

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

January 31, 1951

The Soto Adobe

Mrs. Mary Greene, Custom House curator, has completed the restoration of the Soto Adobe, which she purchased from the Soto heirs in 1945, has had it blessed and at this date Monterey has another historic building to add to the list of those preserved for posterity. The Soto Adobe is located above Eldorado street just off Pacific, and commands an enchanting view of the bay, the hills, and the surrounding country. It was originally a three-room adobe, but Mrs. Greene added enough hand-made adobe bricks and other material to make a five-room home, losing none of the charm or atmosphere in the making.

This property had been in litigation for many years before Mrs. Green became interested in acquiring it. Other members of the Soto family were contacted in various sections of the state and finally the legal ownership was determined, and Mrs. Greene was allowed to purchase the 'house of her dreams.' The dwelling was probably built in 1820 by Joaquin de Soto.

Ninety-nine years ago, Soto wrote his will in Spanish, his native tongue, and that will is still on file in the county recorder's office at Salinas. Maria Carmen Castro de Soto and Bernardine Soto were appointed executors. The will was translated by Samuel Hanna in 1853, as follows:

In the name of Almighty God Amen: I, Joaquin Soto, a native and citizen of the City of Monterey, legitimate son of the matrimony of Ysidora Soto and Marcela Linares, deceased, natives and citizens of the same place, by the divine mercy finding myself sick but being of sound mind, believing and confessing with firmament, I believe and confess in the mysteries of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three distinct persons and only one true God, I believe in Holy Mary and our Lord Jesus Christ, that by the infinite merits of His precious life, passion, and death, will pardon all my faults and take me to the enjoyment in his presence.

Fearing the certainly of death, which is natural to all human beings, I grant, make, and order my testament in the following form. I commission my soul to God our Lord. I order my corpse to be enshrouded in the habit of Santa Domingo. It is my order that on the day of my

funeral there shall be a High Mass sung for the repose of my soul with my corpse present.

I declare and recognize of all my goods real and personal property one home in Monterey (situated between the Carmelo road and the Sanjon gulch), of adobe with a tile roof and a lot appertaining thereto with one hundred varas in every direction I also declare that El Rancho Del Piojo, adjoining the ex-Mission of San Antonio, consisting of three Sitios de Ganado Mayor (three square leagues of land for grown cattle) to be my property, with a home on same of adobe with a tile roof, two corrals and one-hundred head of cattle and five horses. I also declare to have in my possession, that is to say pledged (or mortgaged) seventy sheep (ewes) to Mr. Roach, sheriff, in the sum of two-hundred dollars on the terms of one and one-half months from the eleventh day of this month of September.

And also declare that Jose Ma Villa owes me fifty dollars and two reses gordas (fat cattle or beef cattle) as per document I have in my possession, el Chino Rios, Twenty dollars and Bonifacio Olivares, one tame cow; and also declare to be debtor to Don Luis Leese, ten dollars, to Don Maximo Taboas, thirteen, and to Mr. Roach, on account of the sheep (ewes) aforesaid two hundred dollars and also declare coming to my memory, I have on the Rancho del Piojo, yoke of oxen and three Spanish carts.

(More Tomorrow)