

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

July 2, 1951

### **In Their Place, An Orchard**

After the happenings which we have been relating in recent Diaries concerning the bandit gangs near San Juan Capistrano, the murder of Bartola Baratie and his partner, M. J. Borel, the capture of Mrs. Baratie by the robbers of their rancho and their execution, Mrs. Baratie's father, Captain George Foster Laing of Corralitos became anxious to visit his daughter in San Luis Obispo.

A few years previous to the tragic events which we have repeated as told by his granddaughter, Mrs. Rebecca Deleissegues, Captain Laing had fallen from a load of wood and after that accident had been paralyzed on his left side. He lived almost bedridden for the remaining years of his life.

Even with these handicaps, his granddaughter related, he insisted upon making the journey south. Benjamin Hames, his son-in-law, made a top for his spring wagon, as a protection from the sun's rays and evening's chill. He and his wife fixed a mattress and pillows in the back of the wagon, with plenty of blankets, quilts, and provisions, and the trip was begun, with William Laing and Henry Post (a grandson whose mother was Rosa Laing Post) taking turns at driving, sleeping and caring for the old gentleman.

They all arrived in San Luis Obispo safely and Captain Laing lived there with his daughter, Mrs. Murray for three years. He died there April 16, 1864. He was buried by the Masons with high honors.

Alexander Murray died in San Luis Obispo, May 16, 1870. He had been born in England October 1, 1834. His wife, the heroine of the story, died at the home of her niece, Mrs. Deleissegues, the teller of the tale, May 20, 1920.

Albert Oliver Deleissegues, husband of Reecca Hames Deleissegues, died at his home in Nipoma May 8, 1921. He had been born in Monterey February 6, 1847, where he was christened by Father Ambris, who later had charge of Mission San Antonio, and is buried before the altar there.

Dona Modesta Castro, wife of General Castro and I.A. Marenhout, French Consul at Monterey, who afterward became vice-consul at Los Angeles, were the godparents of Deleissegues.

Benjamin Hames, founder of the town of Corralitos, died there August 30, 1866, and was buried in the little village graveyard. His wife died at San Luis Obispo in 1901.

John Hames, founder of Soquel, went into the sheep business in 1833 on his ranch in Hames Valley, Monterey County.

Mrs. Deleissegues wrote of the family in 1929: "All of the family deaths were in the early days and all were left to sleep in peace and quiet in the same graveyard, under the shade of the same friendly oaks, where the wild flowers bloomed and the birds sang sweetly all day.

"On a visit to my girlhood home after an absence of 50 years, the town seemed beautiful, but when we went to visit our loved ones' graves in the old cemetery we found the stately oaks were gone and in their place grew an apple orchard. It seemed a sacrilege and lack of reverence for the dead that this little plot, a quarter of an acre of ground, should have been plowed up, with not a marker left to tell the story of its original use or to identify the pioneers and founders who lie buried there."

Carmen, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Hames, married J.G. Munoz of San Luis Obispo. She was a sister of Mrs. Deleissegues and Mrs. Mylar, who wrote down for the other members of the family, the life history of the various members of the family of Benjamin Hames, the founder of Corralitos. From time to time Mrs. Munoz has sent historical gifts to the Monterey History and Art Association, and it was she who provided the pamphlet from which these recent articles have been procured.

In "1,000 Place Names in California" we find that Corralitos means "Little Corrals." It is first mentioned in 1807 and was applied to a land grant in 1823.

Soquel, a Rio de Zoquel, is mentioned in Mission records in 1807. The name was probably derived from that of a Costanoan Indian village. In 1833 it was applied to the Soquel land grant.