located at the end of Boronda Lane, leading off from Sherman Lane.

This...is the oldest standing adobe residence, not only in Monterey, but in the state of California. It was erected by Don Manuel de Boronda in 1817, attested to by documents in my possession, sworn to and signed by the governor. The next oldest residence is the Arguello adobe home in Santa Barbara, built in 1818.

Casa de Boronda has remained in the possession of and [been] occupied continuously... by the direct descendants of Boronda. Eight generations of the family have lived [in] and five generations have been born in the old adobe.

Tulita's husband Samuel H. Westfall signed his name to two additional letters. His February 11, 1939 letter to Colonel R.S. Fitch addressed any prior claim that might be proffered on behalf of Casa Buelna: "From [the Bancroft] records, it is manifest that the Buelna adobe was not constructed prior to 1821, ... which was the date that Buelna came to Monterey from San Jose." His subsequent letter to Ted Clark, President of the Monterey History and Art Association, begins in a huff: "We have noticed of late a disposition even on the part of some of the members of the History and Art Assn to question some of the historic facts which we have set up connected with the Boronda family and the Boronda Adobe." Westfall went to the trouble of sending copies of his second effort to the Bancroft Library at the University of California, the State Library at

Sacramento, and the public libraries of San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Monterey and Pacific Grove.

This native New Yorker might have continued soldiering in his wife's campaign for local and statewide recognition of her birthplace, but his health was failing, and he died later that same year in a Salinas hospital after a six-month illness. No photo of him survives, but the grave marker that his wife designed for him boasts one of the more lengthy inscriptions in the Monterey City Cemetery.

Tulita Bennett Davis Westfall, the fourth generation to inherit the ancestral property through the maternal line, researched her forebears in order to provide material for a

28-page typescript titled "History of the Boronda Adobe." This essay was her contribution to "Adobes and Old Buildings in Monterey," part of the prestigious Historical American Building Survey of the Monterey Peninsula

that was compiled by the Depression-era Works Progress Administration in 1937. Tulita's rambling account of Casa Boronda and its inhabitants was condensed to two pages of project 4080, file 43. (Edna Kimbro notes that the same publication reproduces a number of outlandish claims, including the contention that Casa Boronda was a two-story adobe constructed in the 1790s and destroyed by fire in 1926.)

Tulita's claims for the preeminence of the Boronda Adobe continue to echo across time and across the state. A copy of her WPA account was sent to me from a Scotts Valley reader of my 2002 anthology, *The Monterey Mesa: Oldest Neighborhood in California*. I have subsequently encountered significant variations of this same typewritten account at the Monterey County Historical Society in Salinas and the Santa Barbara Historical Society Library, the latter version updated to 1960. A carbon copy of Tulita's "History of the Boronda Adobe" was among the items in the carton of Boronda memorabilia retrieved by Harry Parashis. Intriguingly, that copy—my first acquaintance with the document—was accompanied by a letter to Dr. Wolfson and his second wife Evelyn, written in 1981. Dr. Wolfson—who purchased the adobe from its first non-family owner, Alexander Tiers, in 1941—resided there for forty-six years, until his death in 1987. (His widow Evelyn Wright Wolfson continued living there until her death in 1999.) The letter is on the following page is from one of Wolfson's nephews.



History-Hunters Beware

This letter offers one more small demonstration of how history moves in strange ways—and how the strange ways of history can also move us.

Coincidence, and the thrill of making connections large and small, is what keeps historians going.

The photograph on the cover of this publication is another case in point. The original snapshot, which measures only 3x4 inches, is part of a collection of 186 purchased in 1974 by Pat Hathaway from a dealer in Pine Grove, California. The group includes photographs of San Juan Bautista, Carmel, and Pebble Beach, along with Monterey fishing scenes and numerous adobe buildings. Numbers written on the back suggest four different series, but none of the images is dated. The fact that the San Carlos Hotel appears in one snapshot indicates that the photographer took at least some shots after its construction in 1926. The presence of the tile roof on the reconfigured Casa Buelna means that the image could not have been taken earlier than 1924. Nothing is known of the photographer, but several shots suggest an artistic disposition—in the compositional echoes of paintings by Armin Hansen, for example.

We may never learn who snapped our cover shot, or determine its exact date, but the photograph is an historian's gold mine. It captures the long-standing visual connection between Casa Buelna and Casa Boronda, provides the only known photograph of a Spanish-era tile kiln in Monterey, and includes

JULIAN H. L. WOLFBOHN • P. O. BOX 734 COLUMBIA, CALIFORNIA

October 10, 1981

Dear Mast and Evelyn:

We must apologize for not sending off the history of the Boronda Adobe to you ere now.

I must admit that I was interested enough in it so that I wanted to read it before sending it forward, but it has taken such a long time that I can wait no longer to get it on its way.

It seems to be a most interesting document, and I am sure that its contents will add to your store of knowledge on this subject. We hope that this paper will give you as much joy in reading it as it gave us to find it.

In case you do not recall the details, we would like to tell you how this all happened. We went to Sutter Creek with a friend, ostensibly looking for stamps on post cards and envelopes of 19th century usage and, while wandering through the town, I was drawn to an old book store. While rummaging through the books, I engaged the proprietress in conversation and somehow or another I mentioned that my uncle lived in the oldest inhabited adobe in the State. She asked me its name and I told her it was the Boronda Adobe. Most excitedly she called my attention to the document which you find here enclosed which she had just finished reading not a few minutes before. Feeling this a real find, we bought it and upon our return home called you to let you know.

It is finally on its way to you, and we hope you enjoy it as much as we did in finding it.

Trust this letter finds you both well. We send our love.

Magda & Julia.

(just barely) the temporary family residence of J.C. Anthony, the builder who reasserted Spanish architectural styles and methods on the Monterey Mesa during the 1920s. Affirming the palpable presence of the past in Monterey, this unprecedented photograph encompasses the Spanish, Mexican, Californio, and American regimes.

In this age of electronic wizardry, we can no longer assume that images are unmediated mirrors of truth. The enlarged snapshot on the cover has indeed had its scratches digitally excised and its deep shadows digitally dispelled. But it has most definitely not been subjected to any form of manipulation that would distort or falsify the unique conjunction of space and time that it represents.

History-Writing and Wishful Thinking

Unlike the long-assumed transparency of photographs, historical accounts have always entailed selective interpretation, so questions of reliability are nothing new. Tulita's version of the Boronda history happens to be a rather egregious example of history-writing as wishful thinking. Her insistence that founding patriarch José Manuel Boronda (the "aristocratic particle" *de* was her own embellishment) came from one of two villages called Jerez in the south of Spain—rather than from a town of the same name in New Spain, as recorded in Church records—betrays the Eurocentric bias so prevalent in her day. (In the margin of her personal carbon copy of Tulita's summary, historian Amelie Elkinton wrote, "Not true: from Mexico.")

Tulita's claim that her Boronda ancestors conserved their "pure Castillian" tongue by retreating to a "mountain fastness" during the Moorish occupation of Spain is preposterous because the occupation she refers to lasted from 711 to 1492—a very long time for any language to remain "pure." The second edition of *The Monterey Mesa: Oldest Neighborhood in California* includes a new section called "Memoirs of the Mesa." One of the three reminiscences is Tulita's history of the Borondas—included as much for what it reveals about attitudes toward the past as for the family stories recounted there. Tulita's claim to preeminence on behalf of Casa Boronda cannot be substantiated, but even if her birthplace is not the oldest home in California—or, for that matter, in Monterey—its richly layered past deserves to be revisited.



Fragment of José Cardero's 1791 drawing, Vista del Presidio de Monte Rey, showing tile kilns at left, also featured in the cover photograph. Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, Honeyman Collection.

Part II: The Families



Emma Butler Bennett Ambrosio with granddaughter Casimir Davis in the kitchen of Casa Boronda circa 1930. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

The Written Word

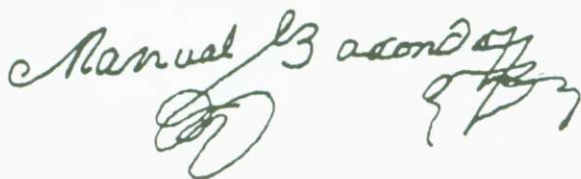
When California was colonized by Spain in the late 18th century, the written word was a technological advantage exercised by relatively few. As decreed by Governor Diego Borica in 1794, the purpose of schooling in Alta California was twofold because literacy reinforced religious piety among the sons of soldiers and settlers.

Both José Manuel Boronda and José Antonio Buelna served as schoolteachers as well as soldiers. During their years of active military service, José Manuel Boronda taught at remote, inhospitable San Francisco and José Antonio Buelna at the more temperate San José. Boronda is recognized for conducting the first "select school for boys" in his home on the Mesa during his retirement at Monterey. Across the ravine, Antonio Buelna taught *primeras letras* (beginning letters) to the less advanced students, also male. Subsequently, his daughter Ylaria Buelna Tapia would conduct the first school for girls there.

Volume 7 of the 16-volume *Monterey County Archives*, housed in Salinas at the Monterey County Historical Society, Inc., contains an original schoolmaster's report penned by Manuel Boronda in San Francisco, and delivered to Governor José Borica at Monterey. In his end-of-the-year progress report, written on December 13, 1796, Boronda lists eight boys under his tutelage—including his own first-born, then only four years old:

Report given to the Lord Governor expressing the names of and the state in which the following students can be found from April 1, 1796 to the present date.

<i>Arguellos:</i>	<i>Luiz is writing with a rule Gervasio the same Santiago is learning his first letters</i>
<i>Carrillos:</i>	<i>Carlos the same Anastacio beginning to draw (decorar) Domingo is learning his first letters</i>
<i>Boronda:</i>	<i>Josef Canuto is learning his first letters</i>
<i>Bernal:</i>	<i>Francisco is beginning to draw</i>

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Manuel Boronda". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M" and "B".

The Founding Borondas

Both Boronda and Buelna would have received their 4-5 acre plots on the Monterey Mesa as recompense for some twenty years of military service, much of it unpaid due to chronic political and economic problems in both Spain and New Spain. According to *Building and Builders in Hispanic California, 1769-1850*, the first Alta California record of José Manuel Boronda appears on December 31, 1785. At that time, the 35-year old bachelor—a trained carpenter from the town of Xérez (Jerez), Bishopric of Guadalajara, in the Jalisco region of New Spain—was employed by the Department of San Blas in northwestern New Spain and later attached to the Presidio of Santa Barbara. Seventeen of his twenty-seven fellow artisans also hailed from Guadalajara.

At Santa Barbara, Boronda apparently made the decision to enlist in the Spanish colonial army, signing on for ten years. Soldiers and craftsmen alike were encouraged to take a wife and children to the frontier or to marry during their tour of duty. Manuel Boronda followed the latter course, marrying thirteen-year old María Gertrudis Higuera Arredondo, an *hija del país* (Alta California-born daughter) who had been baptized in 1776 at Monterey. The double wedding, held at Mission Santa Clara on January 23, 1790, included Gertrudis's sister Victoria and her groom Francisco Valencia.

The newlywed Borondas promptly relocated to San Francisco. Between 1792 and 1812, Gertrudis bore thirteen children, but only eight of these would survive to adulthood—three sons and five daughters. Three Manuels were buried at a tender age before the ninth child was able to carry the name into maturity and eventually pass it on to a third generation. Before the birth of José Eusebio in 1808, Corporal Boronda enlisted for a second term of service. A minimum of eighteen years were required before qualifying for retirement with a half-pay pension. The soldiers and artisans most likely to remain in California turned out to be those who, like Manuel Boronda, produced a large number of *hijos del país*.

The number of Borondas baptized at Mission Santa Clara suggests that Gertrudis preferred to be near her mother when she delivered. It was not unusual for Alta California wives to give birth twelve, fifteen, and even twenty times in the course of their marriages—in part because they got such an early start, and also because they were under considerable pressure from civic, religious and family leaders to populate the land. Infant and child mortality was relatively high, since medical care was primitive at best. Available statistics suggest that female mortality was almost double that of males, presumably due to the risks of childbearing. Discrepancies between the number of baptisms and the number of offspring who reached adulthood were considerable. Gertrudis and Manuel lost five of their offspring to unidentified causes. The rate of infant mortality, calculated by Scheutz-Miller from her data on artisans who were active in colonial California, was 25% for infants and 39% for children under five. Gertrudis and Manuel's painful parental losses corresponded to the norms of their time and place.



*Petra Boronda de Allen, daughter
Refugio Allen and youngest son Manuel
Martin*



Petra and Manuel



Manuel Martin full-grown



*Gertrudis "Tula" Allen,
half-sister of Manuel Martin*

*All photographs on these two pages
courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.*



Refugio Allen Butler



*Miguel Allen (on right) with
unidentified friend (on left)*



*Wedding photograph of Lester Davis
and Tulita Bennett (later Westfall)*



*Emma Butler Bennett (later
Ambrosio) mother of Tulita, daughter
of Refugio, granddaughter of Petra*

Between 1790 and 1793, private Boronda was promoted to corporal, a promotion predicated on literacy. In 1793, he was assigned to work as a carpenter on the construction of Castillo San Joaquin (today's Fort Point). Following Governor Borica's 1794 decree that primary schools be started wherever feasible, the corporal was assigned to teach catechism, reading and writing to the sons of soldiers at the Presidio de San Francisco. At the same time, he pursued his trade as a carpenter and also took charge of the smithy until 1796. In that year, he and Sargeant Amador supervised a crew of Indians assigned to repair Presidio barracks and housing. The following year, they supervised construction of fortifications at San Joaquin and Yerba Buena, overseeing a crew composed of ships' carpenters and sailors from San Blas as well as Indians from San Francisco and Santa Clara. Boronda also sold cattle hides for use in the building process. Between 1797 and 1812, he was corporal of the escort (*escolta*) at Mission Santa Clara. In June of 1805, a few months before the birth of the couple's tenth child, Corporal Boronda retired from military service but reenlisted the following year.

By 1814 Boronda was living in Monterey, serving as *sacristán* at the original San Carlos church and schoolmaster at the Presidio. He continued as sexton at least until 1816. When he died at Monterey ten years later, his final request was to be buried in the habit of a Franciscan friar, an honor reserved for Third Order or lay Franciscans. The date of his burial—January 23rd, 1826—must have been doubly painful for his widow Gertrudis because it coincided with their 36th wedding anniversary.

A copy of Manuel Boronda's last will and testament, written on a folded folio sheet, has been handed down from one occupant of Casa Boronda to the next—from his widow Gertrudis to their youngest daughter Petra, from Petra's daughter Refugio to her daughter Emma, from Emma's daughter Tulita to the first non-family owner Alexander Tiers, from Tiers to Dr. Mast Wolfson, and from the heirs of Wolfson's widow to current owner Harry Parashis.

The will is witnessed by Mariano Vallejo as *alcalde* (mayor and magistrate) of Monterey, José Pico as sergeant of the Presidio, and son-in-law Jorge Allen. It lists but one material debt: an ox owed to Juan Martínez, and consists primarily of a long enumeration of monetary debts, totaling 27 individuals and some 300 pesos in all. This is a huge sum for what was essentially a barter economy where cash transactions were rare. In contrast to this massive debt, only two people are listed as owing money to the former corporal: 13 pesos for a horse, saddles and other items, and 50 pesos owed by the local carpenter for unspecified trade or services.

The patriarch entrusted his youngest son, José Eusebio, and his Irish-born son-in-law Jorge Allen, husband of Petra for barely six months, with discharging his remaining debts. Toward the end of a list that occupies the better part of two large folio pages, the dying man declared his personal ownership of a single item, a cow, which he desired to leave to his wife. In the next clause, he stated that he could not dispose of the "house in which I live, because it already belongs to my wife by dint of her labor." In this last provision, Manuel Boronda

was following Mexican law regarding the “widow’s portion.” This recognition of female inheritance rights would eventually be incorporated into the 1849 constitution of the State of California, because the Californios insisted on it well before such gender-sensitive considerations became law in Anglo-dominated states.

Manuel Boronda’s will does not mention one item that was passed down from generation to generation, remaining with the house even after Tulita sold the property to Alexander Tiers in 1939: an 18th century oil painting of Nuestra Señora del Pueblito supported by a Franciscan priest holding three large spheres. A photograph included in a *Monterey Peninsula Herald* feature on Casa Boronda from March 14, 1953 shows that Dr. Wolfson kept this framed painting in the living room, above Tiers’ copper-verdigris fireplace surround.

The image, incorrectly identified by Tulita as Nuestra Señora del Refugio, originated in Querétaro—one of the three leading Mexican cities in the colonial period, and also the site of an important Franciscan monastery. Edna Kimbro notes that this image appears on an 1834 inventory of items at Monterey’s Royal Presidio Chapel, and again in an inventory from the 1840s, but is missing from subsequent inventories. She hypothesizes that the painting might have been gifted to one of the Borondas in acknowledgement of some special service to the Church. The painting was still on display above the fireplace after the death of Evelyn Wright Wolfson; if it remains with her heirs, its restoration to its rightful Monterey location would be welcomed.

Volume 7 of the *Monterey Country Archives* contains another copy of Manuel Boronda’s last will and testament, written in another hand. The accuracy of the copy was attested to on March 7, 1831 by Antonio Buelna, son and namesake of the deceased’s neighbor, in his capacity as “Constitutional Alcalde of this Port.” The junior Buelna explains that the original copy of the will “remains in the power of those who have a stake in it,” and that it falls to him to authenticate this subsequent copy “for lack of a public scribe.”

One of the Boronda family’s favorite stories, apparently dating from sometime after the death of the founding patriarch, has to do with the annual trips to Santa Clara to visit the family’s *milpitas* (corn fields). While the men rode horseback, the women traveled in an oxcart supported by two large wooden wheels. The carts’ wooden axles screeched and grated; on such a long trip, they needed to be frequently lubricated with bear grease.

On this particular journey, the party was making their first day’s camp on what would one day become Ft. Ord when they realized that the skin of bear grease had been left behind. The distressed Boronda ladies had no alternative but to send their male companion back to Monterey to retrieve it without delay. After his departure, women and children passed an anxious night in grizzly bear country, tending a circle of fires to keep the grizzlies at bay.

In the census of 1836, a decade after the founding Boronda patriarch was laid to rest in the little *camposanto* below his family homestead, twelve people were listed as living at the Boronda Adobe, site #21. Forty-year old Irish-born businessman Jorge Allen and his 23-year old wife, Petra de Allen, were



residing there with their four children: Miguel Allen Boronda, age nine; Ysidora Allen Boronda, also age nine; José Jorge Allen Boronda, age three; and María Guadalupe Allen Boronda, age two. Other members of the household were José Antonio Santa Cruz Rodríguez, 43 years old, from Guadalajara; Gertrudis Villavicencio, 46 years old, from San Antonio; Juan José Santa Cruz from Monterey, age nine; María Gertrudis Higuera Arredondo, widow of Boronda, age 62; her unmarried granddaughter Josefa, age 29; and a grandniece, María Guadalupe Espinosa, age eight, born at Monterey. It's a wonder the modest household could accommodate so many people, even with the fourth room reportedly added by Don Jorge. Family lore indicates that the Irishman followed his father-in-law's example in conducting a school for boys at Casa Boronda.

Gertrudis was fifty years old when she was widowed in 1826. When her father, Manuel Higuera, died two years later, Gertrudis's widowed mother—María Antonia Arredondo Limón de Higuera—came to live at Casa Boronda. Tulita describes her dramatically as having “a concave face with a pointed chin, a nose hooked like an eagle's beak, and the cruel memory of the Spanish Inquisition surging in her veins.” Another recollection suggests why children would have given this lady a wide berth: Emma Ambrosio, granddaughter of Petra, told Amelie Elkinton that great-great grandmother Higuera kept a short leather horsewhip attached to her wrist at all times, ready to chastise an unruly child with a quick flick of her hand.

The Founding Buelnas

José Antonio Buelna, son of Anastasio Buelna, was born in Villa de Sinaloa in central-western New Spain. Like José Manuel Boronda, he was considered an *español* (Spaniard) because he was of Spanish stock. Buelna arrived in Alta California in October of 1774 as part of the Rivera y Moncada expedition.

Two years later, on May 26, 1776, he married María Antonia Tapia at Mission San Carlos. The bride, daughter of Felipe Tapia, was born in Villa de Limón, New Spain. Her father was among the soldiers recruited from Culiacán who trekked to California with the Anza party of settlers. Antonia, identified in William Mason's study of the 1790 census as “an Indian from Culiacán,” was just thirteen years old when she and her family arrived in Monterey. She was married soon afterward. In her contribution to *The Monterey Mesa: Oldest Neighborhood in California*, historian Edna Kimbro noted that the couple settled in the Cañada de la Huerta Vieja (Old Garden Glen)—on or near today's Monterey Peninsula College campus—in 1795.

José Antonio Buelna had enlisted as a soldier of the Spanish Crown before 1780. He subsequently served in the *escolta* (guard) at Mission Soledad, became a settler at San Francisco, and conducted classes at Monterey between

Left: A painting of this image of Nuestra Señora del Pueblito hung over the Casa Boronda fireplace for 150 years. This copy was sent from Querétaro by Yve and José Rafael Ramos and historian Angela Moyano.

1818 and 1821 (some sources say until 1824) and at San José in 1829. According to Mission San Carlos baptismal records, Buelna retired by 1811. Some sources place his death as early as 1822—which would make it difficult for him to be teaching at San Jose in 1824! His wife Antonia Tapia de Buelna passed away in July of 1830 (burial #2756).

Mission records also indicate that the Buelnas had as many as fourteen offspring and scores of grandchildren and great grandchildren. José Antonio, confirmed in September 1790 at Mission San Carlos, became a soldier like his father and namesake. His notable career included serving as *diputado* (member of the territorial council) from 1828 and as *alcalde* (mayor and magistrate) of Monterey in 1831, and again from 1835 to 1839. In 1837 he was sent south as a *comisionado* (commissioned officer). As commander of the San José troops, he supported Juan Bautista Alvarado's uprising against Governor Gutiérrez in a bid for Californio self-government. In 1839, he was grantee of the San Gregorio and San Francisquito ranchos, the latter located in the Santa Lucia Mountains overlooking Carmel Valley. In 1839-1840, he commanded the expedition against foreigners that later became known as the Isaac Graham affair, after the most obstreperous of the deportees. In 1841, at the age of fifty, he and his wife, María Concepción Valencia, could be found at San José with their four children.

According to Edna Kimbro, José Joaquín Buelna, baptized at Monterey's Mission San Carlos in 1777, became prominent in the Santa Cruz/Branciforte area as the first owner of Rancho San Agustín in today's Scotts Valley. That rancho belonged for a time to José Bolcoff, until Bolcoff's brother-in-law, William Majors, took it over. The Bolcoff Adobe, today part of Wilder Ranch State Park, is featured in **Arc of Adobes: Santa Cruz to Monterey**.

There was possibly another Ylaria Buelna in the Santa Cruz branch of the family, since it was very common for names to be echoed from one generation to another, to the lasting confusion of historians and genealogists. The case of the Ylarias makes for added confusion because the name was also spelled Ilaria, Llaria and Hilaria. According to Edna Kimbro, it was probably the Ylaria Buelna of the Monterey Mesa who received a grant of coastal land north of Santa Cruz, the Rancho del Jarro, but eventually lost ownership of it because she never managed to make the requisite improvements.

The Buelna property in Monterey was confirmed to María Ylaria Buelna Tapia by the *ayuntamiento* (town council) in 1836. That year's census listed five people in residence at site #23: the owner, a single woman of thirty-four, born at San Jose in 1802; María Antonia López Martínez of Monterey, a married woman of twenty-five; María Isidora López Martínez, a single woman of eighteen, born at Monterey; María Antonia López Martínez, a girl of thirteen born at Monterey; and Nicanor Zamora, a laborer and married man of twenty-five from San Agustín. Edna Kimbro's research indicates that Señora López also had an adobe on the Buelna property.

In 1851, five years into the American era, Elario Wilner (an Anglo version of Ylaria Buelna) was assessed \$20 for the Buelna property. Four years later, her assessment grew to \$100. Within a single generation of its likely

construction, Casa Buelna had become a household of women; within two generations, long-time property owners were being dispossessed under an unfamiliar legal system that arrived with the Americans.

According to María Antonia Bach Thompson, who passed the information on to Amelie Elkinton, the natural daughters of Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado's *casa chica* (second household) were among the girls educated by Ylaria Buelna during the 1830s and 1840s. They would have had the option of being boarders or day students, since their home was nearby. Among those who boarded at Casa Buelna were Maria de los Angeles Boronda and her sister, granddaughters of the founding Borondas, who made the long journey to and from the Boronda Adobe in Carmel Valley by horseback or ox-drawn wooden cart on a weekly basis.

This long-lived Boronda descendant was interviewed by Joy Anthony, daughter of builder J.C. Anthony, for a front page feature article published by the *Monterey Peninsula Daily Herald* on January 16, 1923. María Boronda de Pomber, "one of Monterey's oldest women," recalled that girls ranging in age from nine to twelve were enrolled at Casa Buelna to be taught "reading, writing, sewing, cooking and general housekeeping, as well as the cultural finesse of a real Spanish lady."

Mrs. Pomber remembered her former teacher, the unmarried owner-occupant of Casa Buelna, as "an intellectual lady of 60-odd years [who] was fondly called *Señora* Llaría because of her unselfishness, her wonderful character and loving nature, and also to give her the dignity of a teacher. [Her] home was frequented by the elite and prominent people of those times who loved her devotedly." María Boronda de Pomber also recalled that Doña Ylaria raised sheep on the property as an additional source of income and sold the fleece for mattresses. Those mattresses were enjoyed by her Boronda neighbors, according to reports by Emma Bennett Ambrosio and her daughter Tulita; the alternative had been to sleep on straw. (Segments from this extended interview with María Pomber were republished verbatim on a number of occasions in the "Peninsula Diary" column written for the *Monterey Herald* by Mayo Hayes O'Donnell, without crediting the source.)

Señora Ylaria's "intellectual" qualifications are called into question by the declaration that she made on June 15, 1850, affirming her right to the Casa Buelna property after the American takeover of California. The document (Vallejo Doc. CB 35:195, #478) claiming *un solar de 35 varas de frente y 50 varas de fondo, con una casa de adobe, enfrente de la casa de Don Jorge Allen* (one building lot 35 rods across and 50 rods deep, with one adobe house, across from the house of Mr. George Allen) was "signed with her mark," strong evidence that she was not literate.

Edna Kimbro's research reveals that the property was occupied for a time by José M. Armenta, a mulatto from Jalisco married to Brígida Álvarez de Armenta, when it was referred to as the Armenta Adobe (and sometimes, erroneously, the Armenti Adobe). The Armentas owned other property on the Mesa for a time. In 1870, "Señora" Buelna, then getting on in years, reportedly

adopted 23-year old José Jesús Gómez. Buelna family ownership ended when she deeded the property to him in 1875 at the age of seventy-three.

In the late 1880s, the former Buelna property was acquired by Scotts-born lawyer and land shark David Jacks as part of his Rancho Aguajito tract. According to Emma Bennett Ambrosio as relayed to Amelie Elkinton, Jacks enclosed it with fencing. Emma remembered a very old man living or farming there, Juan Rosales, also known as “Juan Chueco” (Crooked John) and “Spotted John.” Other sources also recall this familiar personage—one of the many local characters whom John Steinbeck would recruit into his fiction—tending vegetables at Casa Buelna around 1900. In a 1946 letter to Harriet Coombs, Maria Antonia Bach Thompson wrote:

The “unknown” adobe was owned and built by the Buelna family. Doña Ilaria Buelna started there one of the first schools in Monterey, teaching the prayers and Christian doctrine, reading, writing, plain sewing and embroidery. The three daughters of Governor Alvarado were reared by her... The Buelna house was later owned by the late Marcy Woods and is now the home of Mr. L. A. Ross. It was in this house that Juan Rosales or “Spotted John” died.

According to another account, Jacks finally managed to drive Juan Rosales out with the offer of a \$20 gold piece. Both the Monterey Public Library and Pat Hathaway’s California Views have circa 1900 photos of Juan Rosales gardening in front of a structure that closely resembles Casa Buelna as it would appear subsequent to reconstruction by builder J.C. Anthony in the early 1920s.

Webs of Kinship

Thanks to generous land grants conceded in the 1830s as a result of the secularization of the missions, second and third generation Buelnas and Borondas dispersed across Alta California. Because their offspring were so numerous, the intricate web of consanguinity that bound so many of the earliest settlers—Castros, Sotos, Cotas, Espinosas, and so on—was reinforced by new layers with each subsequent generation.

The marriage of José Eusebio Boronda to María Josefa Buelna on September 5, 1831 eventually provided the two founding couples with shared grandchildren. Their son José Sylvano was father to the artist Lester David Boronda, also a grandson of the founding Buelnas. Together, Eusebio and Josefa built the first of two Boronda Adobes in Salinas.

The Boronda family incorporated two Irishmen early on. María Josefa Boronda, third daughter of Manuel and Gertrudis, was widowed by the accidental death of her first husband Manuel Cota while were living at Casa Barreto-Dutra just south of Josefa’s parental home. After remarriage to sea captain James Walter Burke of Galway, the couple relocated to Santa Barbara. Petra, the youngest sister, was courted by an Irish Quaker, George Allen of

Cork. Converting to Catholicism in order to claim her, he was baptized José Jorge Tomás Allen on December 22, 1824 and married his intended six months later. In 1836, he received a grant of city lands adjacent to the original Boronda property on the Mesa.

A highly respected local citizen deemed worthy of the deferential *don*, Jorge Allen died in 1847 after 22 years of marriage. Four years later, in 1851, the thirty-nine year old Petra wed the French physician Alphonse Théodore Martin. She would bear three more children, but only one, Manuel Martin, would survive to adulthood. He was known as “El Mudo” because of a childhood accident that impaired his hearing and his speech.

Petra’s female descendants generally followed her lead in marrying Anglo-Americans: her daughter Refugio Allen married the American Charles Butler; her granddaughter Emma Butler married the Englishman Edward Bennett; her great granddaughter Tulia Bennett married Lester Davis of Maine, and later Samuel Westfall of upstate New York. Emma Butler became an exception when she took her widowed Californio cousin, Frank Ambrosio, Jr., also a Boronda descendant, as her second husband.

Casa Boronda’s and Casa Buelna’s female-centeredness might be viewed as predictable given how local custom encouraged forty year old men to wed fourteen year old girls. Founding matriarch Gertrudis Higuera de Boronda outlived her husband by twenty-five years, the exact difference in their ages. Sometime after the death of her mother, Gertrudis herself became the widow in search of a sheltering home. She deeded Casa Boronda to her youngest daughter, Petra, and relocated to Santa Barbara.

Borondas at Santa Barbara: María Josefa

At Santa Barbara, Gertrudis lived with daughter María Josefa, son-in-law James Walter (Santiago Guaterio) Burke and their six offspring (seven, counting daughter Manuela Cota Boronda from María Josefa’s first marriage) in a twelve-room adobe facing what would become the first block of Figueroa Street, between today’s State Street and Anacapa. They moved in the same social circles as the eminent Spanish-born community leader José de la Guerra y Noriega and his family. In fact, their only son Miguel F. Burke married Mary Ellen Murphy, foster daughter of the de la Guerras.

Three of their daughters took Irish husbands: Josefa married John Kays, Dolores married Francis John Maguire, and Magdalena married Captain Thomas W. Moore. María de los Angeles Teresa Anne married John Hill, California-born son of a Massachusetts carpenter who was the grantee of La Goleta. Captain Thomas Moore, a seaman from Galway like his father-in-law, kept a store at Mission San Inés. In 1881, the couple’s only son, named for his father, would marry Teresa Hope, daughter of Thomas Hope, whose Hope Ranch property would become a prominent real estate development featuring “Spanish-style” homes half a century later. The fifth sister, Eduviges, took her vows as bride

of Christ, becoming Sister of Charity Mary Emanuel. Her example may have inspired a legendary, long-term houseguest to do the same, or vice versa.

One of three women profiled in *Rose, or Rose Thorn?*—an early work by Suzanne Dakin, author of the magnificent biography of adoptive Californian William P. Hartnell—is María de la Concepción Arguello. Conchita was daughter of the commandant of the San Francisco Presidio in the early days when Manuel Boronda was a corporal. In fact, Boronda acted as godfather at her baptism in 1806, standing in for a more high-ranking officer who was unable to make the trip from the San Diego presidio for the occasion.

The most famous of the ill-starred early California romances recalls the patient young Conchita waiting year after year for her gallant, middle-aged Russian, Count Nikolai Rezanov, to return from his trans-Siberian journey with the Czar's permission to wed her—and presumably continue to expand the Russian presence in Alta California. Sources differ as to when and how Concepción was finally informed of her fiancé's accidental death en route to St. Petersburg, but they concur that she dedicated the rest of her life to piety and good works, joining the Dominican convent of Santa Catalina at Monterey in 1852, shortly after its founding.

While residing with daughter Josefa and her family, the widowed Gertrudis may have gotten to know Conchita Arguello at close hand. Dakin reveals that the ever-hospitable de la Guerra family finally had their fill of their more-pious-than-thou house guest, whom they encouraged to “take up residence at the nearby home of the widowed Doña Josefa Boronda de Burke. With four devout daughters, Doña Josefa had created a convent atmosphere which appealed to [Conchita].” (Dakin: 52)

Historians record another trying situation that might well have reinforced Josefa's piety. At some point in their marriage, her husband adopted the infamous custom of maintaining a *casa chica* parallel to his *casa grande*. Captain Burke's concubine had quite a story of her own, being the out-of-wedlock daughter of a Hawaiian maiden called Pegui (Peggy) and Captain George Washington Eayrs, the only English sea-captain ever jailed for piracy off the Alta California Coast. Captain Burke's “other woman,” a child when her father was arrested, had remained with her mother in Santa Barbara, where the de la Guerras offered them shelter and sustenance. Eventually, social pressure against her liaison with Burke compelled María Antonia de la Asunción Eayrs to leave for nearby San Buenaventura with her two daughters in tow. She returned a few years later as Mrs. Isaac Sparks, a development that would not have pleased Josefa.

None of these accounts gives us access to Josefa's thoughts in her own voice. The only direct communication from María Josefa Boronda de Burke discovered in the process of this research is a letter in Rose Marie Dunsford's collection of Boronda family memorabilia. On lined paper inscribed in a delicate, deliberate hand, María Josefa wrote the following to her sister Petra on December 15, 1851. The occasion could not have been more lamentable.

Dear Sister,

With all the Sentiment of my heart, I convey to you the Following: our beloved Mother, after having received all the ministrations of our Holy religion, surrendered her soul to the Creator amid the tears and prayers of her daughters, with the peace of the just, even as her lips were giving us witness of her pure conscience and fanning our hopes. Now we entrust her soul to the Creator and we hope that you unite your votos [pledges] with all those of her family in order that her Glory increase.

She died Wednesday the 10th of the present month about eleven o'clock at night, was buried at sundown on Friday, and had a mass sung for her the following day, Saturday.

You can't imagine my sorrow that my Mother has gone from me so soon, but I am left with the consolation that at least I saw her and served her during the last portion of her life. For three and a half months she was bedridden, and although she would suddenly improve, she never managed to rise again from her bed no matter what we did for her.

Tell my brothers to honor the bones of our good Mother and to remembers her teachings to us. Tell this particularly to José Eusebio, for whom she used to weep the most.

Accept the deep affection of this entire family and offer our grief up to God.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Maria Josefa Boronda". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored, slightly textured paper. The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent flourish at the end of the name.

Postscript:

I shall tell you as well to tell Miguel [Petra's eldest son] that my Mother requested that I tell you to tell him not to forget to pay me the medios that he owes me, and that if Pedro is not paying him for the house, that he should sell it to another party.

Borondas at Salinas: José Eusebio

Born in 1808, José Eusebio was the youngest of the Boronda sons, the one that his Mother worried about most—evidently for good reason; his prowess as a grizzly bear hunter would have been cause enough for concern. In an undated, unidentified newspaper clipping from the early 20th century, Edward A. Morphy tells the story of how José Eusebio hanged a bear, supposedly in the bear-hunter's own words:

I was coming down from the rancho when on the narrow trail I met a grizzly. He was of ugly temper and would not depart nor make way, and my

horse fretted. The matter pestered me. I was not equipped for a bear hunt, but my horse is good, and my lariat is good. Therefore, as the bear stood up and menaced us, I lassoed him. The bear went down with a yelp and then commenced to struggle. It was my brave horse than won the battle. The bear tried to pull back. The horse would yield a little, then with a spring he would jerk the rope tight again. Then the bear tried to come up and overhaul us. The horse would not let him. For nearly half an hour we played that bear as some fishermen would play a salmon on a line.

Presently I saw an oak tree with a suitable overhanging bough. Thither we manoeuvred the grizzly. By good fortune I got a turn of the rope over that bough. Then it was comparatively easy work to haul up the animal so that only his toes were on the ground. Next we took a couple of turns of the rope around his legs and lashed him to the tree trunk lest he should struggle free. We left him thus safely hanging.

According to Morphy's account, José Eusebio then rode in to town to collect an audience and generate a few wagers that his story was just another tall tale. After the group of horsemen arrived at the oak tree in question to find the grizzling hanging there, strangled but still warm, "they rode right back into Monterey and got the finest saddle ever made and presented it to [don Eusebio]." (Quoted in McGlynn, Dec. 1983)

An unattributed typescript, likely by Robert Johnson, provides a context for thinking about José Eusebio and his cohort of second-generation Californios:

There were not many people in California at that time, so most families were "prominent." Land parcels of up to eleven leagues (one league=three miles) could be had for nothing by those with connections... Although many were wealthy merchants, cattlemen and successful political figures, a good many existed like the Borondas, by subsistence farming and husbandry, bartering goods and performing odd jobs. They were respected and had good standing in the early "Californio" community. They often held minor governmental positions but were not necessarily the wealthy land barons that we picture the Spanish and Mexican[-era] land barons to have been.

Eusebio was not a wealthy man despite owning extensive acreage. He played no great role in historical events, devoting most of his energy to the everyday tasks of the rancho. During the Mexican regime, he held the post of juez auxiliar, or deputy justice of the peace. He fought the Battle of Natividad against Fremont's invading Americans in 1846... Eusebio hauled lumber from the redwood sawpits in Carmel Valley and Santa Cruz to Thomas O. Larkin, a wealthy American merchant and later United States Consul to [Mexico at] Monterey. In return, he received goods from Larkin's store. Eusebio and [his wife] Josefa Buelna also bartered sheep, butter and barley for goods [from Larkin].

Johnson describes José Eusebio and Josefa Buelna de Boronda's second Salinas adobe, which still survives as part of the Monterey County Historical



José Eusebio Boronda in full equestrian regalia, circa 1860. Courtesy of the Monterey County Historical Society, Inc.

Society and History Center, in sufficient detail to help us imagine how it felt to live there:

...Although single story, [it] copied many features of Larkin's two-story "Monterey Colonial" home, a unique blend of New England, [Carolinas], and Spanish adobe architectural styles. [José Eusebio and Josefa's] adobe differs ... in its wood-shingled roof that slopes four ways; its wide verandah completely encircling the house; its double-hung window sashes with their standard-size window panes; its white-washed, open-beamed ceilings; and its two indoor fireplaces, each with carved wood mantle pieces.

The adobe was originally only one room; [presumably] the fireplaces were intended to heat an

open area [at] either end. Soon after [construction], the wooden partitions and dining area door were added, and the side porches were boarded in to provide work areas...

The middle room was a multi-purpose [area] where most family activities took place and guests from neighboring ranchos were entertained. Guests often stayed overnight and usually longer [because distances were great and transportation slow.] Hospitality was open-handed to friends and strangers alike.

In the evenings, the middle room was the scene of much music and dancing. It was also used as a bedroom for the single girls and women. There was very little furniture in this room, to provide for more space; during the day, bedding was stored in trunks placed around the room. [These trunks also doubled as places to sit.]

One end [of the structure] was used as a bedroom while the other was used as an eating area. Boys and young men slept outside or upstairs in the low storage loft, reached by a stairway from the back porch [and entered] through a door above the back door.

Food was prepared in an outdoor kitchen, called a "ramada" [because it was roofed with branches or ramas] and then brought directly through the [exterior] door leading into the eating area. Since there was no refrigeration, foods were preserved through drying and smoking, then stored in the loft. The purpose of the outdoor kitchen was to keep the heat and smoke generated from the wood cooking fires out of the house. In the late 19th century, a lean-to kitchen

was added to the house over the door to the dining area, and the back porch was boarded in to provide additional work space. There, the Borondas manufactured their own leather, metal and wood items. The glass windows and doors were added during the 1870s or 1880s.

With the American takeover, landowners were compelled to produce documents proving ownership of their lands. Many were unable to do so because their documentation was informal, lost, or incomplete. Cases that went before the Land Commission took an average of seventeen years (!) to resolve. Even families who eventually won clear title to lands that had been granted them under the previous regime often ended up relinquishing a great portion of those lands to pay lawyers' fees. José Eusebio's grant was originally 6700 acres, but by 1860 it was reduced by two-thirds.

In 1852, the year after his mother's death, José Eusebio abandoned his wife. Several years after her death, he sued his own children to regain title to his lands. Robert Johnson tells the story in a 1998 pamphlet distributed by the Monterey County Historical Society, Inc.:

In 1852 Eusebio had such serious differences with his wife Josefa and children that he felt compelled to a separation from them. He deeded the rancho and all of his other property—except a mattress, an ox cart, and a few cows, horses, sheep and chickens—to his wife and children to do with as they pleased...

Between 1860 and 1865, California suffered one year of great floods and two years of great drought... Added to the other strains, these factors may have hastened the death of Josefa Buelna de Boronda on July 17, 1864.

Francisco, a son, was appointed Executor. He noted that, as of July 1865, thirteen head of stock had died of starvation.

Eusebio had signed the will, agreeing to its provisions dividing the rancho among the ten surviving children. [But] he brought suit against Francisco and the other [offspring] in 1867, and in 1868 he recovered title to the rancho.

Though successful in his suit, Eusebio agreed to a partition of the ranch, surveyed by his son-in-law A.L. Cervantes in 1869, dividing the property substantially as it had been done in Josefa's will.

Borondas in Carmel Valley: José Manuel II

The namesake of family founder José Manuel Boronda was the ninth of the thirteen children whom Gertrudis brought into the world; two other sons baptized with their father's name did not survive to maturity. The second José Manuel married Juana Cota. The couple eventually settled in Carmel Valley, where they expanded an earlier adobe while also—with the birth of Maria de los Angeles (later de Pomber)—expanding their brood to fifteen.

Like his brother José Eusebio and their contemporaries, José Manuel had occasion to ride the hills hunting grizzlies. Having injured his left leg in a nasty accident, he reportedly called for a woodsaw and cut off the damaged foreleg himself. Competing versions retain the detail about the everyday woodsaw called into service as a surgical tool, but claim that the actual sawing was done by a neighbor.

Another story, in circulation as recently as the April 18, 2004 edition of the *Monterey Herald*, credits José Manuel Jr with the invention of the first lie detector test. Ripley's 1966 edition of *Believe It or Not* shows him "ordering a suspected thief to hold one of his fingers in a pan containing two inches of water. If the suspect lied, an involuntary nervous reaction caused ripples in the water."

According to the family version, which casts a rather different light on José's "invention," the suspects were female and thievery was not at issue. One of José's daughters unintentionally dropped a container of her father's medicine, an efficacious and hard-to-obtain Indian remedy. Faced with their father's ire, none of the girls would confess to the deed. José Manuel's angry expedient of the pan of water apparently produced a false positive: the more timorous daughter made the water vibrate and had to bear the lashes, while the bolder daughter's defiantly steady hand spared her from punishment for her earlier clumsiness.

Juana Cota de Boronda, a housewife with fifteen children to feed, enjoys a lease on immortality because it was reportedly she who, by using a jack to press out the excess liquid, developed the technique for making the cheese that would become widely known as "Monterey Jack". Among Spanish-speakers, it was called *queso del país* [native cheese].

Whether land baron David Jacks imitated, marketed, or simply let his name be associated with this popular product will probably never be determined, but Juana's descendants have endeavored to set the record straight from time to time. In a November 1982 letter to the *Herald*, Anita Abby Church of Pacific Grove wrote that her great grandmother

...made cheese to help augment the family income as early as the 1840s, when her children were young. Some of it went to the gold mines and some was used for trading in Monterey in the same manner as cow hides—California "leather dollars." However, by the 1880s the Rancho de Los Laureles was no longer in Boronda hands, having been sold in the 1860s to Nathan Spaulding of San Francisco.

The senior Borondas left Los Laureles [in Carmel Valley] to relocate to Castroville, where they could be near several relatives, including my grandmother Señora María de los Angeles Boronda de Pombert, the youngest of their 15 children, who enjoyed el queso del país as part of her diet almost until her death in Pacific Grove in 1935 at the age of 96.

Borondas at Monterey: Petra de Allen and Her Offspring

Born right after José Eusebio, Petra was the youngest child of the founding Borondas. The sad tidings of her mother's death reached her in her thirty-ninth year, a few months after she married Monsieur Martin, about whom little is known. Petra had been experiencing a number of losses during this period, having buried Jorge Allen senior and Jorge Allen junior within a year of each other in 1847 and 1848. According to church records, she also lost an infant daughter, nine month old Josefina Allen, in May of 1851, just a month before her remarriage—a heartbreak that may have also led to social censure. The youngest of Petra's children, Manuel Martin, who was impaired in hearing and speech due to a childhood accident, remained with his mother throughout her life.

Jorge Allen passed away at the dawn of the American era. Without his able presence, Petra and her offspring probably felt alone and undefended. Three of the five surviving children (Miguel Allen, Gertrudis Allen, and Manuel Martin) never married: they may have felt pressed to stay “united” under a single roof in order to better navigate those uncertain times.

It was only relatively late in life that Petra's son Alonzo Allen married Dolores Munrás. This match was a step up in the world, since the Munrás family owned one of the most significant houses in Monterey at the time—a two-story adobe built in 1822, with fourteen rooms on the first floor alone. According to the taste of her artist father, Esteban Munrás, a Catalán born and raised in Barcelona, the rooms were all furnished in the European style. Dolores and Alonzo built an elegant frame house of their own in the prevailing Victorian style.



*Hand-colored tintype of José Manuel Boronda II, circa 1860.
Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.*

Although their union produced no offspring, they were godparents to their great niece Tulita. Among the family keepsakes is a pair of beautifully illustrated, embossed-leather volumes of *El Conde de Monte Cristo*, a gift to Tulita from her godfather. Her penciled underlines suggest a young girl diligently expanding her Spanish vocabulary. A note in the margin on page 40 says, “Here the story gets exciting.” Alexander Dumas's tale and its engraved illustrations may have abetted Tulita's dramatic as well as romantic inclinations.

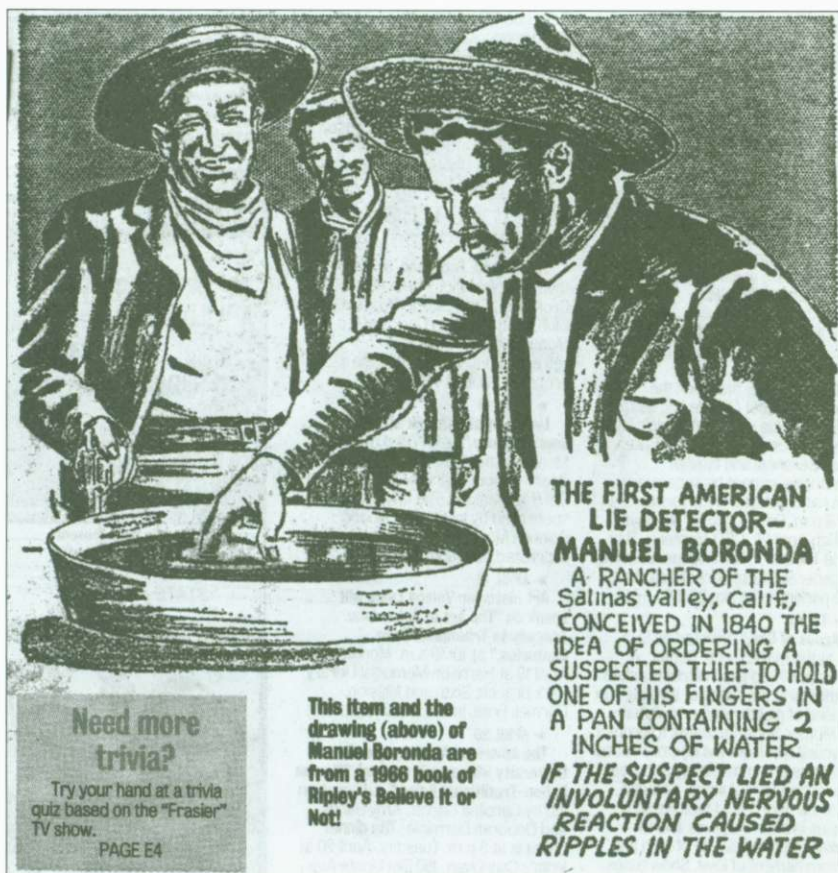
Petra's daughter Refugio Allen married the American Charles Henry Butler. Her groom, son of the Englishman Daniel Butler, was a veteran of the Union Army. A photograph of the latter is among the family keepsakes, but no photograph of

Charles Butler survives. Little Emma, named after Charles' sister in England, treasured a *carte de visite* sized photograph of that elegant lady taken in Chicago. The penciled inscription on the back reads:

Is this Emma?

Grandma always told me I was named after her and told me to take good care of the card because this was her likeness. If it is her, please send it back because it is the only one I have.

The tall, dark Mr. Butler—described in his Civil War discharge papers as five feet eleven inches tall, with brown hair, dark eyes, and dark complexion—abandoned the unfortunate Refugio for unknown reasons. (Tulita's whitewashed version has him departing California in grief after the death of his wife.) The spurned lady was only twenty-eight when she died, leaving 18-month old Emma to be raised by Grandmother Petra and Aunt Gertrudis. Many



This illustration from Ripley's Believe It or Not was reprinted in the Monterey Herald in May 2004.

decades later, Emma learned that her father had spent his last years at a Veteran's Hospital in Danville, Illinois, where he died in 1899 without ever having hinted to hospital staff that he had a daughter in California.

In February of 1952, family members in Pacific Grove (possibly Anita Abby Church and her husband) taped a conversation between Anita's mother, Fanny Pomber Abby, daughter of María de los Angeles Boronda de Pomber, and her cousin Emma Ambrosio, then about to celebrate her 85th birthday. Fanny's voice is shrill and her manner seems intrusive or flippant at times compared to Emma, who offers her recollections in a low, measured tone that wins the trust of the listener. My transcriptions cull from several sections of a two-hour tape that opens a precious window onto daily life at the Boronda Adobe in the 1870s:

I'm a little backward, because whenever she had company, [my grandmother] wouldn't say anything to me, but with her finger, you know, and her eyes she would signal me to leave the room. When I asked why, she would answer, "Because I don't want you to know what we are talking. Little children shouldn't hear what old people talk."

One thing I never learned...was to dance. We never had any dances at the house, but my grandmother used to take my youngest aunt to dances, and of course I would go along.

My grandmother was very religious and—I don't know—too strict. She didn't care for...[trails off] But she was the most wonderful cook. She made the most wonderful dinners! There was never a day that would go by without soup—only Fridays. Friday was a fast day and a day to abstain from meat altogether. No meat on Fridays, or on Saturdays.

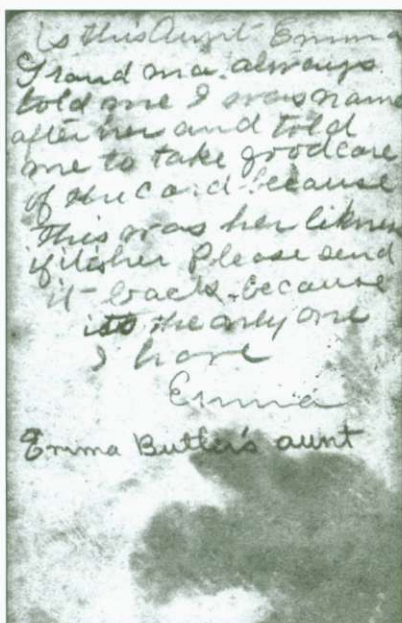


Illustrations from a deluxe Spanish-language edition of The Count of Monte Cristo given to the young Tulita Westfall by her great uncle and godfather Alonzo Allen. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

Grandmother used to make all different kinds of stews— some with meat, some with chicken, some with, well..., whatever she raised there around the house, also pork. She used to make the most wonderful estofado in big crocks. She would put the salted meat in first and then make a sauce with chile and all sorts of herbs. That would keep for a long time, and it was delicious.

My grandmother also used to make wonderful bread and biscuits. They never used baking powder. She used to make her own yeast with hops and potatoes. She also made pan dulce, not exactly a cake, but it was sweet.

She used to make her own butter because she had cows. My youngest uncle [Manuel] used to milk the cows, and we always had plenty of butter, plenty of milk, plenty of chicken. Once in a while they would raise a hog and pickle it down in crocks.



My grandmother used to raise all kinds of vegetables... tomatoes, chile peppers, squash. But the squashes in those days were different to what they are today. When she let them get ripe, they would be a great big pumpkin, and she used to make conserva out of those. It's so delicious. If you've never eaten it and you try it once, you will want another piece. All the Spanish people used to make the conserva. [Here Fanny Abby volunteered the recipe for this treat, describing the firm, candied wedges as "the color and transparency of amber."]

We had attic in the old home. Grandmother used to put everything up in the attic. She used to store great big crocks of food up there, sealing the neck of the crock with oiled paper.

One day she told me to go up to get something. It was kind of dark up there. I could feel a crock with paper over it. When the paper broke, I stuck

my hand in and it came out all gooey. I lifted my fingers to my mouth. Oh, how delicious it tasted!

I ran to the opening and called down "Oh, there's a big jar up here of something very good." So Grandmother sent my uncle up to get the jar down. It turned out to be huckleberries that had been there five years, and they'd candied. [Fanny Abby chimed in here that Emma should have kept the discovery to herself, but the guileless Emma seemed surprised at the suggestion, assuring her *prima* that there had been plenty for everyone.]

We had no household help at all. My youngest aunt, myself, my grandmother, and my youngest uncle [did everything that needed to done]. There were three uncles and only one married, Alonzo, the uncle who married Dolores Munrás. My oldest and youngest uncles [Miguel and Manuel] never married.

My "cousins" included the children of Dr. Martin [and Aunt Guadalupe] who built a hospital in Castroville. There names were Jimmy, Josie, Ida, Annie, George and another who passed away when he was a youngster; I can't recall his name. Aunt Isadora Cervantes had six children: Miguel, Antonio, Dolores, Marguerite, Carmelita, and Manuelito. From my branch of the family, there was only me.

I remember my great aunts and uncles very well, because every year while her sister was living in Santa Barbara my grandmother used to take me over there with her. She never left me behind.

From there she used to take me to San Luis Obispo to visit her brother José Canuto, and from there she would come to Salinas and visit her brother José Eusebio, Lester Boronda's grandfather. We traveled by horse and buggy; there were no trains then. It would take us months to make the trip.

Those present at the taping prompted Emma to recount her childhood visits with to the home of Mrs. Leese, reminding her that she appears in Anne Fisher's *No More a Stranger* as a nine year old wearing a large silver cross around her neck. Emma remembered wearing squeaky new shoes when she and her grandmother went to call on Mrs. Leese:

It was a two-story house between the Larkin Home and the Sherman Headquarters. Later, they took it out and put it somewhere else.

Mrs.[Rosalia Vallejo de] Leese and my grandmother were very companionable. I don't know..., she always wanted my grandmother to stay there with her. She didn't want to be alone, you see, because her daughters would go out. They had a person that would do the cooking and wait on the old lady, but Mrs. Leese wanted my grandmother there as a companion.

And when they wanted to talk secrets, they didn't want me around. They didn't want me listening to the conversation, so they'd send me out, and of course I had to entertain myself.

This place was built with rooms to rent. Some people would rent rooms there over night while others would stay on, like Stevenson. His was on the south side, and it was a very pleasant room.

Well, I'd go upstairs and then I'd start running up and down the corridor amusing himself. He'd come to the door and say in a low voice, "Little girl, don't make noise. I'm a siiiick man. Go downstairs and play out in the yard."

And he did look drawn and thin, not like a healthy man. So I'd say, "Alright." Then he'd give me a piece of candy, and down I went.

But after I finished the candy, I'd go right back and start running up and down the hallway again. Upstairs and downstairs, the same thing over and over. That's how we got acquainted. He gave me a photograph of himself, but someone stole it.

People think that he lived in what is now called the Stevenson House, which was where the Girardines used to live back then. In my time, he never lived there. [Jules] Simoneau had a bar there, and Stevenson used to go there and talk to whoever was in there. And he would also take his meals there. I don't know why people got to calling it the Stevenson House, just because he went there for a drink of beer or a drink of whiskey, whatever he wanted.

Of course, the last time I saw him, he told me that he was going away and probably would not come back to Monterey any more. I don't think that he came back after he got married. But if he did, maybe that's when he stayed at the Girardines' home.

In 1888, a decade after Stevenson's visit, Emma married at twenty. She was tragically widowed not long afterwards when her husband Edward Bennett, a violinist from Plymouth, England, died en route to Alaska in search of gold. Only his book of daily devotions and his battered and broken violin returned from the trip, sent by the ship's captain to console the young widow and her three year old daughter.

When her British in-laws declined to offer financial assistance, Emma had to find the means to support herself and her little girl, eventually finding employment as a lady's maid and seamstress in San Francisco. At first she took little Tulita with her, but later she decided that it was best to leave her at the ancestral adobe to be raised, as she herself had been, by Petra and Gertrudis.

Tulita remembered that "even though [my great grandmother Petra] was partially paralyzed, she rolled her own cigarettes and smoked with pleasure." Emma was twenty-nine years old and Tulita was seven when Petra died in 1897 at the age of 85. Emma remarried the widowed Frank Ambrosio, Jr., in 1909 when Tulita was twenty. For a time, the blended families lived together on a farm in San Benancio Canyon, near Corral de Tierra. Eventually, the young people went their own ways while Emma and Frank continued to farm, growing fruit and hauling it into Monterey by horse-drawn wagon. Emma never learned to ride horseback, but she could drive a wagon. Towards the end of her life she recalled the many times that she had made the trip from San Benancio to Monterey alone—four hours with a loaded wagon, slightly less when the wagon was empty.



Emma Butler Ambrosio and her Boronda cousin Fanny Pomer Abby, circa 1952. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

The willful, exuberant Tulita, an artist and iconoclast from a tender age, also married early. Like her great grandmother Petra, her great aunt Josefa, and her mother Emma, she married twice, but in her case remarriage was the result of divorce rather than widowhood. On both occasions, Tulita chose men considerably older than she.

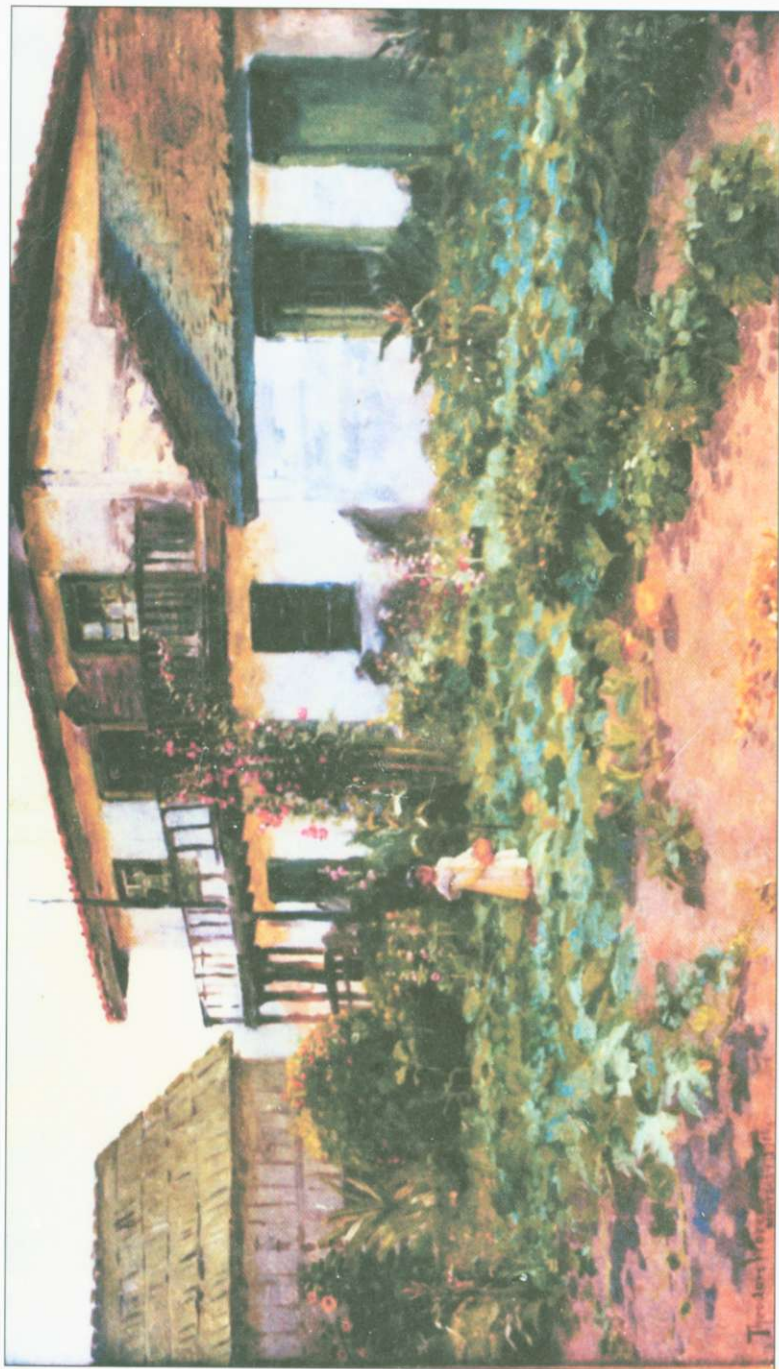
Her first husband was Lester Davis—a career soldier originally from Waldo, Maine. Her second was Samuel Henry Westfall, a native of upstate New York who had been a dealer in Florida citrus before becoming turning to art. The two artists reportedly led a “vagabond life,” drawing and painting in Yosemite, exploring Mexico, living

for a time in Hayward. The strains of the Great Depression may have brought them back to Monterey.

In 1933, when daughter Casimir Davis was 10 years old, Tulita convinced Emma and Frank to deed Casa Boronda over to her. Samuel died in 1940 and Tulita sold the adobe that same year, purchasing a house on Monte Verde in Carmel which she rented for income, installing herself in the garage, which doubled as her studio. Under the Works Progress Administration, she had been commissioned to make illustrations of jewelry and other items related to early California for the Index of American Design. A painter somewhat in the style of Henrietta Shore, Tulita was a member of the Carmel Art Association for many years, and three of her paintings were included in their 60th anniversary show.

Lester Davis never remarried after Tulita divorced him. From his home in Pacific Grove, he remained close to his daughter Casimir throughout his lifetime, helping her weather an unhappy first marriage and supporting her second marriage to another career soldier—Joe Timar of Cleveland, Ohio. Casimir named her first-born after her father. The death of seventeen year old Lester Sowell, a casualty of the Korean War, left a wound in the family that could never be healed. Casimir and Joe also had four children of their own: John, Joe, Frank and daughter Rose Marie.

When military duty took Joe away from his family, Lester was a willing substitute, but Casimir tried to keep her mother Tulita at arm’s length because of her stormy temperament. Rose Marie remembers, “Whenever Tulita visited, she and mother would end up in a shouting match—always in Spanish, which we children did not understand.”



*"California School: A Relic of the Past" by Theodore Woras, 1910.
Current location unknown.*



*"California School: A Relic of the Past" by Theodore Woras, 1910.
Current location unknown.*

Great grandmother Emma, on the other hand, who moved to Pacific Grove after Frank Ambrosio's death, was a frequent and welcome visitor at Casimir's house. As numerous family snapshots attest, Emma Butler Bennett Ambrosio—deserted and unrecognized by her father, orphaned by her mother and again by her grandmother, widowed early, and separated from her young daughter by economic necessity—doted on her granddaughter and her granddaughter's offspring. Rose Marie and her three brothers grew up with two loving, grandparently figures—their great grandmother and her one-time son-in-law.

Gifts of Piety

Casa Boronda was sited “just a short walk from the presidio chapel” so that the women could walk to worship, as several generations would have done on a more than weekly basis. The chapel records, now part of the Diocese of Monterey, are a rich source of information on family baptisms, weddings and burials. Tulita, an artist who seems always to have danced to her own drummer, at one point converted to Judaism. Her relationship with her mother Emma was never smooth, so it is intriguing to note how, in their later years and different styles, both became active supporters of the Carmel Mission and its history.

Tulita made two gifts to the Carmel Mission. In 1945, after apparently holding on to it for twenty years, she claims to have returned a life-size 18th century statue of Our Lady of Bethlehem that had reportedly been safeguarded by María Ignacia Cantúa-Dutra and her family during the half-century (1834-



Tulita Bennett, four years old in 1893, attended this San Francisco day school for a time. Both photographs courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

1884) that the mission suffered chronic neglect and decay. The Barreto-Dutra adobe, also on the Mesa, was just south of the Boronda property. Tulita takes credit for restoring "La Conquistadora" to the Mission in a *Game & Gossip* feature published in 1961, the year before her death. Newspaper accounts from 1945, however, credit the restitution to Mrs. Howard Severance instead. A caption in the same 1961 article asserts that Tulita gifted a pair of gold filigree earrings with acorn-shaped pendants, made by local silversmith Celestino Trujillo, to the church for the statue to wear. The photographs reproduced on the following page attest to the validity of this claim.

Tulita's second gift is acknowledged in an undated note from her childhood friend, Maria Antonia Bach Thompson. The note suggests that Tulita herself was author of the art work, which Rose Marie Dunsford thinks no longer exists:

My dear "Tulita,"

Following the meeting this afternoon (May 9) of San Carlos Altar Society, I, as secretary, extend, in behalf of the society, deep and sincere appreciation for the gift of the beautiful painting of Our Blessed Lady and the Divine Infant honoring the memory of your good mother.

May every blessing continue to crown your God-given gift as an artist! Please accept my personal best wishes.

*Sincerely,
Maria Antonia Thompson
Secretary*



*Joe Timar and wife Casimir Davis Timar during service in Japan, circa 1960.
Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.*

Before her death in 1956, Emma was honored to be invited to give testimony on behalf of the campaign to canonize Father Junípero Serra, founding president of the Alta California missions. In 1943, and again in 1948-49, Emma shared the following family reminiscences with the Reverend Eric O'Brien of Mission Santa Barbara, and Harry J. Downie, the "lay Franciscan" restorer of the Carmel Mission :

Because my mother died when I was very young, I was raised by my grandmother, Petra Boronda Allen, [who] used to pray daily to Padre Serra.

When I was about seven, it was customary for several families to gather in one or the other home to make a novena to Padre Serra for good crops. These families[included the] Abregos and Buelnas. At these novena devotions, we said the Rosary and a special prayer which mentioned Padre Serra's name...

Not only my grandmother, but also the others of her generation, used to consider Padre Serra a saint, as did Isabel Meadows. I knew one old Indian woman when I was a child [who] also thought Padre Serra was a saint; she said he used to protect her.

Once my grandmother prayed a novena to Padre Serra when her crop of peas was spoiled and neighbors all said it was hopeless. Soon after, the crop improved and the yield was wonderful. It used to be said and generally believed that Padre Serra worked miracles when alive.

One of the family keepsakes is a photograph of the rededication of the Carmel Mission on August 28, 1884, the centennial of Father Serra's death. This celebration was the culmination of a ten-year campaign by a volunteer missionary priest from northern Italy, Fray Angelo Delfino Casanova, pastor at Monterey from 1870 to 1893. Also among the family mementos are a *carte-de-visite* photograph of Father Casanova and a prayer book that he gave to the



"La Conquistadora" (recent) and Tulita Bennett Davis in 1910 wearing the same gold earrings crafted by early Monterey silversmith Celestino Trujillo. Detail of photograph of Tulita in Spanish dress courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

young Emma on the occasion of her first communion. She would have been sixteen years old on the day of the rededication ceremony, her grandmother Petra seventy-one.

Brother Larry Scrivani, archivist to the Catholic Diocese, kindly examined rosaries and devotional books that have been handed down by the Boronda descendants. While noting that there is to date no authoritative study on the history of rosaries, he was able to identify three that date back to the 19th century—based on clues like hand-made links and signs of dessication or worm holes in the olive pits used for beads. The cross on what appears to be the oldest rosary of the group slides open, becoming two. The top cross, the color of brass and very worn, features a relief profile of Christ looking left on its face, and a profile of Mary looking left on its back. The still-pristine silver under-cross features St. Christopher carrying the Christ child on its front and no image at all on its back.

The lead chain, cross, and crucifix of another rosary can be identified as made in France. Its links are of different shapes and metals, suggesting that it may have been reassembled by adding pieces from other rosaries, a common practice. A third with 19th century beads and links features a medal of St. John Bosco, a 20th century saint. The fourth and smallest is not a rosary at all but a chapelet, with thirteen groups of three beads, numbering 39 beads in all. Brother Larry was uncertain of its purpose.

The devotional books are a fascinating assortment. The oldest is a novena (9-day cycle of prayers) published in Tacuba, Mexico [City] in 1795. The title reads: *Novena del gloriosísimo patriarca San Joseph, padre putativo de Jesús y esposo dignísimo de María* (Novena for the most glorious patriarch St Joseph, putative father of Jesus and most worthy spouse of María). This very ragged little booklet has lost its cover, and its title page is splotched with red dye, suggesting that the cover may have been that color. Padre Ripalda is the author of a leather-bound catechism from 1843, printed in the Plazuela de Santa Clarita in the Mexican capital. This compendium of doctrine designed for rote learning, “the kind of basics that the Spanish fathers taught to the Indians,” according to Brother Larry, includes a “Table of Moveable Feasts, 1839-1851” and a list of memorial occasions associated with the saints covering every date in the calendar.

Semana Santa, a complete companion for Holy Week featuring eight elegantly engraved illustrations, was printed in Paris in 1845—in Spanish. The vest-pocket size *Keys of Heaven*, printed in San Francisco in 1887 in both English and Latin, is a complete book of devotions, with



Father Casanova's carte de visite, circa 1875. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.



Celebration of 1884 Carmel Mission restoration and Father Serra centennial. C.W.J. Johnson photograph courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

daily prayers, the Epistles and the Gospels, and Biblical readings for Sunday mass. This copy belonged to Edward Bennett, Emma's ill-fated spouse. It was ideally suited for someone traveling to distant lands where priests might be scarce. Published the year before Edward and Emma wed, it may well have been a parting gift that, like the broken violin, made its way back to Monterey from some forbidding Alaskan port to console the bereaved young widow.

The most extraordinary of these devotional items is a 3x4 inch cross made out of silver inlaid with dark wood. Nine year old Emma was wearing a silver cross when she playfully pestered Robert Louis Stevenson. Her cousin Fanny Abby asked the whereabouts of this cross on their 1952 tape recording. Emma replied that she had "given everything to Casimir." When I mentioned this exchange to Rose Marie, she brought out a silver cross with black inlay and triple-scalloped tips, a still popular ancient Roman design, according to Brother Larry. Deborah Silguero, exhibit curator for the Monterey History and Art Association, immediately noticed that the cross was designed to open like a locket.

Inside the velvet-lined cavity are six tiny pieces of paper, each with a typeset name, with some of the letters obscured or folded under: Martyre, Blasius, Jucundius, David, S. Agnes, Agnus Dei. Paired at each tip of the cross are miniscule relics encased in tiny beads of glass. The cross is a reliquary, probably made in Italy or Spain. The photograph of little Emma included in Anne Fisher's *No More a Stranger* shows her wearing a different cross. The story behind how the reliquary came to the Boronda family is a tale that cannot be told until more information comes to light.

Reassembling the Pieces

After her great grandmother's death at 85, Tulita reported that various aunts came by to remove what they wanted from Casa Boronda. Emma remembered that a large portion of the furniture was taken by Miss María Antonia Field, who felt entitled to it because her aunt Dolores had been the wife of Petra's son, Alonzo Allen. Edna Kimbro believes that the more rustic pieces in the permanent display of Munras furniture at Carmel Mission, identified as made "by a Presidio carpenter," are the ones that María Antonia Field, benefactress of the second Carmel Mission restoration, removed from Casa Boronda, and she also suspects that the unnamed Presidio carpenter was in fact founding patriarch Manuel Boronda.

Amelie Elkinton's files at the Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library contain a handwritten list of items associated with Casa Boronda that Emma Bennett Ambrosio gifted to the State of California in February of 1949. These included the *comal* (iron griddle) that founding matriarch Gertrudis Higuera de Boronda took on trips to San Jose to use over an open fire in the fields where the family had their *milpitas* (food-growing areas); Petra's iron kettle, used for making beans and stews, along with the retractable spit that she used with the iron stove; *sartenes* (frying pans) that had belonged to Emma's mother, Refugio; a brass pot used to make *dulce de leche* candy; one of several chairs that George Allen purchased for Petra (up to that time, the family would have made do with wooden benches), and the stone *olla* (cooking pot) made by Chumash Indians from the Channel Islands off Santa Barbara—all prized family possessions. Thanks to the efforts of Edna Kimbro and Chief Museum Curator Kris Quist, both of California State Parks, several of these items have been located and included in the **Tales of Two Adobes** exhibit.

*Casa Buelna
courtyard, 2004.
Photograph by
John Castagna.*





Eighteen-year old Tulita Bennett with pup, parasol and poppies, photographed against the wall of Casa Boronda circa 1907. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.



West façade of Casa Buelna in 2004. Photograph by John Castagna.



West façade of Casa Boronda in 2004. Photograph by Julianne Burton-Carvajal.

Part III: The Dwellings



East façade of Casa Buelna with Royal Presidio Chapel and San Carlos School, circa 1900. Courtesy of Edna Kimbro, Monterey County Library Collection.



East façade of Casa Boronda with attached barn, circa 1900. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

To Remodel or Not to Remodel

The WPA Historical Survey's 1937 description of Casa Boronda borrows wholesale from Tulita's typescript:

The original building consisted of one small room in the center with two large rooms on either side. The beams are axe-hewn and some are twisted. The building, which is 87 feet long by 20 feet wide, follows the slope of the ground. When originally built and for many years after, the floors were of dirt, but when wooden floors were put in, it was necessary to add one step in the center of the building in order to make the floors approximately level. This caused the ceilings in all the rooms to be some inches lower at one end than at the other. The different in the height of the ceiling from one end of the house to the other is 15 inches. ... The tile roof has been changed to a shingled one. There is still remaining a remnant of an old whalebone walk, but the Spanish fence [low adobe wall] that once surrounded the rose garden is gone.

A small item in the *Monterey Herald* on June 19, 1923, headlined "Original Boronda Not Changed," reveals Emma Ambrosio's dual determination to keep Casa Boronda pure and the record straight:

Mrs. Ambrosia has called at The Herald office to inform us of a slight misunderstanding appearing in a recent "building page" article of this paper. She states that she is the owner of the original Boronda adobe and that it is not being remodeled at the present time as stated in the issue referred to. The adobe named is alleged to be generally known as the "Boronda adobe," but such is a misnomer, according to Mrs. Ambrosia.

Ironically perhaps, the same newspaper page that printed Emma's disclaimer also featured an advertisement for J.C. Anthony's construction company. Presumably, the newspaper had misidentified one of the Mesa adobes then under renovation by J.C. Anthony, probably Casa Buelna.

ADOBE

*And Chalk-Rock Homes,
Covered with hand-made
Tile, are most attractive for
the environment of Monterey.*

Investigate costs and specifications.

Expert Architect at Your Service

J.C. Anthony
522 Fremont Street

In the lifespan of both dwellings, ownership transfers have been a rare occurrence. Since it left the family line, Casa Boronda has had only three owners (Tiers, Wolfson, and Parashis) and Casa Buelna the same number since J.C. Anthony reconfigured it in 1922-23 (Woods, Ross, and Evans). Neither has escaped modernization, however. Casa Buelna was very extensively reconfigured in the 1920s and again in the 1970s and 1980s. Casa Boronda, modified by Jorge Allen in the 1830s-1840s and again by Alexander Tiers a century later, was in fact the *only* surviving Spanish-era Mesa home exempt from J.C. Anthony's aggrandizements. Still pristine into the 21st century, it has recently been the object of an extensive restoration at the hands of master craftsman Dan Lancaster, including the removal of inappropriate brick and asphalt surfaces, installation of a period wooden fireplace surround, repainting indoors and out, and various improvements to adobe walls and gates, wooden outbuildings, gardens and grounds.

Lester Boronda's Example

Ironically, the innovative artist-craftsman who gave J.C. Anthony his first taste of adobe renovation may well have been Emma's cousin from Salinas, Lester David Boronda. Early in the second decade of the 20th century, when both men and their young families were living on the Mesa, the Barreto-Dutra adobe, just north of Casa Boronda, became the first of Monterey's decaying earthen buildings to be restored for modern living. The remodel, done by one artist at the behest of another, featured a large "studio window" on the northern side to admit painterly light. Fifteen years later, when J.C. Anthony undertook to reconfigure three of the four remaining period homes on the Mesa, including Casa Barreto-Dutra, he consistently followed this prototype. His modifications to Casa Buelna, for example, featured an 8x8 feet north window for artist-client Marcy Woods. What's more, the clients for the first four homes that Anthony revived and built on the Mesa were all artists: Gouverneur Morris, Percy Gray, Marcy Woods and Lucy Valentine Pierce.

While editor of *Noticias*, the late Betty Hoag McGlynn conducted exhaustive research into Lester Boronda's family origins and artistic career, publishing her illuminating findings during 1983-84 as a five-part series. In Part IV, she describes the artist-craftsman as "slight of stature, but wiry and physically active all his life, ... dark-complexioned like his male ancestors, patrician of features, and courtly of manners, with a rather peppery disposition."

Her account indicates that Lester's parents, who had lost another son in early childhood and produced no other children, did not favor a career in the arts for their only child. But the youngster apparently prevailed because, in 1904 at the age of eighteen, he enrolled at San Francisco's famed Mark Hopkins Institute. There he studied not only drawing and painting but also woodworking, metal craft, pottery and glass-making under Arthur Matthews, the influential Arts & Crafts master of "the California decorative style." After the great earthquake and fire of 1906 cut his studies short, Lester's parents sent him off to

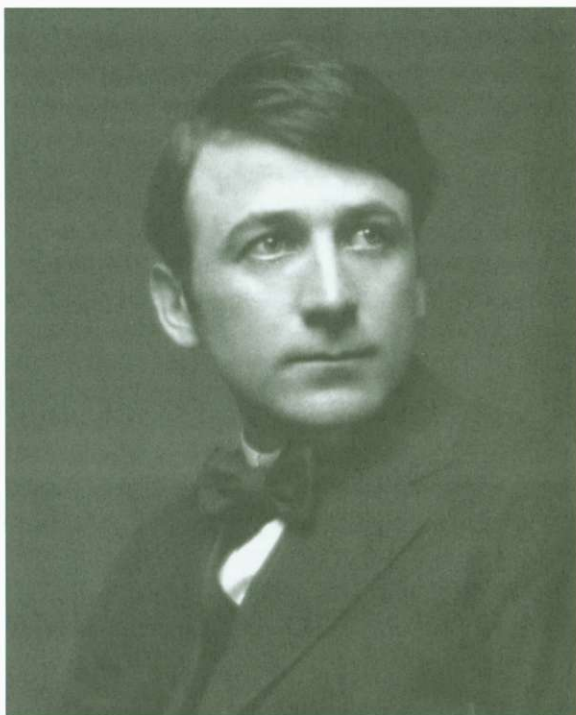
Europe, where he expanded his artistic horizons in France, Germany and Italy. Upon his return to California in 1909, he promptly wed fellow Institute of Art student Ruby Drew of Sacramento, and the newlyweds moved to Pacific Grove.

The following year, the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco mounted a display of 100 paintings and drawings from Lester's European travels. Also in 1910, the wealthy, civic-minded artist Sarah Cornelia Parke, heir to a Detroit pharmaceutical fortune, purchased the Barreto-Dutra adobe from Mary Dutra Machado. Parke thought the old building might make a fine painting studio, and she hired the versatile Lester Boronda to remodel it.

Under the headline "Picturesque Adobe to be the Studio of Pacific Grove Artist," the May 5, 1911 issue of the *Del Monte Weekly* sounded the romanticized note typical of the period:

The house is beautifully located on one of the hills just beyond the old San Carlos Mission. Truly an inspiration to any artist will be this studio nestling on a grassy knoll—on one side the mountains over which drift the veil-like mists, on the other side, the sea stretching its limitless distances—while nearby the hours are told by the music of the mission bells.

Lester's three-year renovation of Casa Barreto-Dutra was the first such project in Monterey. Soon many artists and civic organizations would follow his lead. Once the job was completed, Lester, Ruby and their two young children, Beonne and Drew, moved in for several months. Sometime in 1913, the young family departed California for New York City, where Lester would gain considerable renown as both painter and expert craftsman, establishing successful workshops for wood and metal in the Washington Square area. According to McGlynn, the



Lester David Boronda circa 1910. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

best known of these, The Firm of Beed, Inc., has been the subject of a number of museum shows.

Lester and his family returned to California every other year, usually driving cross-country to visit friends and fellow artists like Myron Oliver, who apprenticed as a frame-maker in Lester's New York workshop and then provided frames of superb quality to Monterey's artist community. Myron's daughter Margot Berkquist remembers driving to New York with Lester and her father for an extended visit. Lester Boronda died at his beloved second home in the picturesque seaport town of Mystic, Connecticut in 1953, eight years after his mother María Ray Boronda, and thirteen years after his father José Sylvano Ambrosio Boronda—son of José Eusebio the bear-hunter and the long-suffering María Josefa Buelna.

Lester Boronda's artwork is widely dispersed, and the whereabouts of many pieces remain unknown. **Tales of Two Adobes** features five of his oil paintings, all closely tied to the theme of the exhibit. "Sunday Afternoon in Old California," painted at 131 Waverly Place in New York City, features a gathering of Californios on the golden hillside surrounding Monterey's Casa Boronda. Two other small oils depict Monterey adobes—"The House of Four Winds" and "The Alvarado Adobe on Dutra Street." "The Fandango Dancer," part of the Harry Parashis collection, is a delightful compliment to an even larger canvas called "The Grape Harvest," on loan from the Monterey Country Historical Society, Inc.

While researching this section, I discovered that "The Grape Harvest," which features the Carmel Valley Boronda Adobe in the background, is the center panel of a triptych identified in the Betty Hoag McGlynn archives as "The Old Wine Makers of California." Giving this 4x5 feet canvas pride of place in the exhibit, and reproducing all three sections here, may lead to the rediscovery of one or both missing panels and other examples of Lester Boronda's artistry as well.

There is no information to indicate whether Sarah Parke, who owned several houses across the Peninsula, ever kept a studio at the remodeled Casa Barreto-Dutra, but another artist of note lived and painted there during World War I. The internationally known caricaturist Kate Carew, also called Mary Reed, painted many canvases of Mesa scenes that echoed her cherished haunts in the South of France, off-limits because of the war. In later years, when the second World War brought her back again to the Mesa, she gave titles to those paintings and monoprints, sometimes mislabeling her paintings and prints of Casa Barreto as Casa Boronda.

Alexander Tiers Restyles Casa Boronda in 1940

After being handed down through five generations of females, Monterey's Casa Boronda was purchased by Alexander Tiers, the first owner outside the family line, in 1939. Tulita's excerpted WPA account, printed in



"The Grape Harvest," triptych by Lester Boronda. Photograph courtesy of the Betty Hoag McGlynn Archive, Monterey Museum of Art.

1937, claimed that "The building has been thoroughly remodeled without in any sense changing the lines or contour of the original structure inside or out, and is to be found in a splendid state of repair." Various family pictures show a gabled dormer on east and west elevations to give light in the attic, a barn attached to the southern end, evidence of roof leaks, and a later redesign of the dormers in keeping with the early 20th century Arts and Crafts look.

Tiers apparently begged to differ with Tulita's opinion about the "splendid" state of repair, since electrical wiring and a modern bathroom were apparently not included. A theatrical designer originally from New York, relocated to Santa Barbara by way of Los Angeles, he immediately set out to modernize the Boronda Adobe and redesign the grounds. He hired respected Carmel-based builder Michael J. Murphy to expand the chimney, tile the floors, add plumbing, heating, electricity, closets and open shelving, build two board-and-batten outbuildings, and enclose the front (east-facing) garden in a high wall of new adobe, adding pergolas on large square pillars at each end.

Sportswriter Ted Durein, a lifetime director of the Monterey History and Art Association, published an article in the *Monterey Herald* on January 12, 1940 reassuring the public about the new owner's intentions. Headlined "Preservation of Boronda Adobe Assured; New Owner Carrying Out Model Plan for Making It Livable," the item declared in part:

[The] young writer from Southern California...is now engaged in a project of preservation so revealing of a tender regard for old and beautiful things that many natives and adopted sons might well sit up and take notice, or perhaps shed a guilty tear or two for past sins in this regard... The oldest known home in Monterey, perhaps in California, ...will be made a modern habitation with all the 20th century amenities.

What makes this work unique is Tiers' statement: "I have the written assurance of the contractor that none of the old structure is to be touched. We are even putting new electric floor plugs in the new tile floors rather than cutting into or even removing and resetting the baseboard, of a later date..."

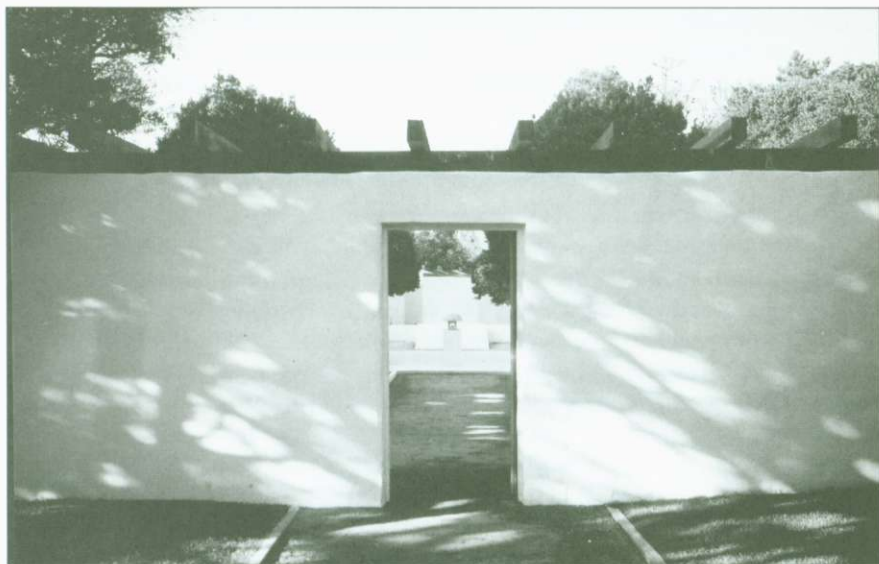
No expense is being spared to preserve the building in its original state. No where is the adobe being cut into at all, except around the fireplace, where the sections can be put back, should this ever be desired.

The new bathrooms and kitchen are being built as units and installed in the old rooms as sort of stationary stage sets, in order not to damage the old walls by nailing to them. Wiring is by conduit and it is being laid through the attic and under the floor.

The old roof line will be preserved, but the roof will be covered with shakes and a dormer of a later period will be removed... Replacing the remains of the old adobe chimney will be a new chimney of brick, laid irregular and plastered to resemble the old adobe walls...

Tiers left his designer's touch on Casa Boronda in the emphatically modernist verdigris copper door grates (still extant) and the matching verdigris copper fireplace surround (removed in 2003 but recreated for **Tales of Two Adobes**), the cast-plaster wall sconces and, above all, in the white-walled Moorish-Andalusian water garden—with its classic quadrant design, and its shallow pool fed by a rill embedded in the stepped concrete pathway. In an especially romantic detail, the unpaved surfaces of the garden were covered in crushed abalone shells that glistened in the moonlight.

Tiers' original pencil sketch for that garden—drawn on the back of a torn architectural drawing for a Doheny estate in Southern California—was one of the miscellaneous items in the carton retrieved by Harry Parashis. An



View from the strolling garden into enclosed patio with central water feature, designed by Casa Boronda owner Alexander Tiers in 1940. Photograph by Julianne Burton-Carvajal, 2004.

undated article from the *Monterey Herald* circa 1952, headlined "Homes Built in California," describes the result:

One major outdoor change made by Tiers was the addition of a high wall in front of the house [east side] and the planting of a garden within the wall. The garden was designed along Grecian lines, formal and simple, with a rectangular pattern... At the center is a concrete pool surrounded by a square planting area. Four oak trees trimmed to an oval shape occupy the four corners of the square. Four other small square areas in the garden each contain a laurel tree in the center. Planting has followed the classic tradition, with acanthus, olives, figs, and a pear tree to honor Father Serra, who always planted pears. Two pergolas [occupy] each end, and occasional escalas, or stone benches, are recessed within the wall for resting. The entire floor of the garden is covered with broken abalone shells.

Adjacent to this small garden is a larger garden for strolls. The classic pattern is followed in the design of this also. Cypress trees are planted against the walls [grape-stake fencing] for background and [cork] oaks line the walkways. When the gate between the two garden areas is open, the effect of a long, spacious vista is obtained.

Dr. Wolfson Comes to Stay

Two surviving letters from Alexander Tiers to Mast Wolfson reveal that the latter agreed to purchase the property in 1941 for \$10,000. The following letter from Tiers to Wolfson was hand-written on stationery from the Peter Pan Lodge in Carmel:

December 4, 1941

Dear Mast Wolfson,

This acknowledges receipt of (\$4,000.00) four thousand dollars handed me today by you as down payment on my property in Monterey, California known as the Boronda Adobe, consisting of approximately just under four acres with all buildings and improvements thereon, which you are purchasing from me for the sum of (\$10,000) ten thousand dollars. Balance of purchase price to be paid as per verbal agreement. I or my heirs will allow you or whomever you desire to occupy the above-mentioned property if verbal agreements and obligations are adhered to and all taxes and any assessments paid in full by you when due and the place maintained as it is now by you.

Taxes are now paid in full to July 1st 1942. Title was granted by Salinas Title Company when I bought the above-mentioned property.

*Sincerely,
Alexander H. Tiers*

A subsequent letter to Wolfson from Tiers, written from Sycamore Canyon Road in Santa Barbara on March 17, 1942, suggests that the writer had

suffered a serious accident or illness. Amid his struggle for coherence, the letter takes on a more personal and caring tone:

Dear Mast—

I hope things are well with you. I am better most of the time and am working very hard at re-education, which I needed badly, as you know. The doctor with whom I'm working is very able.

I am very sorry to possibly add to your things about which you have to decide at this time, for I can well imagine they are many, but it seems imperative that I now at this time make over the deed of the Boronda property to you. As you know, our negotiations were and have not been according to an accepted business way as far as payment is concerned. Our plan, as far as I'm concerned, about the money part stands. I am happy about the money part, for I felt prompted by the good Lord to enter into that arrangement.

So will you write me how you want the deed to read as far as names are concerned, and I will attend to it.

Always,

Alex

Tiers lived on in Santa Barbara for forty-four more years, dying “unexpectedly” at St. Francis Hospital on August 3, 1986 at the age of seventy-nine. His last Santa Barbara address, on Nopal Street not far from that city’s splendid Spanish-revival County Courthouse, is a charming one-story cottage in the Spanish-Mediterranean style, part of an attractive row of similar stamp. Tiers would probably be pleased to know that his current successor at that address is a landscape architect with Spanish roots.

Tiers’ tenure at Casa Boronda was very brief, if indeed he ever took up residence there; his successor would live there almost half a century. Dr. Mast Wolfson, a native of San Francisco, earned his medical degree in 1920 from Harvard and moved to Monterey a decade later, becoming very prominent in local medical circles as an internist. His patients included builder J.C. Anthony and Hotel del Monte-Pebble Beach Company visionary S.F.B. Morse. It was Wolfson who persuaded Sam Morse to donate the 22 acre site that became today’s Community Hospital. As members of the Monterey History and Art Association, Mast and Charmaine Wolfson opened their home and gardens for the 1959 Adobe Tour, inviting visitors to experience Tiers’ striking landscape design in its early maturity.

Dr. Wolfson lived at Casa Boronda for forty-six years, until his death in 1987 at the age of ninety-four. He remarried after Charmaine’s death, and his second wife, Evelyn Wright Wolfson, remained there nearly fifteen years after his passing. Evelyn’s caretaker, Nancy Chris, remembered that the second Mrs. Wolfson kept a guest book containing the comments and addresses of the many visitors who came to the house, including quite a number of Boronda relations. That guestbook may also have been retained by Colonel Wright, Evelyn Wolfson’s heir.

Apparently preferring to leave design to the designers, the Wolfsons respected and maintained Tiers' modifications. They told a *Herald* journalist circa 1952 that Tiers "had done considerable experimenting with the décor and made a number of changes before arriving at the setup the house now has" and that, liking "the colors and arrangement," they "kept it very much the same." This explains how so many of the modernist touches added by Tiers remained intact for over half a century.

During forty-one of the Wolfsons' years on Boronda Lane, Addie Lee Niblet Smith (later Addie Lee Welsh) worked as their housekeeper. Addie Lee, who had moved to Monterey from Texas in 1937 at the age of eight, was educated at Bay View and Monterey High. She began working for the Wolfsons at Casa Boronda in late 1945, when her son Jerry was just three months old, and she remained with them until her death in 1985.

Jerry Smith, recent mayor of Seaside, recalls that his mother "worked a long day every Wednesday and occasionally on weekends, and prepared dinner for the Wolfsons every evening." It is not surprising that her only son, an infant when she began working for the couple, spent a lot of time at the top of Boronda Lane. The boy who "started out as chief crab apple picker" eventually and proudly took charge of the entire garden and orchard. Today, he remembers Casa



Dr. Mast Wolfson and his wife Charmaine, circa 1960. Photograph courtesy of Jerry Smith.

Boronda fondly as “the house where I grew up” and Dr. Wolfson as “a surrogate father to me.”

Reviving Casa Buelna

The first non-Californio owners of Casa Buelna, Mr. and Mrs. Marcy Woods of Stockton, acquired the property in 1922 from local builder J.C. Anthony. The builder had purchased it from the heirs of local land-baron David Jacks once distribution of their father’s estate was finalized in 1921. After a property-line dispute was cleared up, Anthony expanded the original adobe core into a handsome balconied estate home.

The photo-diary compiled by Mr. and Mrs. Woods, rediscovered in one of the outbuildings in the 1970s by then-owner Marian Evans, confirms that Anthony’s remodel began with a modest one-story structure, more like a barn than a house. Mysteriously, this core structure bears no resemblance to the one so frequently photographed featuring Juan Rosales in his vegetable patch. The oldest extant photograph of this unknown structure was taken in 1894 by J.K. Oliver, who identified it simply as “Primo’s (Cousin’s) House.” Although widely (mis)identified as the Buelna Adobe, the true name and location of “primo’s house” continues to baffle the experts. Still, it seems the obvious inspiration for J.C. Anthony’s ambitious remodel.

In the 1923 newspaper article quoted earlier, Joy Anthony includes María Boronda de Pomber’s description of Casa Buelna when it was a “select school for girls:”

...Built true to type, the adobe was L-shaped. A large sitting room was flanked at each end by a smaller bedroom, while the kitchen formed the bottom of the L. Apart from the house proper, but adjoining the kitchen, were the chambers used by the visiting relatives of Señora Llaría. A spacious corredor [verandah] ran around the outside, connecting all of these rooms.

Apparently, by the time Anthony acquired the premises, the structures had fallen prey to years of abandonment and neglect, and all that survived was the barn-like adobe core and a remnant of the right-angled wall. In his 1917 Master’s thesis, Raymond Jeans incorrectly identified the building as “the Briones Adobe.” Joy Anthony adds quite a surprising twist to the mystery of which building served as the model for Casa Buelna’s reincarnation when she notes in her article that “Mr. Woods is remodeling this adobe along the lines of one of the oldest adobes built in Montecito, [near] Santa Barbara.”

Whatever his design inspiration, Anthony added five rooms to the surviving adobe core, and divided the latter into the living room, dining room, and library. He conserved two wrought iron locks that had been part of the original structure. The lock and key for the front door, used as the logo of these companion exhibits, appear on the title page of this publication. Anthony also installed pegged hardwood floors throughout, added a simple wrought iron



In his 1922-23 reconstruction of Casa Buelna, contractor J.C. Anthony rebuilt it to look like this early Monterey dwelling, identified only as "Primo's House" by photographer J.K. Oliver, 1894. Collection of the City of Monterey.

railing on the living room stairway and balcony along with wrought iron wall sconces, and carved "rocking W" brands into the rough plank doors of the old adobe section—no doubt at the request of Mr. & Mrs. Woods.

In his years on the Monterey Mesa, Marcy S. Woods was active in the local arts and community events, supervising the decorations for the great 1924 Serra pageant, for example. Before leaving the area, he got involved in real estate and is likely responsible for carving building lots from the Buelna property before selling it. According to the Edan Hughes' biographical dictionary *Artists of California, 1786-1940*, these first owners of the reconfigured adobe were back in Stockton and Lodi by 1932, working on a WPA project. This may indicate that, like their neighbors Gouverneur and Ruth Morris at Casa Castro, Marcy Woods and his wife might have been forced from their Mesa home by Depression-era foreclosure.

Garden Showplace

The next owners, Colonel Leo A. Ross and his wife Irene, were to enjoy Casa Buelna for four decades. The Colonel reportedly had an import-export business, possibly the source of the richly carved Italian marble fireplace surround in the dining room. He took his German shepherd on daily walks through nearby Iris Canyon and was such an avid poker player that he had one of his winning hands mounted and framed. His wife Irene was a pianist who

enjoyed treating visiting neighbors to cookies during the holiday season. Most significantly, the Rosses were avid gardeners drawn to exotic species.

Ylaria Buelna may have been the first to appreciate the property's horticultural potential. According to Mrs. Pomber, "The Señora's rose garden was to be envied, and well known for its many varieties [including] an old pink rose of Castille that still blossoms in season." However, it was Colonel and Mrs. Ross, also appreciators of fine roses, who would transform Casa Buelna's grounds into one of the showcase gardens of the Monterey Peninsula by planting "every inch" with specimen plants like Canary Island Madrone, Japanese maples, and exuberant succulents. They added a greenhouse for orchids and other tender plants, and retained a staff of eleven gardeners. Presumably, visitors to the 1956 Adobe Tour sponsored by the Monterey History and Art Association experienced the grounds in their glorious maturity.

From the 1930s through the 1960s, Colonel and Mrs. Ross compiled their own "photo-diary" that rivals the record Mr. & Mrs. Woods made of the Anthony remodel. For an undetermined number of years, friends and relatives of the Rosses received custom-made holiday cards featuring a portion of house or garden, often with an original poem printed inside. Mrs. Ross left several samples of these professionally-printed cards for her successors, along with fourteen metal photogravure plates mounted on wooden blocks—another collection of artifacts that bespeaks a very special pride of place. (Both cards and printing plates are featured in **Tales of Two Adobes**.)

The only image in the Ross series that is not photographic is an etching of the renovated Casa Buelna done by artist Ferdinand Bergdorff. Published in a 1923 issue of the *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, it clearly pre-dates the Rosses' ownership. It is possible that the Woodses' gesture of leaving this plate for Colonel and Mrs. Ross provided the inspiration for their holiday card tradition.

After the death of her husband, Mrs. Ross decided to move to Oakland, reportedly to be closer to a nephew. Through a fortuitous mistake, the property sold itself. Responding to a call from a client on the Mesa, electrician Bill Evans drove up the wrong driveway and knocked on the wrong door. Captivated by the house and grounds to which his mistake had led him, and thrilled to learn from Mrs. Ross that the property was about to be listed, he rushed home to fetch his wife Marian, and the three of them proceeded to work out a deal on the spot.

Raising six children there required several remodels and scaling back the gardens. As active members of the Monterey History and Art Association, Bill and Marian chaired the Merienda in 1988, and Marian became President of the Board of Directors in 1993. The family hospitably opened Casa Buelna's wide plank doors to Adobe Tours in 1973, 1976, 1979, and 1986. In the spring of 2002, they again graciously opened grounds to public enjoyment during the "Historic Homes and Hidden Gardens" tour of the Monterey Mesa, sponsored by the Monterey Museum of Art and organized by this author.

Part IV: Affirming Community and Continuity



Emma Bennett Ambrosio with granddaughter Casimir Davis and an unidentified friend in the garden of Casa Boronda, circa 1920. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

Petra's World: The Realities Behind the Romance

Three photographs of Petra Boronda came to light during my research; the third appears on the following page. Tulita's family history and Emma's taped interview touch all too briefly on their childhood perceptions of this stalwart lady—her piety, her strictness, her culinary skill, her cigars. Nothing written by Petra or her husband Jorge Allen has been handed down within the family. Although the materials gathered for this exhibit give us only a glimpse of Petra, it is sufficient to suggest that her life offers a unique prism for reassessing Monterey's pre-American past.

In 1940, scientist-turned-novelist Anne B. Fisher published *Cathedral in the Sun*, "a pageant of early California—the story of love and faith and the unrecorded heroism of the humble." The Carmel Mission church is the "cathedral" of the title and the true protagonist of Fisher's story, which she divides into two parts. Book One (1818-1836) is told from the perspective of Juan Onésimo—called "the Mission Builder"—an elderly, Christianized member of the Rumsien (Fisher spells it Room-se-en) tribe. Book Two (1836-1882) is told from the point of view of his daughter, Loreta Onésimo de Peralta de Preble.

Most of Fisher's characters are modeled on actual historical personages. Loreta, for example, is based on the real-life mother of Isabel Meadows, Loreta Onésimo de Peralta de Meadows, born to Rumsien parents at Carmel Mission in 1818, when the Spanish Franciscans had been operating the mission for nearly fifty years. Several years after her first husband, a Californio, was murdered in a land-grab, Loreta married the English seaman James Meadows. The youngest of the couple's several children, Isabel Meadows, declined to marry and instead cared for both her parents in their old age. She spent the last years of her long life at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., serving as honored Native Californian informant for the pioneering ethnolinguist James P. Harrington. (See *Noticias* LII:2 summer 2003.)

Petra Boronda de Allen is one of the historical figures who makes frequent appearances in Fisher's novel. She is billed on the dust jacket as "an unforgettable character over whose favors men were fighting before she was in her teens." Fisher gives Petra a queenly role—first alluring señorita, later blushing bride, and finally gracious protector of the Onésimos and their offspring—but the result is a lifeless cliché in a book unfortunately brimming with them.

Fisher prided herself on her research connections and reportedly dedicated seven years to this project. According to the dust jacket, "The old Spanish families of California, descendants of the original Dons, opened to [the author] their treasure chests. From many other sources she gathered the authentic and irreplaceable information which she has woven into her story." Fisher dedicates her book to Isabella Meadows, who is also the subject of her "Afterword," along with Isabel's younger brother Thomas Meadows, Benito and Nathaniel Soberanes, and the "descendants of Don José Manuel Boronda."

We know that Fisher interviewed Emma Ambrosio, spent countless hours with historians Amelie Elkinton and Mayo Hayes O'Donnell, and enjoyed the very able assistance of "girl Friday" Anita Abby Church—daughter of Fanny Pomber Abby, granddaughter of Maria de los Angeles Boronda de Pomber, and great grandniece of Petra. Yet today's reader, eager for insight into the socio-ethnographic history of early Monterey, will be disappointed because Fisher's novelized history is not quite one or the other.

With the perspective of sixty-five years since Fisher's depiction, the historical Petra Boronda de Allen

merits a much more nuanced and multi-faceted portrayal. Born in 1812, Petra lived her life under four different regimes: Spanish (until 1822), Mexican (until 1846), Californio (1830s and early 1840s) and American (from 1846 until her death fifty-one years later, on the eve of the Spanish-American War). She was six years old in 1818 when Hippolyte Bouchard sacked and burned Monterey. During the early years of her marriage, she witnessed incessant power struggles between northern and southern contingents of her countrymen, who thought they were ready for self-rule. She saw her siblings and others move elsewhere to oversee the huge land grants that were awarded them in the great post-secularization give-away. She was thirty-one years old when Thomas Ap Catesby Jones led his premature, comic-opera takeover on behalf of the Americans. As a recent widow, she must have been astonished by the wholesale evacuation of the town as all able-bodied men took off for the Sacramento gold fields in 1848. This panorama of events all took place before her fortieth birthday.

Jessie Benton Fremont, illustrious daughter of a United States senator, was Petra's neighbor, renting rooms just across the ravine in the mid-1840s, while her husband John Charles Frémont and his troops were roaming the



Petra Boronda de Allen and her son Miguel Allen, circa 1870. Courtesy of the Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library, Amelie Elkinton Collection.

countryside, trying the patience of Commandante José Castro (another of Petra's neighbors) and the rest of the authorities with their belligerence. The obligatory touchstones of local history writ large—Robert Louis Stevenson, Walter Colton, Captain Juan Bautista Rogers Cooper, Señorita María Ignacia Bonifacio, Concepción Arguello, Juan Bautista Alvarado, Isabel Meadows, David Jacks—were simply part of the everyday landscape of Petra's life.

Petra never had the opportunity to travel beyond California, but she undertook arduous annual journeys to visit siblings who had fanned out from Salinas to Santa Barbara. Traveling by horse and cart, she would take her granddaughter or another family member with her, packing food and making camp along the way. Although she was married to an Irishman for twenty-two years, and afterwards to a Frenchman, and although she lived half her life in American California, Petra spoke only Spanish. In fact, her descendants remained Spanish-speaking up until generation born around 1940.

The witnesses at the wedding of Petra and Jorge Allen were two Native American brothers, the Christianized neophytes Agnicio Pacifico and S. Manuel, and intriguing circumstance. Petra outlived her first husband by half a century. She birthed up to a dozen children and saw seven of them survive to adulthood. She continued to raise a second and even a third generation at the family adobe on the Monterey Mesa without ever enjoying the advantages of indoor plumbing, refrigeration, or electric light.

She raised chickens and the occasional pig and cultivated assorted vegetables, combining Old World and New World traditions in her cooking. Pre-Colombian elements included ground corn for



Alonzo Allen and his wife Dolores Munrás de Allen. Alonzo's courtesy of the Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library, "Lola's" courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

tortillas and the chiles used as preservatives in crocks of stewed meat, pickled vegetables, and candied fruit that she stored up in the attic. The proverbial rainy day reserve was literal in this case because the outdoor cooking set up—beehive oven, underground broiling pit, wood oven with spit, all sheltered by a ramada or lean-to—definitely did not lend itself to stormy weather.

Petra kept a cow, required one of her sons to milk it, and made her own butter for the bread and biscuits that she baked in the *horno* (beehive oven). Her granddaughter Emma marveled that the loaves never burned, and went on to explain how the embers were raked out once the wood fire reached the right temperature so that residual heat, not live flames, baked the loaves.

Petra walked to town and wherever else she needed to go, with daughter Refugio or granddaughter Emma or some other family member in tow. For basic necessities that couldn't be produced at home, she headed over to José Abrego's store—hoping, as Emma remembered eighty years later, "that he wouldn't charge her." And perhaps he didn't, knowing that Petra had no source of income and all those mouths to feed.

She also walked to Larkin House to visit Rosalía Vallejo de Leese, sister of Mariano Vallejo and sister-in-law to the Massachusetts-born merchant-sea captain Juan Bautista Rogers Cooper, who lived right across the street with his wife Encarnación Vallejo de Cooper. Perhaps the comparatively wealthy Mrs. Leese compensated Petra for those frequent visits with something more than the latest gossip.

At a point when advancing age should have entitled her to some respite from routines that the Anne Fishers of the world might have found decidedly lacking in romance, Petra did laundry for the well-to-do Munrás family. This was an arduous job that involved hauling the load down to Washerwoman's Gulch on the far side of today's Monterey Peninsula College, scrubbing it on a wooden washboard, and spreading it out to dry—followed by the final, tricky manoeuvre of folding it in the open without soiling it anew. Given the proverbial pride ascribed to the sons and daughters of Spain, however far-flung, Emma's recollection of Petra as laundress, shared with Amelie Elinton, is particularly poignant. Hopefully, Petra did not have to continue in this humble capacity after her son Alonzo Allen took the very privileged Dolores Munrás as his bride.

In her "spare" time, Petra would have attended mass, said her rosary, tended her kitchen garden, counseled her children, and perhaps found the time to practice the fine needlework that became a family tradition—handed down, like the adobe itself, from mother to daughter. (Dozens of examples of intricate needlework are featured in the **Tales of Two Adobes** exhibit.)

One of Petra's late-life consolations may have been that her daughter Isadora (b. 1831) and son-in-law Manuel Cervantes (b. 1829) lived just down the hill from Casa Boronda. A photo from 1914 or 1915, identified during this research, shows Isadora Allen de Cervantes and her great grand niece Casimir in front of an unpainted frame house (possibly the same house inhabited by J.C. Anthony and family when they resided on the Mesa during the early 1920s). Just as Isadora's long, layered traditional dress, topped by her white head scarf

and brimmed hat, contrasts sharply to idealized views of "Spanish Californians" in alluring costume, so the following incident, the only one involving Isadora that has been handed down, clashes with the projected "romance of Spanish California:"

Monterey, September 13. *Monterey was thrown into a state of excitement Monday morning by a rumor that David Jacks had on Friday night gone to the house of Mrs. Cervantes, an old Spanish lady and, with the assistance of a deputy sheriff and a notary public, induced the old lady to sign over a deed of her property.*

Mrs. Cervantes lives by herself on the outskirts of the town, on a piece of land that Mr. Jacks claims as part of a grant. On Friday evening at 11pm, Mr. Jacks, in company with Deputy Sheriff Pyburn of Salinas, went to Mrs. Cervantes' house. The old lady says that she was much frightened to see them at that hour of the night, and demanded to know what they wanted. Mr. Pyburn, who understands the Spanish language, told her the land that she occupied belonged to Mr. Jacks, and as she was an old lady and a widow, Mr. Jacks was willing to give her a few dollars to keep her from starving.

She refused to sign the paper. When they put some money on the table, Mr. Pyburn told her that she had better take the money because, if she did not, she would be ejected and would lose the whole thing. She says they insisted so



Isadora Allen de Cervantes with her grandniece Casimir Davis in 1915. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

much that she finally made her mark on the paper in the shape of a cross, but that she refused to accept the money, which was left on the table until the next day, when she gave it to her brother, Mr. Allen.

The next day, a deed was recorded from Mrs. Cervantes to David Jacks. The excitement aroused by the act was so great that on Tuesday the deed was ordered to be cancelled. Mr. Allen informed the Chronicle correspondent that he would at once appeal to the court for redress, since he did not consider the cancellation of the deed valid.

The *Chronicle's* follow-up article, reproduced by the same source, back-pedaled to exonerate Pyburn if not Jacks:

Mr. Jacks' friends now explain that Mrs. Cervantes, being desirous of obtaining money to assist in improving a pre-exemption claim in which she was interested with her children, had offered to make the sale [of her property], and that Pyburn was simply present

in his capacity as notary public [rather than as party to an act of intimidation and misrepresentation]. Every act performed by Mrs. Cervantes was entirely voluntary, and the only object Mr. Jacks had in canceling the deed was to relieve Pyburn of the charge that he had assisted in extorting it from Mrs. Cervantes.

The brother of Mrs. Cervantes, Mr. Allen of Monterey, at first much exercised over the alleged attempt to intimidate, was subsequently convinced that he was in error, and published a card in which he fully exonerated Mr. Pyburn, at the same time withdrawing all charges...

These two news items go a long way toward explaining how Monterey's Spanish-surnamed families moved from landed gentry to day laborers in a single generation. They dramatize the human toll of David Jacks' land-grabbing tactics. The about-face on the part of Isadora's brother (either Miguel or Alonzo) only confirms the unrelenting nature of Jacks' grip over Monterey's real estate, and the chilling effectiveness of his methods. When Amelie Elkinton transcribed these news fragments from the Escolle family scrapbook, the year of publication was probably missing on the originals, so we can only conjecture when this incident occurred (remembering that David Jacks died in 1909, twelve years after Petra).

Perhaps because one of her sons defended her more successfully from similar depredations, or perhaps due to her own strength of character, Petra did not lose her property to the machinations of David Jacks or his ilk. In 1891, six years before her death, she had the Boronda property officially subdivided. The procedure followed the American practice of superimposing a grid irrespective of the actual contours of the land. Plot maps designating the Petra de Allen Tract delineate nine legal lots laid like so many strips of bacon, up one side of the hill and down the other between Sherman Lane and Mesa Road, beginning just above Perry Lane. David Jacks, J.C. Anthony, John Chace, Fred McCrary, David Cervantes, and a Mr. Ladd all owned parts of this tract in the first quarter of the 20th century. Attaching her name in perpetuity to some of the very first California property ever allocated to private citizens is no small achievement for this hard-working daughter of pioneers; hers is the only Monterey tract that bears a woman's name.

History's Mysteries

In 1933, there was another act of dispossession on the Mesa, not imposed by an outsider this time, but by one family member upon another. On September 10, 1926—when Emma was 58 years old, daughter Tulita 37, and granddaughter Casimir 14—Emma and Frank Ambrosio signed an indenture transferring the ancestral house and majority of the Petra de Allen lots to Tulita “for and in consideration of love and affection...to have and to hold... unto her heirs and assigns forever.”

Seven years after the adobe was deeded to her, Tulita exercised her prerogative of ownership by asking her mother to move out of the ancestral

home where she had lived for most of her sixty-five years. The last batch of photographs to surface at Rose Marie's house, discovered unexpectedly in a 1970s family album, included the poignantly captioned pair reproduced here. Tulita's motives for this apparently harsh decision remain unknown.

Six years later, her birthplace and Emma's focused the attention Monterey's foremost painter of adobes, M. (Mary) Evelyn McCormick (Placerville, 1862-Monterey, 1948). Trained in France in the late 19th century, McCormick later earned a reputation as "California's Monet." Impoverished, like so many others, by the Great Depression, she welcomed a WPA commission to paint Monterey's historic buildings. Her rendition of Casa Boronda, painted on the spot, is a brilliant example of a now priceless series.

On June 2, 1939, a photographer from the 9th Signal Corps of the United States Army memorialized the artist addressing her subject. When I came across a 4x6 inch photograph in the Amelie Elkinton files at Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library a year ago, I immediately recognized the building but—had it not been for the intriguing isosceles triangle shape of the easel—would have missed the artist lurking under the oak tree. John Castagna's digital enhancement not only produced a strikingly beautiful photograph but also made a positive identification of the artist possible. McCormick's painting of Casa Boronda greets the visitor to the main exhibition gallery at the **Tales of Two Adobes** exhibit, accompanied by the U.S. Army photograph, its digital enhancement, and a portrait of the identically-dressed artist from the Monterey Public Library photo-archive.



Lester Davis, holding his namesake and grandson Lester Sowell, helps Emma Ambrosio remove the last of her things from her Casa Boronda birthplace. Courtesy of Rose Marie Dunsford.

This essay opened with a reference to the claim to preeminence put forth on behalf of Casa Boronda by Tulita Westfall and her husband Samuel Westfall. Their contention that Casa Boronda is the oldest home in California is untenable, along with their claim to be the oldest home in Monterey. A nearby house built of stone rather than adobe is a more likely candidate for the latter distinction. Spanish-era colonizers regarded stone as a “noble” building material, in contrast to its “humble” counterpart, sun-dried brick or adobe. Stone construction, combined with the choice site overlooking El Estero, suggest that a very distinguished personage whose identity remains a mystery may have been given first pick of homesites, constructing what has for decades been erroneously referred to as the Castro/Work “Adobe.”

Another mystery involves the reported existence of two Casas Boronda on the Mesa, one just below the other. To date, no reliable image of the second adobe has surfaced, although Gildemeiser’s 1842 color lithograph (included in the **Tales of Two Adobes** exhibit) represents two adobes in close proximity behind the Presidio Chapel, on what would have been the Boronda property.

No information has come to light about when, why, or by whom the other Casa Boronda was destroyed. According to Joy Anthony, the demolition happened within the five years preceding her 1923 newspaper article, which is to say, in 1918 or thereabouts. Yet Raymond Jeans’ 1917 Master’s thesis on Monterey’s historic buildings does not include a photograph of this second Boronda adobe, Tulita avoids all mention of it in her 28-page Boronda history, and Emma Ambrosio mentions it only briefly in her taped interview from 1952, noting vaguely that “They took it down.”

Edna Kimbro suspects that the remaining Boronda adobe may not be the first but rather the second home that the family built on the Mesa, constructed by son-in-law Jorge Allen sometime around 1835, when his request for land on the Mesa contiguous to his in-laws’ property was granted. Encountering such an unexpected puzzle at this late date brings to mind Pat Hathaway’s sage assertion that “Doing history involves an endless number of questions and very few answers, and the answers only lead to other questions...”

Exemplifying this principle, Casa Buelna presented a mystery that, once solved, only revealed another mystery in need of solving. We have established in the process of this research that the two-story version created by J.C. Anthony bears no perceptible resemblance to the L-shaped building described by María Boronda de Pomber as the location where Señora Ylaria Buelna taught her charges.

Two models came to light for the more imposing balconied structure that J.C. Anthony created from the remaining three-room adobe—one from Monterey, the other from distant Montecito. The Monterey example would seem the more likely, given the proliferation of photographs with Juan Rosales tending his garden there and the long-time locals who retrospectively identified that property as Casa Buelna. But Pat Hathaway and Edna Kimbro have identified Casa Estrada’s in the background of the photograph taken in 1894 by J.K. Oliver. This means that “Primo’s House” and Casa Buelna cannot be one

and the same, and no one knows for sure at present who built this predecessor or where exactly it was located.

Despite emergent mysteries to be solved, we now know significantly more than was known when we started to pursue the “tales of two adobes.” Hopefully, these buildings steeped in time—and the people connected to them—will continue to share their stories so that today’s lingering puzzles may resolve themselves into tomorrow’s revelations.

The goal of this effort has been to develop a fuller and more nuanced understanding of the historic community of early Monterey Bay and of the continuities that extend to Californians of today. The shared adobe heritage treasured by citizens of Monterey and Santa Cruz counties is palpable testimony to that continuity. Less palpably, the lives of the Boronda women, especially Petra de Allen and Emma Ambrosio, remind us how much we may still share across the centuries in addition to Spanish place names and multicultural cuisine. Reverence for the land, enjoyment of outdoor living, personal resilience, adaptability to unfamiliar circumstances and adverse conditions, life-long hard work, respect for women’s property rights, intense family loyalty, devotion, civility and trust—not to mention the proverbial open-handed generosity to strangers—are the legacy that Petra and Emma leave to us all.



*Julianne Burton-Carvajal has taught Latin American literature and film at the University of California, Santa Cruz for thirty years. After moving to Monterey in 1998, she expanded her research and teaching to include the history, art, and architecture of California from the Spanish era to the present. She is the author-editor of *The Monterey Mesa: Oldest Neighborhood in California* (City of Monterey 2002; expanded edition forthcoming later this year).*

About the supporters of this publication: Arlene Beesley, a long-time acquaintance of the William Evans family, is currently representing them in the sale of their beloved Casa Buelna, in partnership with her son Ben Beesley.

Who's Who at Casa Boronda and Casa Buelna

The Boronda Line

Generation #1:

José MANUEL Boronda (Villa de Jerez, New Spain 1750 - Monterey 1826) and **María GERTRUDIS Higuera Arredondo de Boronda** (Monterey 1776 - Santa Barbara 1851). According to his burial record, José Manuel was born in the bishopric of Guadalajara, New Spain (Mexico) presumably of Spanish ancestry. His wife's family arrived in Alta California in September of 1774, before the Anza colonists; her father **José Manuel Higuera** (b. 1745) and her mother **María Arredondo Limón de Higuera** were among the first settlers in the San José area.

Generation #2: Eight surviving children, including:

JOSÉ MANUEL Boronda II, second son (Santa Clara 1803 – Carmel Valley ?), married **María Juana Cota de Boronda** (Santa Barbara 1806 - ?) daughter of his brother-in-law Manuel Cota's first marriage, in 1821; the couple raised some fifteen children in the Carmel Valley Boronda Adobe, which they expanded some time after 1840 from an earlier structure.

JOSÉ EUSEBIO Boronda, third and youngest son (Santa Clara 1808 - Salinas(?) 188?), married **María Josefa Buelna**, daughter of José Joaquin Buelna and Guadalupe Rodríguez, in 1831 at Mission Santa Cruz and produced at least thirteen children. Eusebio was granted a large rancho where he built an adobe that was subsequently abandoned (and eventually destroyed in the 1906 earthquake). The contentious Eusebio was recipient of life estate from his children. He and his second wife, Ricarda Rodríguez, lived in a second Boronda Adobe on Boronda Road near Salinas, built between 1844 and 1848 as a modified one-story version of the Monterey Colonial style pioneered by Thomas Oliver Larkin, today the History Center of the Monterey County Historical Society, Inc. Eusebio and Josefa's youngest son, **José Sylvano Ambrosio Boronda**, fathered the artist **Lester D. Boronda**.

MARÍA JOSEFA Bruno Boronda, third daughter (Santa Clara 1799 - Santa Barbara 18??) married the widower **Manuel Cota** of Santa Barbara at Monterey's San Carlos in 1817. The marriage produced a daughter, Manuela, born after her father's accidental death in 1826. Josefa remarried sea captain **James Walter Burke** (Galway, Ireland, 1799 – Santa Barbara 18??) in 1828 and relocated to Santa Barbara,

where they raised four additional daughters and one son and looked after her aging mother Gertrudis.

María PETRA de Jesús Boronda Higuera, youngest daughter (Santa Clara 1812 - Monterey 1897) married **George Thomas (José Jorge Tomás) Allen** (Cork, Ireland 179? - Monterey 1846) in 1825, becoming **Petra Boronda de Allen**. Widowed in 1846, she married a French physician, Alphonse Théodore Martin, in 1851; this reportedly unhappy marriage produced one surviving son, **Manuel Martin**, whose hearing and speech were compromised in a childhood accident. Petra helped raise granddaughter **Emma Butler** and great granddaughter **Tulita Bennett** at the ancestral adobe. The subdivision of the Boronda property, carried out before her death, is known as the Petra de Allen Tract.

Generations #3 and #4: Seven children from Petra's marriages to Allen and Martin survived to adulthood: six with the Allen surname (Miguel b. 1825, Isadora b. 1825, Guadalupe b. 1834, Refugio b. 1841, Alonzo b. 1845, and Gertrudis) plus Manuel Martin (1852-1902?). Only half these children married (Alonzo, Isadora, Guadalupe and Refugio). **ALONZO** (1845-1909) and his wife Dolores Munrás were childless. **ISADORA** and Manuel Cervantes raised six children in a home just below the Boronda Adobe; their daughter Dolores, who died young, was the first wife of **Frank Ambrosio, Jr.** Guadalupe married Mariano Soberanes in 1855 then, widowed, remarried Dr. Martin of Castroville, and produced six children: James, Josie, Annie, Ida, Lily and George. **REFUGIO Allen Butler** (Monterey 1841 – Monterey 1869) was abandoned by her husband, Civil War veteran **Charles H. Butler**, and died shortly afterward at the age of 28, leaving a small daughter behind. María **GERTRUDIS** or "**TULA**" (Monterey 1847 – Monterey 1901), considered the most pious member of the family, helped to raise her niece **Emma Butler** and grandniece **Tulita Bennett**.

MARÍA de los Angeles Boronda (Carmel Valley 1843 – Pacific Grove 1935), youngest of ten children of the second José Manuel Boronda and Juana Cota de Boronda, married Juan Pomber[t], an innkeeper in Castroville (he was the son of Canadian Louis Pombert) and became known as **María Pomber**. Among her surviving children was **Fanny Pomber Abby** of Pacific Grove, mother of **Anita Abby Church**, long-term assistant to novelist **Anne Fisher**.

Generation #4: María EMMA Rosenda Butler (Monterey 1868 – Pacific Grove 1956), raised by Grandma Petra and Aunt Gertrudis, married **Edward Bennett**, a violinist from Plymouth, England in 1888 and bore one daughter the following year. His early death left her a

widow with a youngster to support. She became known as Emma Ambrosio after her remarriage in 1908, at age 39 (the same age as Petra when she took her second husband) to **Frank Ambrosio, Jr.**, a farmer-rancher from San Benancio, Corral de Tierra, also a fourth-generation Boronda descendant.

LESTER David Boronda (Reno, Nevada 1886 - New Haven, Connecticut 1952)— son of José Sylvano Boronda, grandson of José Eusebio Boronda and Josefa Buelna, great grandson of the founding Borondas, and great-great-grandson of the founding Buelnas—studied fine art and master craftsmanship in San Francisco and Europe, married classmate Ruby Drew, produced two children, and became a nationally known painter and artisan. He was the first to restore a Monterey adobe, Casa Barreto-Dutra, located adjacent to the ancestral Boronda Adobe.

Generation #5: María Gertrudis “Tulita” Bennett (Monterey 1889 – Pacific Grove 1962) married career soldier **Lester F. Davis** (Waldo, Maine 1871- Pacific Grove 1953) in 1910, and bore one daughter. After divorcing Davis in 1926, Tulita remarried fellow artist **Samuel Henry Westfall** (Newark, New York 1878 – Salinas 1940) in 1916 and was subsequently known as **Tulita Westfall**.

Generation #6. Adriana CASIMIR Davis (Monterey, 1912 – Pacific Grove, 1986) married Jack Sowell of Hollister in 1931 and bore one son, **Lester Sowell** (Monterey 1934 - Korea 1951). After divorcing Sowell, Casimir married **Joe Timar** (Cleveland, Ohio – Pacific Grove) and was known as **Casimir Timar**. The Timars produced three sons—Joseph J., John T. and Frank D.—and a daughter.

Generation #7: ROSE MARIE Timar (Pacific Grove, 1944 -) married Wayne G. Padgett of Pacific Grove. In addition to producing four sons, the couple adopted a daughter, Jeannie Padgett Wilhelm. Rose Marie’s second marriage to fellow violinist **Owen Dunsford** of Dargaville, New Zealand produced two more sons, Stephen and Phillip.

Successive Boronda Owners

In 1939, **Tulita Westfall** sold Casa Boronda to theatrical designer **Alexander Harvey Tiers** (New York City 1906 - Santa Barbara 1986).

In 1940, Tiers arranged the lease and eventual sale of the modernized Casa Boronda to **Dr. Mast Wolfson** (San Francisco 1893 – Monterey 1987) an internist and leader of the medical community in Monterey, and his wife Chairmaine.

In 1999, Colonel John Wright of Fullerton, brother to Dr. Wolfson's second wife Evelyn Wright Wolfson, inherited the property as part of his sister's estate.

In 2001, **Harry Parashis** purchased the property and continues to restore it with the assistance of master craftsman Dan Lancaster.

The Buelna Line

Generation #1

José ANTONIO Buelna (Villa de Sinaloa, New Spain ? – Monterey ?) arrived in Alta California in 1776 as part of the group of 300 skilled settlers led overland by Juan Anza. He served as school teacher at San Francisco, San José and Monterey. Married María Antonia Tapia (Culiacán, New Spain ? – Monterey 1830) and produced a number of children.

Generation #2

JOSÉ ANTONIO Buelna, *alcalde* of Monterey, territorial *diputado*, and military commander, relocated to San José with his wife and numerous children.

JOSÉ JOAQUÍN Buelna (b. 1777) a published poet, owned several ranchos in Santa Cruz county. His daughter María Josefa Buelna (? - Salinas, 1864) married José Eusebio Boronda and settled in Salinas.

María YLARIA Buelna Tapia (Santa Clara, 1792 - Monterey? 189?), unmarried, became owner of Casa Buelna and conducted the first school for girls there for many years. In 1875, she deeded Casa Buelna to her adopted son, Jesús Gómez, who in turn sold it to Gregorio Valdéz.

Successive Buelna Owners

David Jack[s] (Crief, Perthshire, Scotland, 1822 – Monterey 1909) deviously acquired many thousand acres of land in and around the City of Monterey including the Rancho Aguajito, which encompassed most of the Monterey Mesa, including part of the Buelna property, obtained from Gregorio Valdéz.

James Clarence (J.C.) Anthony (Comanche, Iowa 1875 – Monterey, 1949) purchased some five acres including the derelict Buelna adobe from the heirs of David Jacks in 1921.

Marcy S. Woods (? - ?) an artist from Stockton, and his wife purchased the former Buelna property in 1922 from contractor J.C. Anthony, who converted it for them into a handsome two-story estate home.

Colonel Leo and Mrs. Irene Ross purchased Casa Buelna and nearly three surrounding acres from Mr. & Mrs. Woods around 1930. The widowed Mrs. Ross remained there until 1969.

William Evans (Milton, Florida 1922 -) and **Marian Evans** (Raton, New Mexico, 1939 - Monterey 2002) purchased Casa Buelna from Irene Ross in 1969 and raised six children there.

Sources

Private and Public Archives

Anthony family memorabilia, courtesy of Janet MacLean Jones, Carmel Valley; Shirley Anthony Swasey, Santa Rosa; Patricia Anthony Ekstrand, Honolulu; Donald MacLean, Weaverville; and Barbara Pascoe, widow of John Anthony Pascoe, San Luis Obispo.

Boronda family photographs and memorabilia, including a taped 1952 interview with Emma Butler Bennett Ambrosio and her cousin Fanny Abby, courtesy of Rose Marie Timar Dunsford and family.

Casa Boronda documents courtesy of Harry Parashis.

Casa Buelna photographs and memorabilia courtesy of Bill Evans, Jr. and members of the Evans family.

Amelie Elkinton Papers, Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library.

Monterey Country Archives, Volume 7, pages 559-561, and other materials courtesy of Executive Director Mona Gudgel, Monterey County Historical Society, Inc. and the History Center, Salinas.

Tulita Westfall y de Boronda. "History of the Boronda Adobe," 28-page typescript prepared for the Works Progress Administration Historical Survey of the Monterey Peninsula. Portions included in mimeographed "Adobes and Old Buildings in Monterey: Data Compiled by the WPA Historical Survey of the Monterey Peninsula," 1937. A rearranged and annotated version will appear as "Boronda Family Reminiscences" in Julianne Burton-Carvajal, ed., *The Monterey Mesa: Oldest Neighborhood in California*, City of Monterey, 2002; second edition, forthcoming 2004.

Published Sources

Julianne Burton-Carvajal, editor. *The Monterey Mesa: Oldest Neighborhood in California*. City of Monterey: 2002.

Suzanne Dakin. *Rose or Rose Thorn? Three Women of Spanish California*. Berkeley: Friends of Bancroft Library, 1963.

Ted Durein. "Preservation of Boronda Adobe Assured..." *Monterey Peninsula Herald*, January 12, 1940.

Carolyn Elstore, *Game & Gossip* 11:5, March 15, 1961, pages 2, 3, 20.

Betty Lochrie Hoag McGlynn, "¡Boronda!" parts I-V. *Noticias del Puerto de Monterey*, XXVI:3,4; XXV:1,2,3 (September 1983-September 1984).

Edan Hughes, *Artists in California, 1786–1940*, third edition, 2 volumes, Sacramento: The Crocker Museum of Art, 2002.

Raymond William Jeans, *Architectural Remains of Old Monterey*. Thesis for M.A. in Architecture, University of California, Berkeley, 1917.

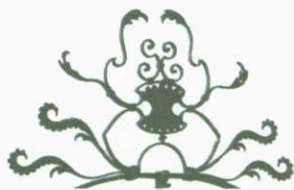
Robert B. Johnson. *José Eusebio Boronda Adobe*. Eight-page pamphlet edited by Gary Breschini and Mona Gudgel. Salinas: Monterey County Historical Society, Inc., 1998.

-- "Boronda Adobe," unattributed typescript.

Edna E. Kimbro, "Spanish-era Settlement on the Mesa" in Julianne Burton-Carvajal, ed., *The Monterey Mesa: Oldest Neighborhood in California*.

Mardith K. Schuetz-Miller, *Building and Builders in Hispanic California, 1769-1850*. Tucson, Arizona: Southwestern Research Center; Santa Barbara: Trust for Historic Preservation, 1994.

Dorothy H. Vera, "Our History and Our Heritage: These People Settled the Boronda District," *Salinas Californian*, Saturday, June 22, 1968, pages 4A and 5A.



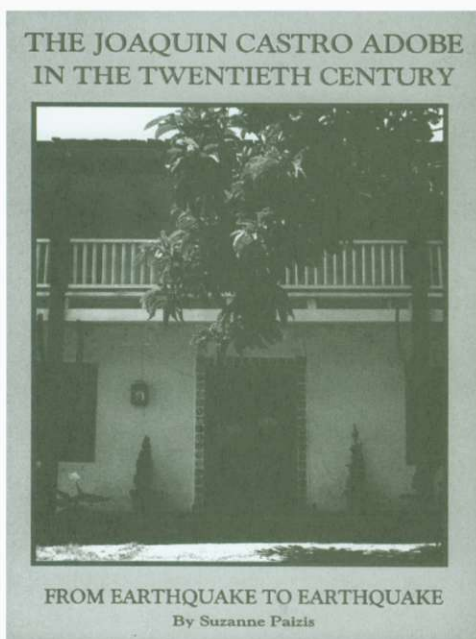
BOOK REVIEW

Charlene Duval

*The Joaquin Castro Adobe in the Twentieth Century:
From Earthquake to Earthquake*

By Suzanne Paizis

Santa Cruz, CA: Otter B. Books, 2002, 182 pages



The attractive compilation by Suzanne Paizis—*The Joaquin Castro Adobe in the Twentieth Century: From Earthquake to Earthquake*—is clearly a labor of love. The book grew out of the compiler's personal association with this handsome two-story adobe in the rolling hills near Corralitos, where she and her husband John resided between 1959 and 1963. Her goal in writing the book was to preserve the memories and photo collections associated with the oldest building in the Pajaro Valley—her own and those of other former occupants. She is to be commended for accomplishing this and much more.

In addition to providing a history of Joaquín Castro and his family, builders of the structure, Paizis located their descendants and recorded the anecdotal information they provided. She also included newspaper clippings, unpublished memoirs, and other written material, using the pair of earthquakes

that marked the beginning and the end of the twentieth century, San Francisco in 1906 and Loma Prieta in 1989, as a dramatic frame for her volume.

Paizis tracked down all the owners subsequent to the Castros, starting with Hans and Margaretta Hansen who owned the house between 1883 and 1914. The earliest known photograph of the structure, taken about 1890, was provided by the Hansen family. Paizis also found owners who had never lived in the house, and discovered relationships between various owners not previously known.

She concludes her chronicle with Joe and Edna Kimbro, who were living in the building when the Loma Prieta earthquake occurred and consequently became its last private owners. Recognized as California State Landmark and included on the National Register of Historic Places, this historic home has recently become part of the California State Parks system, thanks in large part to Edna Kimbro's leadership.

The most important information that Paizis gleaned from previous owners is her chronicle of the changes made to the house and grounds by each successive owner/occupant. This information has great bearing on how the house will be restored in the future. In compiling the Historic Structures Report, State Parks historian Edna Kimbro and other members of the State Parks team were able to utilize this list of changes from the late nineteenth through the twentieth century, saving themselves months of additional research.

Suzanne Paizis' research also helped to determine that the house was actually built by Juan José Castro, son of Joaquín Castro, rather than by the senior Castro as had been thought for most of the twentieth century. In the end, it was the building's construction materials rather than the research findings that resolved the longstanding debate. The materials used in the building and the way the wood was sawn indicate that it could not have been constructed before 1848. During the months following the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill, some local second-generation Californios were able to "strike it rich" and improve their standard of living before the "world rushed in," and they became victims of discrimination. Juan José Castro was one of those lucky few and the magnificent home he built still stands as testimony to his good fortune.

A chronicle of good times and bad at the Castro Adobe during the twentieth century—from its use as a barn after the 1906 earthquake, to its heyday as a grand home surrounded by Thomas Church-designed gardens in the 1970s—this delightful book illustrates each family's tenure with engaging photographs. As an exemplary case study of an historic building, *From Earthquake to Earthquake* offers a model for others who might wish to embark on similar projects. Studies of this type provide glimpses into California's growth and development that cannot be gleaned any other way—making history come alive with the names, faces, and stories of individuals and families who have made this region what it is today.

Charlene Duval is Historian and Executive Secretary at the Sourisseau Academy for State and Local History at San Jose State University.



*Nana Biedman, great-granddaughter of both
the founding Buelnas and Borondas.*

**OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS OF THE
MONTEREY HISTORY & ART ASSOCIATION, LTD.**

Officers

President: Faye Messinger
Secretary: Diane Kajikuri
Treasurer: William D. Curtis
Members-at-Large: Jack Holt & Roy Robbins

Board Members

Wendy Brickman	Laura Cameron
Shelley Claudel	Gloria Costa
Pete Dausen	Sue Dewar
Jane Holmes	Eric Sand
John Sewald	Bill Stone
Andy Wolf	

Honorary Lifetime Board Members

Edwin Bliss	Ramona Smith
Jack Holt	Carol Todd
Gordon Paul Smith	

Executive Director Shawna Hershfield

Member: National Trust for Historic Preservation
California Historical Society
Conference of California Historical Societies
American Association of Museums
Council of American Maritime Museums

Monterey History & Art Association

Membership Benefits

Noticias is made possible by the support of members and the generosity of individual donors. If you would like to receive Noticias by mail and enjoy many other benefits, we encourage you to become a member of MHAA.

In addition to Noticias, you will receive free admission to exhibits and invitations to many special events. Your donations support the preservation of local history, including the following MHAA properties and projects:

- ◆ *Stanton Center and Maritime Museum of Monterey*
- ◆ *Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library*
- ◆ *Perry-Downer House and Costume Gallery*
- ◆ *Casa Serrano, Doud House, and the Fremont Adobe*

Annual Membership Rates

Individual	\$45
Family	\$60
Education/Nonprofit Partners	\$15

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please make your check payable to MHAA and mail to:

Noticias

Monterey History and Art Association

5 Custom House Plaza,

Monterey, CA 93940

Noticias del Puerto de Monterey, a quarterly journal devoted to the history of Monterey and the region, has been published by the Monterey History and Art Association since 1957. Noticias welcomes submissions on any aspect of the history, art, and architecture of the greater Monterey area from prehistory to the very recent past. Please direct manuscripts, books for review, and queries to:

Noticias
Monterey History and Art Association
5 Custom House Plaza
Monterey, CA 93940.

Kimberly@montereyhistory.org (831) 372-2608 ext. 13

Julianne Burton-Carvajal, *Editor and Designer*
Professor of Literature, University of California, Santa Cruz

Editorial Committee

Tim Thomas, Historian, Monterey History & Art Association

John Walton, Professor, University of California, Davis

Kent Seavey, Art and Architectural Historian

Noble Stockton, *Book Review Editor*

Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin, River Falls

John Castagna, *Graphic Design Consultant*

Former Editors

1957-1969 **Donald Munroe Craig**

1969-1977 **Amelie Elkinton, Mayo Hayes O'Donnell**

1977-1980 **Amelie Elkinton, Hazel Dittmer**

1980-1984 **Mrs. Donald Taugher**

1984-1985 **Betty Hoag McGlynn, Virginia Stone**

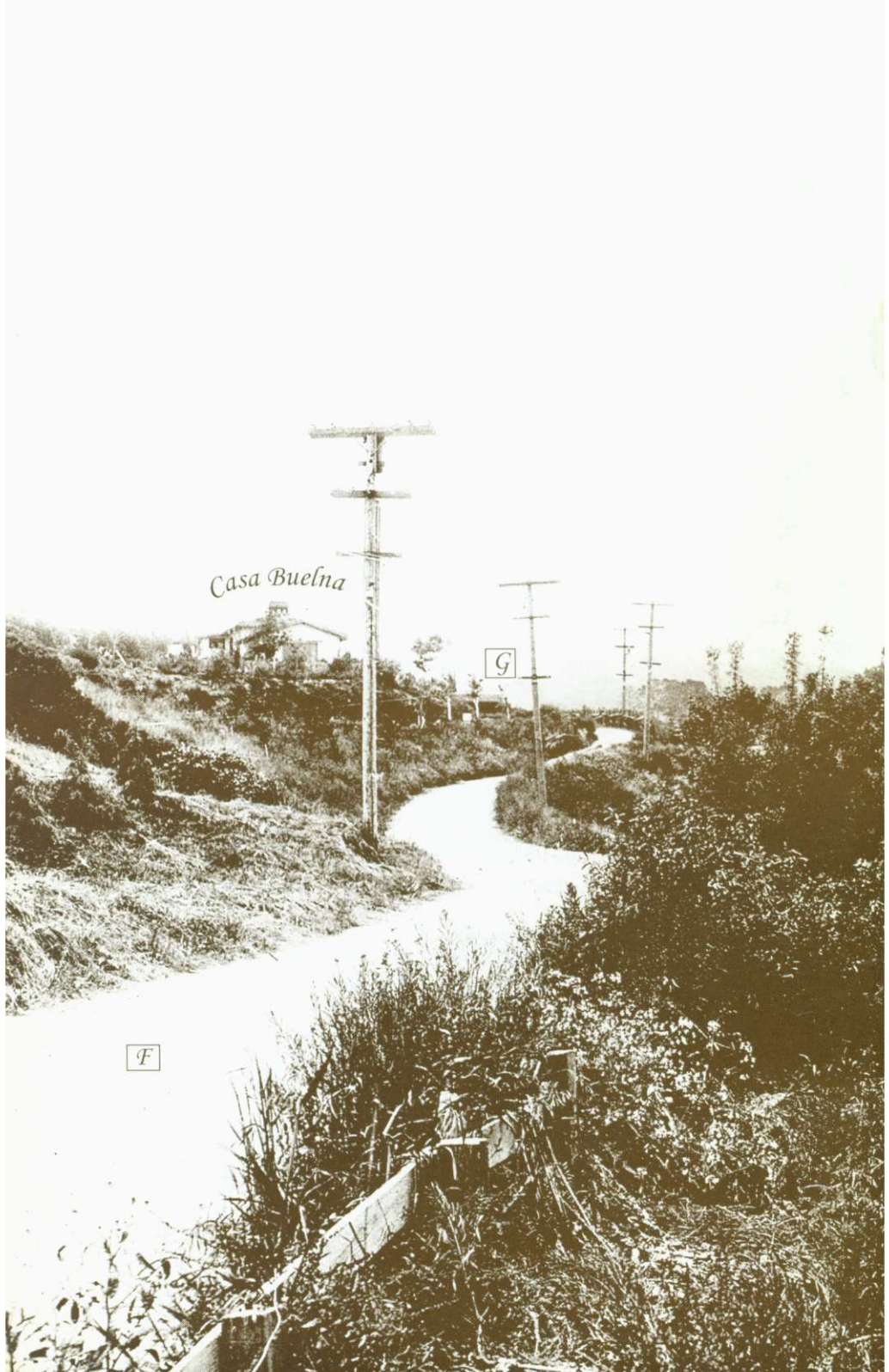
1985-1986 **Betty Hoag McGlynn, Virginia Stone, Donald Woodard**

1986-1988 **Donald Woodward, Virginia Stone**

1988-1993 **Virginia Stone**

1993-1996 **Philip Nash**

1996-2000 **Marilyn McMorran**



Casa Buelna

G

F