

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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The Story of the Dutra Tract

There is an interesting and well preserved old adobe near the Mesa in Monterey which is little known to Monterey residents or to the tourists who visit the city. It is situated on land now known as the Dutra Tract and is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Mort Henderson. From records of ownership and material condensed from the titles of abstract to the property and other historical items, we have been able to glean the following story concerning the old residence, which probably was inhabited as early as 1835.

The land on which the house stands is part of two former areas; most of the lot is on what was city land of Monterey, but a small corner to the south and east is on what was part of Aguajito Rancho, therefore the title of abstract traces both sections.

What is now called the Dutra Tract is based on a piece of land that was known as the lot and residence of Carmen Gargia de Cruz. This lot was a combination of three pieces. First: a piece of land 40 varas square that had been granted by Governor Sola to Manuel Cota (between 1815 and 1822), and which Fabian Barreto had purchased from Manuel Cota. Fabian Barreto was living on the property in April 1835, when he had the town Ayuntamiento (council) confirm it to him. Second: a piece of land 15 varas wide and 80 varas long, which enlarged her property, which Carmen Garcia obtained from the City of Monterey in March, 1850. Carmen's first husband was Fabian Barreto, who was then dead, and she had married again. Third: a small piece, eastern quarter part of a lot owned by Jose Abrego who had bought it at tax sale in 1858.

The little piece which was last added to the property is what caused the law suit which lasted for several years because it stuck out into the Rancho Aguajito. The western boundary of the Rancho runs diagonally across the hill from Sherman Lane to a point across Fremont street about where the stone monument to De Anza was placed last September by the Native Daughters.

The above three parts were all owned by Carmen in 1856 when she sold the property to Ysidora Garcia de Rosales for \$1; "The lots situated to the south of the house of Mrs. Petra Boronda (Dr. Mast Wolfson's

house) and near the well known as El Blanco, together with all the houses and other improvements."

Then evidently Ysidora Garcia de Rosales died leaving at least two sons, Jose Dolores Rosales and Santos Rosales. Jose Dolores signed away his right to the property to Santos for \$30 in November, 1887. Then Santos Rosales and his wife, Cristina, and (probably his brothers and sisters) Balisio Rosales, Juan Rosales, and Refugio Rosales, the wife of Antonio Panas, deeded the entire property to William Dutra for \$200 in October 1873. Dutra lived on the property until his death and then it became the property of his wife, Maria Ignacia de Dutra, and of their daughter and son-in-law Antonio Machado and Maria Dutra Machado.

Now by this time David Jacks was endeavoring to clear the title of the entire Rancho Aguajito as well as other lands. He pushed suits against everyone who in any way was using any part of what he thought was part of the Rancho.

The Dutra family was also included in the suit but that did not hold, so finally the matter was settled by two deeds signed on the same day, March 7, 1899. In the first deed for \$250 all the Dutas (Maria Ignacia Dutra, the mother of, Begenta Dutra, William Dutra, and Maria Dutra Machado) signed the entire property over to David Jacks. And he in turn, signed back to the mother alone part of the property. The entire piece had been almost five and a half acres, and he gave her back one and one-fourth acres, for the same amount, \$250.

She also received the right for two years to take water from the well. "Said well being about 230 feet southeasterly from the residence of said Maria Ignacia Dutra and near the southern boundary of the fence of Ysidora Cervantes," The remains of this well are probably still in existence underground. Ysidora Cervantes, who's mentioned in the above line, was a descendant of George Allen and had part of the Boronda Allen property.

After some trouble keeping up the taxes and other expenses, and Maria Ignacio being quite old, the house was sold in May of 1911 to the late Miss Sarah C. Parke, who also owned the Casa de la Torre (Poor Scholar Book Shop) at one time. Miss Parke sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Harry Toulmin and they in turn sold it in June 1921, to Mrs. Franena E. Robinson, the present owner.

(To be continued)