

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 13, 1951

A Share of \$80,000

William Roach, an Irishman, was appointed guardian of the Sanchez Children and entrusted with the keeping of \$80,000 until his wards should become of age. This was done after Jose Maria Sanchez had drowned in the Pajaro River leaving a widow and three children. After his death something over \$30,000 in gold dust was found in barrels of beans stored on his rancho "Tequesquite," near the Mission of San Juan.

Not long after the appointment of Roach as guardian by Judge Joshiah Merritt, the eldest girl whose name was Refugia married a man living at San Juan named Wilson and soon she and her husband demanded her share of the \$80,000. Roach did not seem to object. A time was set by the court for payment and Roach appeared there with his attorney, P. Ord, and the gold dust in a bag.

Wilson and his wife, Refugia, were there also. The necessary papers were ready to be signed. All the formalities evidently had been settled; the parties interested were waiting, and in one moment more, the business would have been concluded; when to the surprise of all, Roach's lawyer announced that payment could not and would not be made; that he could not safely permit his client to make payment, because Refugia Wilson was not of age. This statement was true and the court adjourned with making the payment.

P. Ord, the attorney in the case, had been a miniature painter by profession, according to E. L. Williams. Paul Parker in his article, printed in the California Historical Society Quarterly, relates that his first name was Pacificus Ord. His brothers were General E.O.C. Ord for whom Fort Ord was named, and Dr. James L. Ord, early Monterey residents. He had come to Monterey in 1847 with Company F. Third U.S. Artillery, as had his brothers.

Wilson and his wife later appealed to the law and, writes Williams in 1893, and employed a law firm in Stockton by the name of Terry and Perley. Terry was afterward elected judge of the Supreme Court, and much later married Sarah Althea Hill. His career is a matter of history, and was ended by his being shot and killed in 1889 by a United States marshal when attacking Judge Field in the railroad eating house at

Lathrop. He had figured earlier in a duel with Broderick, a United States Senator, in which the latter was killed.

Suit was brought by Terry and Perley as the attorneys for Wilson and his wife, to compel payment by Roach—they would come from Stockton to Monterey at the term of the court, procure a proper order that Roach was to pay the money in five or 10 days, as the case might be. The statutes then required five to 10 days' notice. They would then return to Stockton, and the judge of the court, in their absence, would revoke the order. This took place more than once, until the judge through fear of himself being brought to justice fled to Mexico.

Wilson and his wife moved to Stockton and acquired a residence there. Now Terry and Perley put in motion all the machinery of the law that the Stockton judge and court would allow them. Suits were commenced anew. Roach's property was seized and sold. Finally an order was issued by the Stockton court that Roach should make payment in 10 days, or be adjudged guilty of contempt and be imprisoned. To this order Roach paid no attention, treating it as he had other orders of the courts, taking no notice of it.

After the 10 days had elapsed and no obedience to the order of the court on the part of Roach. Terry made his appearance in Monterey with a warrant for the arrest of Roach. He sought out Roach, made known to him his errand, arrested him and took him a prisoner to Stockton.

(More Tomorrow)