

July 11, 1968

The Early Ranchos

In the last of a series on the land grants in Monterey County the name of the rancho is first given, the date of the grant by Mexico, to whom granted and the number of acres.

Canada de la Carpinteria, 1845, Joaquin Soto, extends into the Prunedale section and almost reaches The Rocks on Prunedale cutoff. It means the valley of the carpenter shop.

El Potrero de San Carlos, 1837, Fructuoso, 4,306 acres. This ranch is located up the Carmel Valley. It was on the San Carlos ranch that Robert Louis Stevenson went to visit while sick. At that time, 1880, it was used as a goat ranch by Captain Wright. In early days it was full of grizzly bears and there is still the remains of one of the bear traps to be found. Much of the redwood lumber used in construction at Monterey came from this ranch. The huge stumps can still be seen all over the ranch. It means the pasture of St. Charles.

El Pescadero, 1836, F. Barretto, 1,695 acres. This ranch includes that section of the Monterey Peninsula around Pebble Beach. Named after the fishing village which was situated on the beach below the Pebble Beach lodge. The Indians from as far inland as Tulare used to come in the summer to catch fish and abalones there. (Fishing village).

El Sur, 1834, Juan B. Alvarado, 8,949 acres. The entire section below Monterey derives its name from this ranch which means south. While Alvarado was the grantee the title was confirmed to J.B.R. Cooper by the United States, and a portion is still held by one of the Cooper heirs, Miss Francesca Molera. Cooper was a ship captain who came to Monterey on a trading vessel in 1823. He was a native of England and was half-brother of Thomas Larkin. Cooper had a scar on his left hand and was known as Don Juan El Manco (One handed John).

Rincon de la Puente del Monte, 1836, Teodoro Gonzales, 15,218 acres.

This ranch extends from the Salinas river to the mountains eastward and takes in all that section in and about the town of Gonzales. The name of the town was derived from the original owner of the grant. The names mean the corner of the woods or hill.

San Vicente, 1835, F. Soto and S. Munras, 19,979 acres.

The state highway from just outside Gonzales to the Soledad bridge passes down the center of this grant which

extends almost to Metz. The Salinas river is a boundary on the west and the mountains on the east. This large ranch is still in the hands of the descendants of the original owner. The children of the late Mrs. Thomas Fields of Monterey and the wife of Dr. Callahan, one of the first doctors in Monterey. The ranch is named after Saint Vincent.

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

Corral de Tierra, 1836, G. Figueroa, 4,434 acres. Taking in most of the section known as Corral de Tierra, about ten miles southwest of Salinas.

Cholame, 1844, M. Gonzales, 26,627 acres. This large ranch lies in San Luis Obispo County.

Carneros, 1839, D. Littlejohn, 4,482 acres. Lies along the upper headwaters of the Elkhorn slough and portions go over to the Pajaro valley. David Littlejohn was a Scotchman, who came to Monterey in 1824. He was a carpenter on board W.E. Hartnell's hide and tallow boats. In 1846 he was almost killed by some of Captain J.C. Fremont's men who were stealing his horses. He was left for dead but recovered from the injuries received. Many of his descendants still live around Castroville. It means sheep used for mutton rather than wool.

Another Carneros ranch was granted in 1842 to Maria Linares with 1,628 acres. It is situated in the Prunedale section and almost extends to The Rocks on the new highway there.

Cienega del Gabilan, 48,780 acres. This land grant was 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 bail, skipped the country. This is the largest land grant in Monterey County and extends in San Benito County now but at the time of the suit was in Monterey County. Jesse D. Carr obtained the grant and after his death it was sold to several ranchers, including James, Henry and Charles Bardin. Dr. Rolin Reeves owns that portion which lies on the San Benito slope of the mountains. The name means the swamp of the hawk.