

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

April 19, 1950

A Pajaro Landowner

In a little volume entitled "Too Years in Pajaro Valley," published in 1934 by Fred W. Atkinson, there are many interesting items concerning the early residents and landowners of that part of Monterey County, adjacent to Watsonville.

One of the most interesting was the last will and testament of a Spanish don, Sebastian Rodriguez, grantee of Bolsa del Pajaro. He appears first in the records as a company sergeant at Monterey in 1828-1830. According to other records in Santa Cruz County he died in October, 1855 in Santa Cruz, where he was commissioned in 1831. His will was signed at Monterey April 26, 1854. It was written in Spanish.

Sebastian Rodriguez married Perfecta Pacheco and he states in the will that they had twelve children. From other sources it seems that the first was born in 1812 and the last in 1832.

The time came for Sebastian Rodriguez to decree what was to be done, after his death, with his valuable Rancho del Pajaro, "acre for acre probably the richest land on earth." So at Monterey he made and signed a will on April 26, 1854, the witnesses to which were David S. Spence, Charles Wolter and Salvador Osio. The document has been translated as follows:

In the name of the All Powerful God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Amen. I, Sebastian Rodriguez, a native of Alta California, and a resident of the Pajaro, State of Cala, And County of Santa Cruz; legitimate son of Antonio Rodriguez and Vicenta de Leon, deceased, finding myself by the Grace of God, in good health, and of my sound mind, but fearful of death to which we are all exposed.

I make decree, and ordain this my last will and testament, in manner and form as follows:

First I commend my soul to God, who created it from nothing, and my body to the earth from which it was formed.

Item. I command there be no pomp at my interment, but that some Masses may be said, circumstances permitting.

Item. I declare that I am married to Perfecta Pacheco, and that during our married life we have by divine

providence had twelve children, male and female, and they are as follows, Jose Antonio, Pedro, Jose, Jacinto, Rafaila, Solano, Teresa, Deciderio, Bernabela, Ma Antonio, Carmen, and Ramona.

Item. I declare that my (children) Jose Antonio and Rafaila (Rafaela?) are married, and have received the share of personal property which by inheritance belongs to them, and they have no claim at my death further than the share of land which as heirs belongs to them, after the partitions hereinafter mentioned shall be made.

Item. I declare that to no persons do I owe money or anything of value, and if any claim be made against me, it is null, and without value. And the persons who owe me will be found in my papers in the list of Names and amounts of indebtedness and when this shall be collected, it will be added to the body of my estate.

Item. I declare that the cattle (Ganado) and troop of horses (caballado) which are in the possession of my son Jacinto with my brand and mark are my property as well as any other res (single head of cattle) which bears the mark or brand of any of my children, for in order to avoid trouble we made this exchange, when he took his interest (or share) to put them in the place called "La Posa". And the stock which are in the "Rancho de la Ballena" with brand and mark of my son Jacinto belong to me by the exchange referred to in this article.

Item. I declare it to be my will that there be given to La Salvadora four Milch Cows with heifer calves, for as I raised her as a daughter I wish to show her this kindness.

Item. I declare that the Rancho called "Rincon de la Ballena" was bought by Me and My Son Jacinto, and it is My will and command that the said part which Jacinto has in said "Rancho de la Ballena" remain to the benefit of my heirs, and that there be delivered to My Son Jacinto a half league and a quarter of land in the "Rancho de la Bolsa del Pajaro" in recompense for the part of the "Rancho de la Ballena" which belonged to him, commencing the measurements of land in the "Bolsa del Pajaro" for My Son Jacinto on the South Side, nearest the "Estero" (Tide Water Creek) which is close by the sea, and from thence toward the north to where comes the whole (adonde llegue el completo) of the measurement of the half league and a quarter aforesaid.

Item. I recognize for My property, real and personal the Rancho called "Rincon de la Ballena" which contains one league, a little more or less, and the rancho called "Bolsa del Pajaro" which must contain about two leagues scant, excepting the part which my son Jacinto owns in said Rancho, by the exchange which we mutually made between us both, as is expressed in the clause anterior to this. Tomorrow we will continue with the will and the history of the Rodriguez family members of which played such an important part in the early development of California.