

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Other Land Grants**

The study of the land grants in Monterey County is a fascinating subject. We have before us a series of old newspaper clippings, a Bancroft history and several typewritten sheets naming the rancho, acreage, original grantee by Mexico, dates and when confirmed by the United States, all of which appear to be necessary to correct recording of the history of those Mexican land grants to the early settlers.

Canada de la Segunda was granted to L. Soto in 1839 and contained 4,366 acres. This ranch lies back of Carmel-by-Sea, and takes in those mesas and hills that lie to the left when going to Carmel Mission.

Corral de Tierra, where so many of our citizenry live the year around these days, was granted to G. Figueroa in 1836 and numbered 4,434 acres. The name means a corral or pen formed by the hills and valley.

The Carneros has an interesting history. It was granted to David Littlejohn in 1839 when it contained 4,482 acres. In 1859 it was confirmed by the U.S. to Littlejohn's heirs. This grant lies between the upper waters of the Elkhorn slough and a portion lies in the Pajaro Valley.

David Littlejohn was a Scotchman, who came to Monterey in 1824. He was a carpenter on board one of W.E.P. Hartnell's hide and tallow boats. In 1846 history tells us that he was almost killed by one of Capt. John C. Fremont's men who was stealing his horses. He was left for dead but finally recovered from his injuries. Carneros means sheep used for mutton rather than wool.

Another Carneros ranch was granted in 1842 to Maria Linares with 1,628 acres. It was situated in the Prunedale section out of Salinas and almost extended to The Rocks on the new highway north.

The largest land grant in Monterey County was that of the 48,780 acres known as the Cienega del Gabilan in 1843 to Antonio Chaves. This grant was also involved in the most fraudulent of all land grants; steals when Jose Y. Limantour, a Frenchman, who was a trader at Monterey, forged several grants. The Gabilan was one of them. Limantour was indicted for perjury and forgery and while on \$35,000 bond, skipped the country. The

grant extends into San Benito County now but at the time of the forgery that county was part of Monterey.

In later years Jessie D. Carr of Salinas obtained the grant and after his death it was divided into several small ranches. The name Cienega del Gabilan means the swamp of the hawk.

Bolsa del Potrero y Moro Cojo was the Spanish name for picket for the pasture and the lame moor. It was granted in 1822 to J.J. de la Torre and contained 6,915 acres. Bolsa was used as the name for many grants and conveys the idea of being shut in. Tradition says, according to an earlier writer, that there was a lame black horse running wild on this grant which lies near the mouth of the Salinas River. On account of the Moors who conquered Spain in the early days the name is applied to anything that is black or swarthy.

Bolsa Nueva y Moro Cojo was granted to the heirs of Simeon Castro in 1825. This 28,827 acre ranch extended from north of the present town of Castroville, along Elkhorn slough for many miles. The name means "new pocket and lame moor."

Probably many motorists who have driven over the River road from the Salinas bridge south, have noticed the Buena Vista school house overlooking the Salinas Valley. This school is on the old Buena Vista land grant of 7,725 acres which was given to J.S. Estrada in 1822. This ranch lies across the Salinas River from Spreckles. For many years a portion of the old ranch house could be seen from the road. This house figured in many travelers' account as it was near the road from Monterey to all the southern missions. It was here that Capt. John Sutton, Dr. John Marsh, John Bidwell and others with 100 riflemen and as many Indians joined Governor Micheltorena in 1845 in their march to Los Angeles against the rebels under Juan B. Alvarado.

The Chualar grant was once sold to David Jacks for 25 cents an acre. It had been granted to Juan Malarin in 1839 and then consisted of 8,889 acres. The grant and the town was named by the Indians for the patch of pig weed that grew there.