



HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY FOR GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA IN SAN MATEO COUNTY

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FOR GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL
RECREATION AREA
IN SAN MATEO COUNTY

SWEENEY RIDGE

RANCHO CORRAL DE TIERRA
(AND THE MONTARA LIGHTHOUSE STATION)

MORI POINT

PHLEGER ESTATE

MILAGRA RIDGE

San Mateo County Historical Association
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About the cover:

The historic discovery of San Francisco Bay by Captain Gaspar de Portolá on November 4, 1769, by Morton Kunstler. The original painting is now in the San Mateo County History Museum's "Nature's Bounty" gallery. The discovery was made from Sweeney Ridge, now part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

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PREFACE

The National Park Service, San Francisco State University and the San Mateo County Historical Association have undertaken this Historic Resources Study of Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) holdings within San Mateo County. These parklands include three sites within the City of Pacifica, Sweeney Ridge, More Point and Milagra Ridge, plus *Rancho Corral de Tierra* south of Montara Mountain, and the Phleger Estate north of the town of Woodside. Unless otherwise noted, Mitch Postel, President of the San Mateo County Historical Association, was author of this study. For the National Park Service, Park Historian Stephen A. Haller served as the project's supervisor. Lee Davis of the faculty of San Francisco State University, with her student interns, gathered background information for the piece.

The goal of the study is to provide a resource to help the National Park Service plan, manage, conserve and interpret its holdings within San Mateo County. It is also written with the hope that the interested public will utilize and enjoy it. This study strives to place GGNRA lands within historic context: that is how the story of these segments of the San Francisco Peninsula fit into larger themes of California and United States History.

Thus while the study presents each property separately, it places each in historical perspective according to the times during which it most influenced outside events or during which outside events most influenced it. A look at the table of contents will show the reader how the study is organized in more detail.

Sweeney Ridge is addressed first. The Ohlone Indians were here, and had occupied land for thousands of years, when the crucial discovery of the San Francisco Bay was made in 1769, at the start of *Alta* (upper) California's recorded history. This is arguably the most important discovery achieved by the Spanish during the eighteenth century in regions we now call the United States. Near Sweeney Ridge a mission outpost, established in 1786, continues the thread of the role of the Native People. Importantly, the outpost made the success of the mission at San Francisco possible. The winning of land grant *Rancho San Pedro*, which included Sweeney Ridge, by Francisco Sanchez (among the most prominent *rancheros* of his day on the San Francisco Peninsula) represents an important piece of the Mexican California saga. Other themes developed in the Sweeney Ridge section include Sanchez's role in the early American period, the Peninsula's significant dairy industry that lasted into the mid-twentieth century, the development of water resources for San Francisco, the presence on the Ridge of the United States Coast Guard during and after World War II and the placement of a Nike missile radar control site there during the Cold War.

The story of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* comes next. Here the National Park Service has acquired a good portion of one of the original Mexican era *ranchos* - intact and, more or less pristine. The life of the *vaquero* and the history of this *rancho* are explored. The experience of its owner, Francisco Guerrero y Palomares, is suggested as the principal historical theme. The site of his adobe home is on GGNRA land. Later agricultural uses of the property are also depicted. The original land grant extended west of the park's holdings to the coast and included today's unincorporated communities of Montara, Moss Beach, Princeton by the Sea and El Granada. Contextual information is presented about these places. In fact the oldest native California artifact of the Peninsula was found (a 5,500 to 8,000 year-old tool) near Moss Beach. Other themes that are developed about nearby places with relationship to GGNRA holdings include the accounts of neighboring land grants, coastal whaling, shipwrecks, defense projects of World War II, big wave surfing at Maverick's (near Pillar Point) and environmental conservation along the San Mateo County coastline. As the Montara Lighthouse Station is within the original boundaries of the land grant, and that it is now part of the GGNRA, its history is included in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section of the study.

Third comes Mori Point. An Indian village might have been located here, and during Spanish times a limestone quarry was developed to help with building projects at San Francisco. In this section the succession of farmers of coastal San Mateo County, that started with American, Irish and Chinese pioneers who were augmented by Portuguese, Italian and Japanese growers, is discussed. At Mori Point the Ocean Shore Railroad had prominence; thus a description of the San Mateo County Coastside's struggle to break its isolation through a variety of transportation schemes is documented. The isolation of the coast is also a cause for its law enforcement problems during and immediately after Prohibition. The story of the Mori family is entangled in this history. Mori Point's quarry story is revived during the 20th century. Finally nearby Sharp Park and its World War II internment camp is discussed as a contextual subject.

Fourth is the Phleger Estate. This is the only GGNRA holding located on the Bayside of the coastal mountains. During the Gold Rush era, the site of the Phleger Estate saw the development of a portion of the important logging industry of San Mateo County. Agricultural pursuits on and near the estate are discussed. The progression of suburban development on the Peninsula is described, starting with large estate owners such as Herman and Mary Elena Phleger. Because the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad (which of course ran through San Mateo County) was the first commuter railroad west of the Mississippi, the history of California's suburbs have important roots here. The Phlegers themselves are treated as historical characters, and, because of their important interest in conservation, there is depicted here the Peninsula's long struggle to preserve its environment.

Finally there is the story of Milagra Ridge which has an interesting agricultural history of its own, but whose major story focuses on national defense - first, the seacoast emplace-

ments of World War II and then, during the Cold War era, a missile launching site for protection against nuclear attack. This last story is intertwined with the Nike radar control site on Sweeney Ridge.

Taken together these five properties tell not just a local story. Native habitation, Spanish discovery, Franciscan missionaries, important *rancho* families during the Mexican period, early American exploitation of natural resources, agriculture and the diverse ethnic groups that were involved, shipwrecks and coastal isolation, railroad building and the earliest suburban communities of the West, the strategies to defend the West Coast by the United States military, and environmental preservation - all these and more are encapsulated within the properties of the GGNRA in San Mateo County. All of these and more have importance to larger themes of American History.

How to Use this Study

The histories of the five GGNRA locations in San Mateo County described in this study have a rich variety of topics associated with them. This reflects the eclectic nature of the history of the San Francisco Peninsula. In a variety of ways understanding the Peninsula's overall story is crucial for interpreting the past of these GGNRA parks. Therefore, the study team has included in this work developments that occurred in vicinities immediately surrounding the park lands. Contextual information is also included to help throw light on how the histories of the GGNRA's San Mateo County holdings fit into the larger themes of California and American History.

This study is intended for a variety of readers. Some will want the fuller picture of the Peninsula's relationship with the five properties. Others will want to get to the nuts and bolts of the GGNRA's actual holdings. Some will want to read the study in its entirety. Others will look to it as a reference for a singular focused reason.

Therefore, the study team has organized the work in a way to help readers access the information they want. The Table of Contents is the principal finding aid. If a sub-heading has the parenthetical word "Contextual" along side of it, this means that this particular subchapter is one that has information that is associated with a GGNRA holding, but not specifically so. For example, in the introductory chapter, under I. B. "Native People" (which is labeled "Contextual"), there is general information about Ohlone Indians and not a specific narrative concerning those natives living on National Park lands. Subchapters not carrying the "Contextual" indicator are more focused on the GGNRA parks. For those seeking the fastest answers, they might go directly to Chapter VII, "Recommendations and Conclusions" which lists the findings of this study according to the property.

Unless otherwise indicated, illustrations are from the collections of the San Mateo Historical Association.

Our team wishes our readers success in utilizing this study for understanding the general story of the National Parks' holdings in San Mateo County and/or for ferretting-out particular information to assist with interpretive endeavors or other specific functions of the GGNRA.

INTRODUCTION

PHYSICAL SETTING

San Mateo County is situated on the San Francisco Peninsula. About 10% of the Peninsula at its northern tip is the City and County of San Francisco. The rest, from Daly City to Año Nuevo on the Coastsides and Brisbane to East Palo Alto on the Bayside, is San Mateo County. Its highly scenic values are enhanced by outlooks on the Pacific Ocean on the west and San Francisco Bay on the east. It covers 553 square miles, with 448 of those land and 105 miles bay water. The Coastsides are longer than the Bayside, with 55 miles of coastline compared to 34 miles of bayline.

San Mateo County can be divided into at least five micro-climates. In a 1968 study, the San Mateo County Planning Department identified them:"

Zone A is located in the uppermost elevations of the county's hilltop and ridge-top areas. The zone receives the maximum amount of annual rainfall for the county, generally in excess of 50 inches. Due to its high elevation, the zone has the lowest temperatures, frequently in the twenties in winter, and it also has the largest range in annual temperature. Although seasonal patterns are marked, the zone does not have severe winter cold or enervating humidity. The zone is exposed to wind and gale force winds which occur in winter. Fog frequently arrives at ground level and blots visibility.

Zone B denotes the cold-winter valley floors, canyons and land-troughs in the Coastal Ranges where, due to the fact that cold air sinks, it collects in pockets. The moderating effect of marine air on this inland area is of occasional influence in regards to temperature, but it does generally keep the humidity fairly high.

Zone C denotes a coastal climate where the ocean influences the climate approximately 85 percent of the time and continental air influences it the remaining 15 percent of the time. Most of Zone C gets a regular afternoon wind in summer when the wind blows from early afternoon until shortly before sunset. Piercing, cold north winds may blow for several days at a time in winter. At other times during the winter, fog may arrive and stay for hours or days. The fog generally is at ground level at night and rises to 800 feet to 1,000 feet by the afternoon. Summer daytime temperatures are high when the sun is not obscured by clouds or fog.

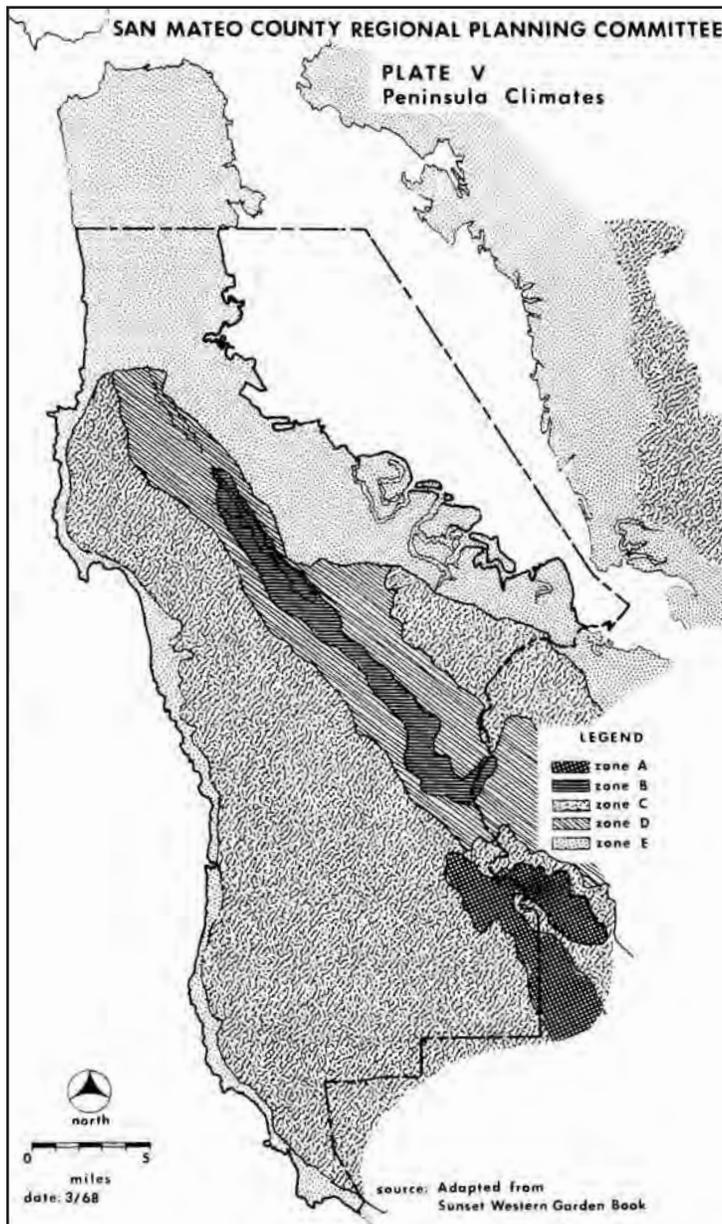
Zone D is also a coastal climate with approximately the same percentage influence from the ocean and continental air as Zone C. Zone D consists of the ther-

mal belts (slopes from which cold air drains). The zone gets more heat than Zone E and also has warmer winters than Zone C.

Zone E is dominated by the ocean influence about 98 percent of the time. The climatic features are created by a close proximity to salt water. Winters are cool and wet. Summers are cool with frequent fog or wind. Fog tends to arrive at higher elevations thus imposing a screen between the sun and earth to reduce the intensity of light, the amount of sunshine but not humidity.

These zones are identified by the map below. Please note that for purposes of this study, Sweeney Ridge can be considered in Zones D and E settings, Rancho Corral de Tierra as C and E, Mori Point as E, the Phleger Estate as B and Milagra Ridge as E.

Fig. 1.1: Micro-climate zones of San Mateo County



In general, the County experiences dry, mild summers and moist, cool winters. The annual mean temperature is about 57 degrees. During winter a few morning frosts may occur in December, January and February. January is usually the coldest month of the year, but temperatures seldom get below freezing. About 74% of the total annual precipitation occurs during the winter, between December and March. During the summer, days are usually sunny and warm, especially on the Bayside of the County. Temperatures seldom reach above 90 degrees.

The 1968 study speaks to the geological history of the Peninsula:#

The more significant aspects of the regional earth form surrounding San Mateo County were influenced by three major features: (1) an up thrust movement producing mountain ranges, (2) the erosion action of a river system, and (3) an increase in the earth's ocean water volumes as a result of glacier thaw. The first significant mountain range is the Santa Cruz Range which forms the

backbone of San Mateo County at an average height of 1,200 feet. Two hundred miles inland, the granite up thrust of the Sierra Nevada Mountains rise 10,000 to 14,000 feet into the atmosphere to intercept the eastern moving moisture-laden ocean winds. The mountain barrier forces the air to deposit rain and snow on the mountain slopes. This tremendous runoff joins together to form a large river system which cut a channel to the sea through the Carquinez Straits and the Golden Gate long before San Francisco Bay was formed. The melting glaciers at the end of the Ice Age caused oceans to rise, flooding these two river gorges and the inland valley to form San Francisco Bay.

There are a few break points in the Coastal Range which borders the Pacific Ocean for the length of California. The most significant one is the Golden Gate gap which extends inland through the coastal Santa Cruz Mountains, through the Diablo Mountain Range just east of the Bay, and across the Sacramento Valley up to the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Of lesser significance to the region, but very influential on the environment of San Mateo County, are two other gaps. San Bruno gap (the historic route of El Camino Real) is higher and narrower than the Golden Gate gap but provides a corridor for sea breezes and fog movement influencing the climate of the cities of South San Francisco, San Bruno, Millbrae, Burlingame and San Mateo. The Crystal Springs gap, a high valley corridor slicing through the mountains from the ocean, was partly created by the San Andreas Earthquake Fault. It serves as a corridor influencing climatic conditions on the southeast bayside of the county. . .

Topographically, the County is extremely varied. The Santa Cruz Mountain Range (or the Sierra Morena) runs through the center of the County and has an average height of 1,200 feet (getting as high as 2,500 feet at the southern end). At its northernmost extent it turns toward the Bay in the form of San Bruno Mountain. Eight types of landforms have been categorized that include (1) ocean beach, (2) coastal terrace, (3) coastal foothills, (4) mountains, (5) upper valley, (6) Bayside foothills, (7) Bayside plains and (8) Bayside marsh and flatlands. See the accompanied drawing. \$

For purposes of this study, Sweeney Ridge can be considered as (3) coastal foothills and (4) mountains. Rancho Corral de Tierra is (2) coastal terrace and (3) coastal foothills. Mori Point is (1) ocean beach and (2) coastal terrace. Phleger Estate is (4) mountains and (6) Bayside foothills.

County planners identified 34 drainage basins. %For Sweeney Ridge, it is drained by Calara Creek and San Pedro Creek on the west and Crystal Springs reservoirs to the east. Rancho Corral de Tierra is drained by San Vincent Creek, Denniston Creek,

and *Arroyo de en Medio*, all going to the ocean. Mori Point is drained by Milagra and Calara Creek. The Phleger Estate is drained by Crystal Springs reservoirs and Milagra Ridge by Milagra Creek.

By 1968, the County had identified four earthquake faults that included San Gregorio, Seal Cove, Pilarcitos and San Andreas (see map). Earthquakes have certainly played a part in the history of San Mateo County. Sweeney Ridge is just east of the San Andreas Fault. The Seal Cove Fault is within *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Mori Point is close to the Pilarcitos Fault, as the Phleger Estate and Milagra Ridge are near San Andreas Fault.'

The 1968 study identified seven different vegetation types, three of which are pertinent to this study. Sweeney Ridge is largely chaparral as are *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, Mori Point and Milagra Ridge. The Phleger Estate is comprised of broadleaf forests and conifer forests, of which "the most significant of San Mateo County's plant resources... the Coastal Redwood" (is included.

The northern boundary of San Mateo County was fixed in 1856 when the State of California created it out of San Francisco. At first, most of what we call San Mateo County was part of San Francisco County, an original county from the time of California statehood in 1850. The state separated the two for a variety of political reasons. The southern-most boundary of the new county reached San Francisquito Creek, on the Bayside, which remains the border with Santa Clara County today. San Mateo County's Coastside originally only reached San Gregorio Creek, but in 1868 the state allowed for it to extend down to a little pass Año Nuevo, the current boundary with Santa Cruz County.)

San Mateo County can be divided into four zones of human activity. Beginning east to west there is the bayshore with some tidelands still intact; most of the low lying Bayside has been developed for residential, commercial and industrial utilization. West from these urban areas are hills that are mostly given over to residential subdivisions. Continuing west are mountain regions that are predominantly rural lands that include several lakes, artificially created in the nineteenth century to give San Francisco an adequate water supply. Finally the coast features hills, valleys and shoreline which are largely used for agricultural purposes or are undeveloped.

Historically, people of the Peninsula have recognized that there are two very distinct geographical parts of the County, with the Santa Cruz Range of Mountains separating the less accessible Coastside from the more developed Bayside. While transportation through San Mateo County has never been an overwhelming problem on the Bayside, on the Coastside, Montara Mountain and Devil's Slide block San Mateo County from San Francisco in the north, "and mountains have a similar effect south of Año Nuevo at the Santa Cruz County line.

In fact the isolation of the coast has had dramatic historical consequences. The flatlands on the Bayside not only facilitated good ground transportation (stage roads, railroad tracks and highways for automobiles were all among California's earliest), they also allowed for small craft to sail safely along the bay and into the meandering tidal sloughs. "In contrast the Coastside's land transportation was not only blocked by mountains to the north and south and the coastal range to the east, but the Coastside's many valleys were separated by steep ridges, making even the shortest local excursions difficult. Moreover, the ocean on the west provided no solution. Perilous cliffs, heavy surf, unpredictable currents, numerous reefs and periodic dense fog discouraged attempts to break the isolation by ship. Only during the 1960s was a safe harbor finally completed at Pillar Point.

Certainly the isolation of the Coast slowed development until recent times. At present a variety of public agencies and non-profit land trusts work to protect much of the coast from further changes brought on by human utilization and habitation.

Nevertheless the coast's environment has experienced tremendous transformation. Its native grasses were largely destroyed by the cattle introduced during the Spanish and Mexican periods. Early farmers planted Monterey cypress, Monterey pine and eucalyptus trees as wind breaks that radically altered the landscape. Growers replaced the original chaparral with food crops like artichokes, while floriculture also became an important part of the Coastside's economy."

NATIVE PEOPLE!" (CONTEXTUAL)

When the men of Captain Gaspar de Portolá's party of 1769 climbed up Sweeney Ridge and looked to the east, they were struck by several things, including sighting "a large arm of the sea" (the San Francisco Bay) and the "smokes" of many campfires indicating the large native population present in what we now call San Mateo County. The tribal world of the Peninsula's bayside was thus first viewed through Spanish colonial eyes. The people living on the Peninsula probably numbered more than 1,500 men, women and children. They were Ohlone people whose total population was about 17,000, and lived between Contra Costa County and Monterey County. The Ohlones were among a large California Indian presence of approximately 300,000. In fact Central California had the densest population of native people north of Mexico.

The oldest evidence of human habitation in San Mateo County is a 5,500 to 8,000 year old crescent shaped scraper found in 1994. Archeologist Mark Hylkema discovered the stone tool at Seal Cove within Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, once part of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Radio carbon dating was employed to estimate the tool's age. Other scrapers like this one have been found in California and some are thought to be at least 10,000 years old. This one was made of Franciscan chert, existent in areas east of

the San Andreas Fault. The piece is now on exhibit at the San Mateo County History Museum in Redwood City. The person(s) who used the scraper were here before the Ohlones. The oldest remains of an Ohlone person in San Mateo County was discovered at Coyote Point in 1987 and dates back about 4,000 years." (Those first people distinguish themselves from Ohlones by following migratory waterfowl and large game relatively great distances for food. They did not have the village-life that the Ohlone people knew. Much about the Ohlone culture is not known. They had no written records. An Ohlone spokesman of the San Francisco Bay Area recently repeated an ancestral tradition which recalls a great flood of the San Francisco Bay separating the Ohlones from the Miwok people to the east. Some recent cultural inquiries confirm similarities between the two peoples.")

The Ohlones (also referred to as the Costanoans[#]) arrived in California about 5,000 years ago as a group of people known as the Penutians. The Penutians are considered to have been, among others, the Walla-Walla, Nez Perce, Yakima, Chinook, Coos, Cayuse, Klamath and Modoc, of the Northwest, and the Ohlone, Miwok, Yokuts, Maidu, and Wintuu of Central California. Ohlones are classified as a group of California Indians because of language similarities among the people that inhabited lands from Contra Costa County to Monterey County. At least eight languages and dozens of dialects actually existed. The people themselves would have never called themselves Ohlone. Instead of seeing themselves as a tribe of 17,000 people, they associated themselves with much smaller groups made-up of dozens, not thousands, of people. Formerly the term "triblet" was used for a unit of these people, but this usage has been judged demeaning by some California Indian people who prefer the use of the term "local tribe."[#]"The word Ohlone may have been derived from a village on the coast called Oljon; it could be a Miwok word for "western people".^{##}

The first written description of the Ohlone people who lived in today's San Mateo County came from Franciscan Padre Juan Crespi.[#] He was with the Gaspar de Portolá expedition of 1769, the first land party to study the *Alta* California coast for purposes of colonization. On October 23, he wrote that at White House Creek (what the Spanish called *Casa Grande*):

...we stopped close to a large village of very well-behaved good heathens, who greeted us with loud cheers and rejoiced greatly at our coming. At this village there was a very large grass-roofed house, round like a half-orange, which, by what we saw of it inside, could hold everyone in the whole village.[#]

This reference to a large house is a curious one. Portolá reports at the same time that the village numbered 200 people.[#] For 200 people to gather in one structure is remarkable for California Indian construction on the San Mateo Coast.

Crespi continues by speaking about the generosity of the people:

These heathens presented us with large black and white-colored tamales: the white tamales were made of acorns, and they said the black-colored ones were very good too. They brought two or three bags of the wild tobacco they use, and our people took all they wanted of it. One old heathen man came up smoking upon a very large (and well carven) Indian pipe made of hard stone. The Indians almost all carry tall red-colored staffs, some with many feathers; they presented four of these staffs to Sergeant Don Francisco Ortega, who was the one they knew best because he had been the one who had explored this place with other soldiers.

Crespi described the appearance of the men: “They all go naked and bare-headed, and are all of them well-featured, stout and bearded.”

In general, the early Spanish observers were impressed by the friendliness and generosity of Ohlones. Portolá’s party, and others later on, depended on the natives for food and directions. They are repeatedly described as gentle and good natured, but also poor. The Ohlones had no wealth in the European sense of material possessions or precious metals. They also seemed to lack any centralized governance. Therefore, despite their peaceful openness, the Spanish looked down on Ohlones as backward people without written language, without metallurgy and without agriculture. They paid little attention to the Ohlones’ complex relationship with nature, their rich religious beliefs and their generally successful way of living for thousands of years.

The Spanish recorded that Ohlone villages were normally located close to fresh water creeks. Shell mounds (in part, their garbage heaps) surrounded such sites. Padre Francisco Palóu noted that there were different times of the year for harvesting the various plants, seeds and acorns consumed by Ohlones. As these food sources were located in different areas of the Peninsula, the people were encouraged to move “their village from place to place.”#&This was done in rhythm, according to the changing seasons, and was also influenced by the migratory patterns of fish and game birds.#'

The tribal life of the Ohlones seemed to have been well-structured. Gender roles, community restrictions and child rearing were all based on ancient tradition. Typically the chieftain of a village was chosen because of that person’s abilities as a provider and his willingness to share. The leader was charged with maintaining balances. Ohlones felt they pretty much lived in a perfect world, so their chieftain’s main responsibility was to keep things that way - - to maintain balances with the other local tribes to attempt to live without war, to guarantee that balances were maintained within the local tribe to insure that family lineage would continue, and to maintain balances with the natural gods that surrounded the men, women and children of the village.

They believed in witchcraft, sacrificed to a variety of deities and paid homage to shaman (medicine men) who were believed to have the power to work miracles such as

curing diseases. However, their beliefs also focused on respectfulness. When a tribal member died, friends, relatives and trading partners would come from neighboring local tribes for religious rites that might last a month. Mourning ceremonies included weeping and wailing. During the ritual, all of the deceased's possessions would be burned. It was thought by doing this, the dead would be able to use the items in the afterlife.

They lived in a spiritual world. Hunters appreciated the spirit of animals they killed for their place in nature. When presenting a killed animal to the village, many times a hunter would not eat the animal's meat out of respect for the sustenance the creature would give to his people. Their religion was based on reverence for the natural world.

This belief system led to an intimate knowledge of the environment of the Bay Area. Ohlone children learned about the plants and animals all around them. They were taught that at certain times burning chaparral encouraged edible grass and seeds and also allowed for more pasturage for the deer, elk and antelope they hunted for food. Ohlones achieved an admirable relationship with their environment by taking only what they needed and by practicing birth control by periodically separating men and women through religious tradition and even, at times, through abortion.

The children gained a strong sense of values from their parents and other people of the village. Selfishness was considered a terrible vice. Prestige and power came with generosity. (Working to make the entire village happy and strong was a spiritual imperative. Everything had its place. The ritualized chores of everyday life and even the tools that were utilized had places in their supernatural world. Animals had unseen powers too and were respected and even worshipped.

Interaction with surrounding local tribes was part of life. While most Ohlones traveled about in a very limited space, they did trade and make alliances with their neighbors. The people were encouraged to marry outside of the local tribe, which assisted with the maintenance of good relationships between communities. Wars did occur, but they were limited affairs continued only until someone was hurt and, on occasion, killed. As in all parts of their lives, contact with other local tribes was ritualized, involving music, food, dancing and trade.

European reference to Ohlones as a "poor" folk does not credit these Indian people with their commitment to living a generous life. Furthermore, their lifestyle, which was mobile, did not encourage accumulation of things. While Ohlones had not the riches that would have been judged important by Europeans, they felt themselves wealthy in family relations, in village life and in their spiritual world. In fact, by burning a person's possessions after they had died, it precluded the handing down of

wealth from generation to generation, thus encouraging a life of generosity and not of accumulation of material items.

While not having great technology, Ohlones were skilled in the arts and crafts that mattered to them. The men made tools and weapons of wood, shell, bone and stone. The women succeeded in creating intricately designed baskets of grasses and reeds.

They loved music, and made whistles, rattles, flutes, clapper sticks and drums. They sang and made music for spiritual and medical reasons. They also performed after victorious battles, to celebrate marriages and to simply pass the time in an enjoyable way.

They may not have had agriculture in the formal sense, but their hunting-gathering food sources provided a varied and nutritious diet that was actually superior to that of the Spanish, who were afflicted by scurvy (a disease resulting from vitamin C deficiency) when they first arrived on the Peninsula. As mentioned, Ohlones trekked from harvest to harvest. When one food source came into season or ripened, the Indians would collect it and, in some cases preserve it by drying or smoking it. Then they would move onto the next food source location.

Acorns were the mainstay of their diet. They were gathered from tan bark oak, black oak, valley oak and coastal live oak. Trees that also provide nuts included buckeye, laurel and digger pine. Fruits gathered included huckleberries, strawberries, blackberries, elderberries, gooseberries, madroneberries and wild grapes. Seeds from grasses were consumed as well as wild onion, wild carrot, mushrooms, roots and shoots.

Men hunted, trapped and poisoned large grazing animals and bear. Added to the diet of coastal people were washed-up whales, seals, sea lions and otters. Smaller animals that were hunted included rabbits, squirrels, rats, skunks, mice, moles, snakes and lizards. Fowl were on the menu, and geese, ducks, doves, robins, quail and hawks were consumed. From freshwater streams came steelhead trout, salmon, sturgeon and lampreys. From the ocean and bay were harvested shellfish like abalone, clams and oysters. Some types of insects rounded out many meals.

The amount of trade accomplished by Ohlones is remarkable. They bartered shell and shell beads through a network that reached as far as the Great Basin of Nevada. Other desirables they used for barter included salt and dried abalone. In return they sought obsidian, a crucial material used in making arrowheads and other weapons. Obsidian came from trade with the eastern and northern California native peoples. Pinon nuts and a variety of exotic foods could also be obtained in trade. In fact, several hundred items have been documented as trade objects among the California Indians. Some scholars believe that trading was such an important part of Ohlone life that the name



Fig. 1.2: Map of the San Francisco Peninsula showing county boundaries, early local tribe areas, and key Golden Gate National Recreation Area properties.

Ohlone, itself, actually meant not just “western people”, but “western traders” among other California people.,# The map below shows local tribal areas and how they relate to Golden Gate National Recreation Area lands.,, Note that the Indians of Sweeney Ridge, Mori Point and Milagra Ridge were Aramai. At the Phleger Estate they were Lamchin. *Rancho Corral de Tierra* is not shown, but the people there were Chiguan. In each of the following sections dedicated to the major GGNRA holdings, these three local tribes will be discussed and, to some extent, their relationship with the neighboring local tribes.

SPANISH AND MEXICAN ERAS (CONTEXTUAL)

In most ways San Mateo County’s early history is a microcosm of the coastal California experience. There was a significant native presence going back thousands of years, a Spanish colonial period, that began with the Gaspar de Portolá’s expedition of 1769, and a

Mexican period after that country gained its independence from Spain in 1821.

When Spain finally got around to planning for the colonization of *Alta* California, it did so after 277 years of experience in the New World. The Spanish crown wished to live down a dark legacy that had followed Spain from the West Indies, to Mexico, to South America - - one in which native peoples were ruthlessly conquered and then enslaved. The days of *conquistadores*, like Hernán Cortés who brought down the Aztec Empire, were at an end. Spain wished for itself a new image - - one that had the best interests of the native people in mind. Led by Franciscan Padre Junípero Serra, the vision was one of gifting a utopian Christian community to the California Indians.,\$ In the meantime, the Spanish wished California to be saved from non-Roman Catholic interlopers like England and Russia. Instead of destroying the California Indians, Spain sought to make them part of its colonial empire. According to the plan missions would be created to teach these people Catholicism and the Spanish language.

Instruction in Spanish culture would follow, and, within ten years, the Indians would be ready to govern themselves. Native priests would replace the missionaries and the mission lands would be returned to the Indians as they would now be good subjects of the crown. The process was called secularization.

Spanish occupation of *Alta* California began with Gaspar de Portolá's "Sacred Expedition", of 1769. A mission and *presidio* were established at San Diego and a second settlement was to be founded at Monterey. However, Portolá did not recognize Monterey when he marched through the area. He kept pressing onward up the coast and, quite by accident, discovered the San Francisco Bay from Sweeney Ridge within today's San Mateo County.

While Portolá himself was not much impressed, others in the expedition were. Following orders like a good soldier, the next year, with Padre Junípero Serra, he founded a mission and a *presidio* at Monterey. At this time he allowed his second in command, Pedro Fages, to lead another expedition exploring the East Bay. Fages' band discovered the opening to the Bay at the Golden Gate. Now the geography of California began to take shape for the Spanish, including the realization that the Golden Gate had strategic importance. In 1776, Juan Bautista de Anza brought pioneers from northern Mexico to settle at San Francisco, and a *presidio* and mission were established there.

As in all of the mission communities of *Alta* California, the intention at San Francisco was to have the missionaries Christianize the natives and then, through secularization, make them subjects of King Carlos III of Spain. What the process meant for the Ohlone Indians was the surrender of their rights and the end of their former way of life. Once they accepted baptism they were treated as if they had "taken an eternal vow." They could not leave the mission to which they were assigned. If they attempted to run away they were forcibly returned by Spanish soldiers. Whippings and shackling were common. The people were given Spanish names and not allowed to speak their native language or participate in their old religious traditions. Their activities were rigidly controlled. Working life was strenuous. The women combed wool and then spun and wove it into cloth; they washed clothes and prepared meals. The men tilled the soil, planted crops, butchered cattle and learned some manual skills like carpentry, blacksmithing, tanning, turning tallow into soap and making adobe bricks. In some places this included mining rock. Mission Indians operated the calera at Mori Point to produce lime from limestone. Unmarried females and males were mostly separated. Girls and single women were not allowed to go out alone at night.

The conditions of the bay region missions encouraged diseases of which the Indians had no immunity. Close quarters resulted in staggering death tolls. Hundreds might die within a few weeks of the outbreak of measles, mumps, influenza, whooping cough or small pox.

As stated, before the coming of the Spanish there were an estimated 17,000 Ohlone. By 1810, all had been brought into the mission system. By 1832, the native population of the Ohlone area had been reduced to 2,000 people, and of these many were from groups of people (not Ohlones) brought in to repopulate the communities.,'

For the Spanish, their occupation of the tip of the San Francisco Peninsula was of crucial importance. Guarding the Golden Gate meant the presidio had to be garrisoned. The presence of the soldiers necessitated the existence of a mission to feed and provide other essentials for the troops. However, the Mission San Francisco de Asís had challenges. The sun never seemed to shine, the soil was sandy, stands of trees for lumber were scarce and worst of all, a good supply of fresh water was lacking. By 1786, the padres had reached the decision to create an agricultural outpost down the peninsula. They chose the site of the Aramai village of Pruristac within the San Pedro Valley on the coast, just to the southwest of the "Discovery Site" at Sweeney Ridge (the site of the outpost is situated at San Mateo County's Sanchez Adobe Historic Park). Here was the first place south of the mission that a creek produced fresh water all year round. Until 1792, this assistance farm served the San Franciscans well, providing them food that allowed the mission to survive. After the first agricultural outpost was established, a second outpost, this one at San Mateo, became the Franciscan's most important resources provider.,(The cattle and sheep that roamed what became San Mateo County and the crops grown at the outposts were crucial to the success of Mission San Francisco de Asís into the new Mexican period of California History.

Mexico achieved its independence from Spain in 1822, and by its constitution of 1824, California became a territory (not a state) of the new nation.,) It was not until the early 1830s, that the process of secularization finally began, but it did not proceed the way the Spanish had foreseen, with a redistribution of the lands to the Indian people. Instead, the Mexican governors of California granted the land as favors to former soldiers of the old regime and other political friends. By the end of the Mexican period about 500 of these grants were issued to individuals who established large *ranchos* upon the former mission properties.

This process ignored any territorial rights for the mission Indians. Many native people simply went with the awarded properties. They now served new masters - - the *rancheros* - - the recipients of the huge land grants.

In what would become San Mateo County, Mexican governors of California issued 17 of these land grants.

As for today's Golden Gate National Recreation Area properties, *Rancho San Pedro*, granted to Francisco Sanchez, formerly occupied three of its holdings - - Sweeney

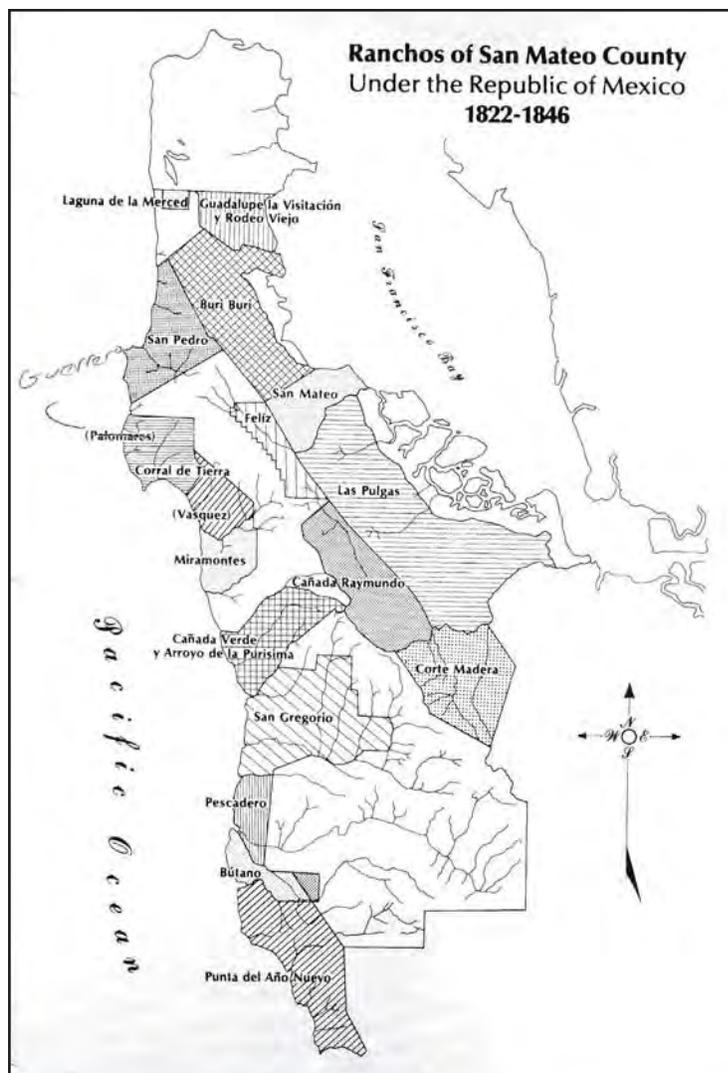


Fig. 1.3: Map of the San Francisco Peninsula showing ranchos in San Mateo County under the Republic of Mexico.

Ridge, Mori Point and Milagra Ridge. *Rancho Corral de Tierra* was split in half between the Vasquez family toward Half Moon Bay and the Guerrero family toward San Pedro Mountain. All of the Park Service land is within the latter Guerrero properties. The Phleger Estate exists on a portion of *Rancho Cañada Raymundo*.^{5*} See the Sweeney Ridge portion of this study for more on the Sanchez family. The Guerrero family is discussed in the *Corral de Tierra* section and a description of *Cañada Raymundo* is contained in the Phleger Estate section.

During Mexican times about one thousand “foreigners” came to live in California of which some 700 were from the United States. At least 50 of the men were living in present-day San Mateo County when the Mexican-American War began in 1846.⁵

THE AMERICAN PERIOD BEGINS (CONTEXTUAL)

California’s days as a remote territory of the new Mexican nation came to a

dramatic conclusion when in rapid succession foreign (mostly American) residents rose in revolt (the Bear Flag Revolt of 1846), the Mexican-American War commenced (1846), Mexico ceded California to the United States through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), the newcomers discovered gold (1848), many more newcomers came here with the resulting Gold Rush (1849-1852) and the federal government recognized California as the 31st state of the United States (1850).

While conditions for the California Indians continued to deteriorate under yet another new regime (the special census of 1852 counted only 140 Indians left in the San Francisco and San Mateo County areas^{5#}, for the former Mexican citizens, the new American government made promises that seemed to guarantee their rights and properties. Through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, they were automatically made citizens of the United States. The document also established that the new government

would respect and protect their property rights. Nevertheless, the enormous population growth of California due to the Gold Rush forced changes.\$,

Americans from the states back east, who had given up searching for gold and wished to settle in the new land as farmers and ranchers, were stunned by the enormity of the ranchos. They felt that much of the property was not being used to its fullest potential and simply settled or “squatted” on *rancho* lands. At first the new American legal system sided with the *Californios* and helped expel the settlers, but in 1851 a land commission was organized that made it mandatory that the land grants of the Mexican era be legally proven in court. While most of the grants prevailed, the land rich, cash poor *rancho* owners had to pay fees for attorneys. They also had to provide for various property taxes. Many mortgaged their places and lost their land to the banks. Others sold o! their property to meet expenses.\$\$

On the highly desirable Peninsula, most of the *rancho* families were rendered landless within fifteen years. For example, the Sanchez family’s *Rancho Buri Buri*, that included the south face of San Bruno Mountain, South San Francisco, San Bruno, Millbrae and the northern portion of Burlingame, was broken up to the extent that the family owned but 5% of it by 1866. Among the exceptions was Francisco Sanchez at his *Rancho San Pedro*. As contrasted to what happened to his extended family just over the hill, he managed to hang on to his Coastside land until he died in 1862.

By the end of the 1850s, the Peninsula’s American population had grown six-fold, to about 3,000. The number of Mexicans, meanwhile, decreased.\$%

During the decade stagecoach highway construction began over old Indian foot paths, Spanish trails and Mexican ox-cart roads. The Bayside had better transportation routes from this time onward and became more desirable to the new settlers. The *Californios* naturally tended to congregate on the more remote Coastside. In fact the County’s first town formed at Pilarcitos Creek where the Vasquez and Miramontes *ranchos* met. The land grant families called their community San Benito. People from over the hill called it Spanishtown, because everyone there seemed to be Spanish-speaking. Today it is known as Half Moon Bay.\$&

During the 1850s, public schools were established at Woodside, in the heart of the important lumbering operations, at West Union, near the National Park Service’s Phleger Estate property, Redwood City, which became the county seat, and Colma, which referred to all of north county. At the beginning of the next decade, nine school districts were organized for the County’s children. During the 1860s, churches and library associations were also established,\$' and by 1864 the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad was built through the County.

This early railroad was the second constructed in the state (and the first commuter railroad west of the Mississippi.) It allowed for the West's first rail suburban communities to develop along both sides of the tracks. The new commuters were the elite of San Francisco's new business community, who, like their contemporaries on the east coast, desired to use the railroad to move their families out of the squalid conditions of a nineteenth-century industrializing city. These captains of industry, mining, commerce and transportation could afford to purchase lavish estates down the Peninsula and create a "country lifestyle" emulating the aristocracy of the "Old World," while being uniquely Californian at the same time. Their presence might encourage one to think that rapid development of the Peninsula followed, but instead, San Mateo County was the slowest growing county in the Bay Area. The estates actually put a damper on growth by taking up the best land near the railroad and hemming in little villages like Burlingame, San Mateo and Menlo Park. Redwood City was the only community to resemble a town from its beginnings. By 1900, the population of San Mateo County stood at only 12,000. In the early years of the twentieth century, more elite suburbanites moved to the "country" including Herman and Mary Elena Phleger at their *Mountain Meadow* Estate, much of which is now National Park property.

Politically, San Mateo County became a county in 1856. It was carved out of San Francisco County as a result of a compromise between city reformers on one side and the established political clique that ruled San Francisco on the other. The reformers wished to have just one local government - a City and County of San Francisco - to look after and keep free of waste and corruption. The clique demanded that a new county be created to guarantee its political power base into the future. Thus the rural nine-tenths of San Francisco was cut off and made a fledgling political entity, entirely subjected to the corrupt influences of the bosses to the North. Only the advent of the famous San Francisco Vigilance Committee of 1856 chased this clique out of California and gave San Mateo County a new chance at self-government.

For both counties, the historical ramifications have been important. For San Franciscans, they would soon be forced to create a water supply in San Mateo County, to use the new county for a place to bury its dead, and, later on, to build an important airport there. The City's ability to expand in geographical size and tax base subsequently was limited to the very northern tip of the Peninsula.

For San Mateo County, the implications were also great. Its slow growth was, in part, a result of the bulk of local economic activity focusing on the great metropolis to the north.

Still worse, as San Francisco's sparsely populated neighbor, San Mateo County became burdened with the reputation as a place where if you couldn't "get away with it" in "wide-open" San Francisco, you could come down to the "country" and do so. In

1859, when former California Chief Justice David S. Terry and United States Senator David Broderick had their attempt to settle their differences by dueling blocked by officials in San Francisco, they crossed the county line near Lake Merced and shot it out. In later years, when dog-racing, horseracing and prizefighting became illegal in San Francisco, facilities were established in San Mateo County.

Problems with illegal alcoholic beverages had a long history down the Peninsula. Stills, present in the County since the 1830s, became most numerous during the Prohibition years (1919-33). In fact the amount of illegal activity was appalling.

On the Coastsides, at one time or another, nearly every large structure served as a speakeasy (a secret club where alcoholic beverage was made available), including Francisco Sanchez's old adobe home. Powerful criminal organizations had their "rum running" ships and boats make routine landings on the beaches and then trucked hundreds of thousands of gallons of "hooch" from coastal roads into the City. It is no accident that the hard-to-reach coast harbored its share of illegal and illicit activity. The rugged coastline and mountain barriers ensured a relatively police-free criminal livelihood, and Mori Point was well-known as the site of a speakeasy and other unlawful enterprises.

In fact, the entire history of the coast is one in which its isolation plays a prominent role. After the Mexican-American War, foreigners from the United States, Ireland, Portugal and China, who were joined later in the nineteenth century by Italians and Japanese, looked to the growing demand for farm products in San Francisco as an opportunity. They produced grain, potatoes, dairy goods and truck crops, but their ability to market these products was hampered by the lack of transportation.

The hope that this isolation could be broken rose in 1905 with the organization of the Ocean Shore Railroad which intended to lay track from San Francisco to Santa Cruz along San Mateo County's coastline. Sadly, the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake did considerable damage to it especially at Devil's Slide, which is just south of Mori Point and north of Rancho Corral de Tierra. A 26-mile gap between Tunitas Creek in San Mateo County and Swanton in Santa Cruz County was never finished. The railroad did serve the Coastsides from north of Tunitas Creek beginning in 1907, but stopped service in 1920.

The story on the Bayside was decidedly different. By 1928 the San Francisco Bureau of Governmental Research could report:%%

Industrial development . . . is centered along the bayshore immediately south of San Francisco, at South San Francisco and at Redwood City. . . The bayshore plain is traversed by the Southern Pacific Railroad, Market Street Railway elec-

tric lines, El Camino Real . . . , and the Bayshore Highway all providing transportation along the bayshore plain to and from San Francisco. The development of these means of transportation has brought about the recent urban growth in San Mateo County. . .

With an eye to the future the Bureau stated: “Tidelands along the entire bayshore have potential capacities for future industrial growth,” and “as transportation methods improve, a still greater urban growth can be expected.”

As the decades passed the words of the Bureau came to realization on the Bayside. However, out on the Coastside, Devil’s Slide continued to live up to its name and hinder automobile highway improvements as it had the Ocean Shore Railroad. The problem of transportation limited suburban growth and industrial enterprise, so that pristine vistas of the Coastside’s mountains, cliffs and beaches and views of the ocean were mostly left untouched. The upshot from the perspective of those visiting National Park Service properties in San Mateo County is that four of its five properties (Sweeney Ridge, Milagra Ridge, Mori Point and *Rancho Corral de Tierra*) were not substantially developed because of this historic land-use story and are now available for utilization as parkland.

INTO THE MODERN ERA (CONTEXTUAL)

Much of the character of today’s San Mateo County is associated with its suburban development. Its original suburbanites came after the building of the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad in 1864. “Down the Peninsula” they built their “summer places”%& that later became permanent residences. They were the “movers and the shakers” of western America’s business elite.% They included such notables as William Ralston (Bank of California, who lived at Belmont), John Parrott (real estate investments, who lived at San Mateo), James Flood (silver mining, who lived at Atherton), James Folger (coffee, who lived at Woodside), Antoine Borel (international finance, who lived at San Mateo), Darius Ogden Mills (Bank of California, who lived at Millbrae) and *Filoli’s* William Bourn (Spring Valley Water Company.) Bourn provided *Mountain Meadow*, later the Phleger Estate, to his water company manager.

A streetcar line from San Francisco to San Mateo was completed in 1902; that and the advent of the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake combined to create new “middle class” suburban communities in San Mateo County. Before 1900, the only incorporated towns in the County were San Mateo and Redwood City. With the streetcar making the commute more affordable and more convenient, the Earthquake’s refugees moved to the Peninsula and in quick succession, between 1908 and 1927, initiated the creation of ten towns: South San Francisco (1908), Burlingame (1908), Hillsborough

(1910), Daly City (1911), San Bruno (1914), Atherton (1923), Colma (1924), San Carlos (1925), Menlo Park (1927) and Belmont (1927).%(

The population of the County which had been 3,200 in 1860 was still only 12,000 in 1900. However, its number of people more than doubled during the first ten years of the new century to 27,000 and in the next 30 years grew more than fourfold to 112,000 by 1940.

As is the case with California on the whole, World War II and the post-war period witnessed substantial growth for the San Francisco Peninsula. Throughout the County, defense projects were plainly visible at and from places like Milagra Ridge and Sweeney Ridge. On these ridges and all up and down the Coastside, the armed forces constructed seacoast fortifications and other installations. Looking east from the ridges, one could see ship building at South San Francisco, the supply dump at Tanforan Race Track and the substantial build-up of San Francisco Airport. After the War many veterans, who had seen California for the first time on their way to overseas deployment, decided to settle in San Mateo County. They went to school on the GI Bill, married, produced “baby boom” offspring and bought their newly built tract houses all along the Bayside. Agricultural lands and open space shrank as this development spread from the traditional town centers. The substantial growth was made possible by the increasingly affordable and popular automobile. %Most of the resulting population increase occurred on the Bayside. Between 1940 and 1950, the County’s residents more than doubled in number to 236,000. By 1960, the population nearly doubled again to 444,000, and the 1970 census listed the population at more than 557,000.

The Coastside did experience some of this activity; particularly in the north, in the western portion of Daly City and in the City of Pacifica (which incorporated in 1957), could one witness the building of housing tracts and shopping centers.

As artichoke fields, greenhouses and dairies gave way, an environmental backlash began. Malvina Reynold’s protest song about “Little Boxes” was actually written about Daly City housing tracts. The new movement helped give impetus to coastal preservation, statewide, with the passage of a protection act by the voters in 1972 which established a Coastal Commission. Its authority was made permanent in 1976. Locally, a variety of slow/no-growth measures were additionally adopted to save the Coastside from further development. Also hindering growth further down the coast was the limited availability of water, sewers and other ingredients necessary for development.&*

Some of the Peninsula had already been set aside. The 23,000 acre San Francisco watershed with its Crystal Springs, San Andreas and Pilarcitos dams hosts a variety of habitats and supports the highest concentration of rare, threatened and endangered species in the Bay Area. The watershed was originally protected by the Spring Valley

Water Company, a private corporation in business to sustain San Francisco's water supply in the nineteenth century. San Francisco purchased the system in 1930 as part of its Hetch Hetchy project.&"

In 1969, the federal and state governments with San Francisco and San Mateo Counties created easement agreements to preserve the watershed. The accords concentrated on 19,000 acres that include Upper and Lower Crystal Springs Reservoirs, San Andreas Lake and watershed lands east of Montara Mountain. Another scenic and recreational easement includes 4,000 acres southwest of the reservoirs. The National Parks Service's GGNRA manages these easements.&#

San Mateo County has also been active in preserving open spaces. It opened its first park on July 4, 1924; Memorial Park was dedicated in honor of World War I veterans from San Mateo County. Today the County Parks Division operates 17 separate parks, three regional trails and numerous other trails encompassing 15,680 acres. They are located throughout the county and represent a wide variety of natural settings including: a coastside marine reserve, a bayside recreational area, coastal mountain woodland areas and urban sites.&,

In addition, California State Park holdings in San Mateo County include (in alphabetical order): Año Nuevo, Bean Hollow, Big Basin Redwoods, Burleigh Murray Ranch, Butano, Castle Rock, Gray Whale Cove, Half Moon Bay State Beach, McNee Ranch, Montara State Beach, Pacifica State Beach, Pescadero State Beach, Pigeon Point Light Station, Pomponio, Portola Redwoods, San Bruno Mountain and San Gregorio State Beach.

With the Bayside nearly "builtout" and the Coastside mostly protected from urbanization, the rate of population increase slowed. Between 1970 and 1980, the number of residents in the County rose only 5% to 587,000. In the next 20 years it grew 17% to 707,000 (2000 census).

Preservation of the Coastside allowed for opportunities to invite the National Park Service to open some of the protected properties to the public as part of its GGNRA. Efforts to include Sweeney Ridge and Milagra Ridge succeed in the 1980s. Congressman Tom Lantos authored legislation that added 1,300 acres of the Phleger Estate to the Park in the early 1990s; and a decade after that, Lantos introduced yet more legislation to include another 900 acres in Pacifica. In April of 2002, the Congressman, GGNRA officials and local environmental leaders dedicated Mori Point when it was added to the Park.

Most recently, on December 20, 2005, President George W. Bush signed into law authority for the GGNRA to purchase 4,262 acres of the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* from

the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST). POST had begun purchasing the properties in 2001. In three phases, with the aid of the California Coastal Conservancy and Wildlife Conservation Board, it raised a total of \$29,750,000 for the acquisitions. Outdoor enthusiasts hailed this effort as it provided public lands that linked the congressionally designated Bay Area Ridge Trail with the California Coastal Trail. In other words, the purchase filled a gap between what had been disconnected federal and California parklands. The federal legislation was authored and championed by Congressman Lantos.&\$

ENDNOTES

"Regional Planning Committee, San Mateo County Planning Department, *The Physical Setting of San Mateo County*, May 17, 1968, pp. 21, and plate V.

#San Mateo County Planning Department, *General Plan*, 1986, pp. 14-15.
 , San Mateo County, *Physical*, p. 24.

\$*Ibid.*, plate I, also see "San Mateo County, California History," http://www.Californiagenealogy.org/San_Mateo/index.htm page 1.

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&*Ibid.*, plate XIII.

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) Alan Hynding, *From Frontier to Suburb: The Story of the San Mateo Peninsula*, Star Publishing Company, Belmont, California, 1982, p. 142.

"**Ibid.*, p. 1.

"*Ibid.*, p. 2.

"#Madge Caughman and Joanne S. Ginsberg, eds., *California Coastal Resources Guide*, California Coastal Commission, State of California, Berkeley, California, University of California Press, 1987, p. 171.

",As this study was being written (2009-2010) Randall Milliken, Laurence H. Shoup, and Beverly R. Ortiz were finishing up their study for the National Park Service, *Ohlone/Costanoan Indians of the San Francisco Peninsula and their Neighbors, Yesterday and Today*. Thus the 2007 draft of this work and the 2009 final version were used extensively, as cited, in this presentation. The finished document is regarded as the most thorough study about the Peninsula's native peoples yet produced.

\$Frank Stanger and Alan K. Brown, *Who Discovered the Golden Gate: The Explorers Own Accounts*, San Mateo County Historical Association, San Mateo, CA, 1969, p. 100.

"%*Ibid.*, p. 98.

"&Randall Milliken, Laurence H. Shoup, and Beverly R. Ortiz, *Ohlone/Costanoan Indians of the San Francisco Peninsula and their Neighbors, Yesterday and Today*, National Park Service, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco, California, (draft) 2007, pp. 64-65.

"'Mark G. Hylkema, *Seal Cove Prehistory: Archaeological Investigations at CA-SMA-134*, Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, San Mateo County, California, 1998.

"(Mitchell P. Postel, *San Mateo A Centennial History*, Scottwall Associates, San Francisco, CA, 1994, p. 1.

)Mary Ellen Ryan, "A Well Looking, Affable People". Online at <http://www.santacruzpl.org/history/articles/253> (Accessed October 15, 2003).

#*The word Costanoan is derived from the early Spanish who called the people Costenos - - people of the coast. Later English speaking people mispronounced this as Costanos. Finally, the compromise word Costanoan was adopted. Descendents of these natives prefer the term Ohlone, which is now utilized in most scholarly and public presentations.

#'Milliken, *Ohlone* (2007), p. 5.

##Malcolm Margolin, *The Ohlone Way: Indian Life in the San Francisco/Monterey Bay Area*, Heyday Books, Berkeley, CA, 1978, pp. 1-3.

#,Not only were the Spanish the first to write about Ohlones, but their diarists provided the most comprehensive accounts existent: hence this study's heavy reliance on them.

##Stanger and Brown, *Who*, p. 88.

##*Ibid.*, p. 87.

##&Margolin, *Ohlone*, p. 52.

#'Gary S. Breshini and Trudy Haversat, "Rumsen Seasonality and Population Dynamics," in Lowell John Bean, *The Ohlone Past and Present: Native Americans of the San Francisco Bay Region*, Ballena Press, Menlo Park, CA, 1994, pp. 183-197.

##(Margolin, *Ohlone*, p. 91.

##)Milliken, *Ohlone* (2007), p. 5.

, * Chester King, "Central Ohlone Ethnohistory," in Bean, *Ohlone*, p. 221.

, "Breschini, "Ramsen," p. 196.

,#To better understand the scope of historical scholarship about Ohlones, Lauren Teixeira's *The Costanoan/Ohlone Indians of the San Francisco and Monterey Bay Area, A Research Guide* is a recommended source along with the already mentioned Randall Milliken, Laurence H. Shoup, and Beverly R. Ortiz's study, with its extensive bibliography, in the recently completed *Ohlone/Costanoan Indians of the San Francisco Peninsula and their Neighbors, Yesterday and Today*. Both of these sources can be found in the bibliography of this work.

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,\$*Ibid.*, p. 159.

,%James J. Rawls, Walton Bean, *California: An Interpretive History*, McGraw Hill, New York, 9th edition, 2008, p. 36.

,&Margolin, *Ohlone*, p. 162. Quote comes from the writings of Jean de La Perouse, French visitor to the missions in 1786.

, ' Robert F. Heizer, volume editor, *Handbook of North American Indians: Volume 8, California*, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, 1978, p. 486.

,(Mitchell P. Postel, *San Mateo County: A Sesquicentennial History*, Star Publishing Company, Inc. Belmont, CA, 2007, p. 78.

.) Rawls, *California*, pp. 58-59.

\$*See Map showing Mexican period land grants of the San Francisco Peninsula. This map was taken from the files of the San Mateo County History Museum. Note the owner of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* is listed mistakenly as Palomares instead of Guerrero. An explanation for this confusion is explained in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section of this study, under sub-heading "Two Land Grants."

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##Milliken, *Ohlone*, (2007), p. 183.

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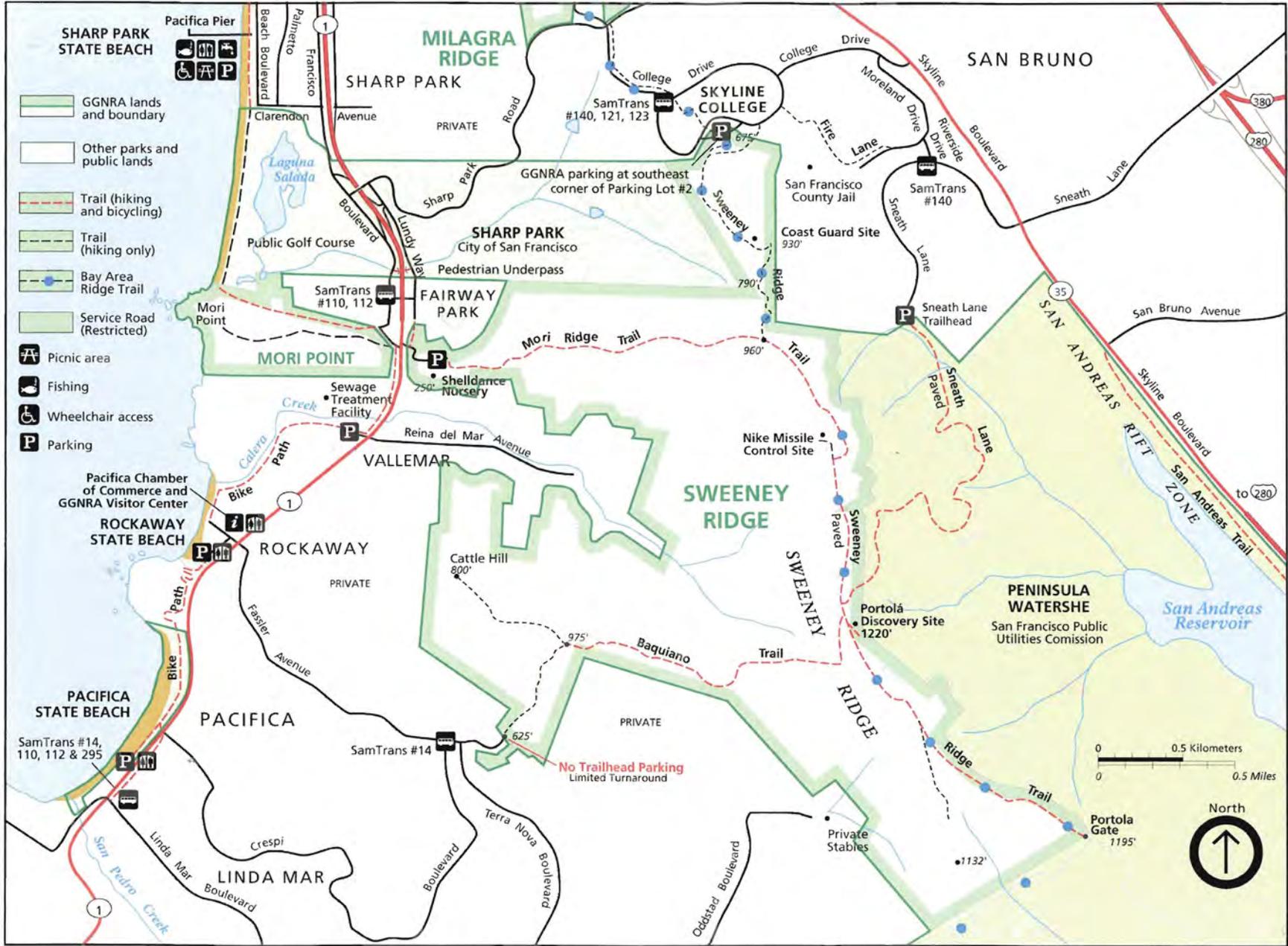


Fig. 2.1: Park map of Sweeney Ridge.

SWEENEY RIDGE

In the fall of 1769, Spanish Army Captain Gaspar de Portolá's party discovered the San Francisco Bay from Sweeney Ridge in present-day San Mateo County. The momentous occasion that would forever change the history of the West Coast of what became the United States was not immediately recognized as such through European eyes. *Alta* California would in fact remain a remote place for another 80 years. Nevertheless, the San Francisco Bay Area, a place that saw little or no change for thousands of years, would, from this point forward, be subject to constant transformation, despite its isolation. The people who inhabited the area near Sweeney Ridge were the Aramai of the Ohlone people.¹ They would be among those whose world changed the fastest.

THE OHLONES (CONTEXTUAL)

Long before Portolá, the first of the Spanish to write about the people we now call Ohlones, were members of the Sebastian Vizcaíno expedition of 1602. Three ships with 200 men aboard left Acapulco on May 5 and, after spending some time at Cabo San Lucas, arrived at San Diego on November 10. They reached Monterey on December 16 and spent nearly two weeks there among the Ohlones. Vizcaíno and members of his party were impressed with the place and had favorable things to write about the native people. In a letter to the King of Spain, Felipe III, Vizcaíno himself wrote: "The area is very populated by people whom I considered to be meek, gentle, quiet and quite amenable to conversion to Catholicism and to becoming subjects of your Majesty."²

Despite Vizcaíno's enthusiasm, more than 16 decades would elapse before the Spanish became serious about colonization in the lands that belonged to the Ohlones, the people who inhabited the San Francisco Peninsula, Santa Clara Valley, the East Bay, Santa Cruz Mountains, Monterey Bay and the Salinas Valley.³

Ohlones composed over 50 local tribes who lived in many more villages. Each village had its own land and customs. Spanish explorers recorded villages at intervals of three to five miles in most areas.⁴

The Ohlones were mobile and so their homes were built to be temporary. They constructed domed thatched houses of tule reed or grass, tied together with willow fiber on a framework of willow branches that stood about as tall as an adult and ranged between 6 to 20 feet in diameter. The dwellings were used for a season, and the people would move on. Sometimes the willow framework could be reused when the group

returned to a particular village site. The structures proved warm in the winter and cool in the summer.

Sweat houses were often present at the villages. The Ohlone usually created them by excavating land near the back of a creek. Sweat houses had low ceilings and doors so small that the men had to crawl into them. Sweat houses were exclusively for men who used them for purposes of cleanliness and spiritual affairs, especially before a hunt.

Ohlones communicated through a variety of dialects. The people north of today's Davenport in Santa Cruz County, all the way to and including San Francisco, spoke San Francisco Bay Costanoan. Thus this was the language of the people in the Sweeney Ridge area.⁵

THE ARAMAI

On October 31, 1769, Gaspar de Portolá and his party descended Montara Mountain and met some 25 people of the Aramai local tribe who most likely lived at the village of Pruristac up San Pedro Creek, to the east of where the Spanish eventually camped.⁶ Today the Pruristac site is in part occupied by San Mateo County's Sanchez Adobe Historic Park. Another Aramai village, Timigtac, may have existed at Mori Point. The trails used by the people of the villages represent the earliest transportation routes in the County.⁷ They walked along the ridges of Montara Mountain to reach their neighbors to the South. Their trails were most certainly used by Portolá and his party when they were in the area.

Indeed, the Aramai had plenty of neighbors. Directly south were the Chiguan who had two villages, the first, Ssatumnumo, at present day Princeton and the second, Chagunte, around Half Moon Bay. According to mission records, the Chiguan probably only numbered about 50 people. (They, as did most Ohlones encountered by Portolá, fed and gave guidance to his expedition in 1769.)

Further south at Purissima Creek were the Cotagen of about 65 Indians who had two villages as well. When Portolá reached there some of his party entered abandoned houses which were found to be infested with fleas;¹⁰ hence the party named the place *Rancheria de las Pulgas* (flea village).

Also possessing two villages were the Oljons, who inhabited the area around San Gregorio Creek.¹¹ They had a population of nearly 160. As mentioned in the Introduction, the word "Ohlone" could have been derived from the name of this local tribe.

Farthest south in San Mateo County was the large village of the Quiroste, close to Año Nuevo. Here the Spanish saw the *Casa Grande* in which all 200 of its residents could fit inside. Across the coastal mountains laid another large village at San Francisquito Creek, the home of the Puichun, who numbered about 250. The Olpen also lived at San Francisquito Creek, but toward the mountainous head-waters of the stream.¹²

Across Sweeney Ridge from the Aramai were the Urebure who had a single village at San Bruno Creek.¹³ South of them, in the San Mateo Creek area, were the Ssalson who, in 1776, were observed by the Anza expedition as being at war with the people at Redwood City, the Lamchin.¹⁴ The Ssalson numbered 100 to 200 individuals and possessed at least three villages. The Urebure may have actually been a northern grouping of the Ssalson.¹⁵ The Lamchin were the largest local tribe of the Peninsula, numbering as many as 350 people. Their lands included today's Redwood City and the hill country to the west including the Phleger Estate.¹⁶

Finally, to the north were the Yelamu who inhabited present day San Francisco. They probably numbered no more than 160, and lived in four villages.¹⁷

Mission San Francisco de Asís' baptismal records included detailed information concerning the parents of baptized children.¹⁸ From those papers it can be determined that the Indians of the San Francisco Peninsula engaged in quite a bit of intermarrying among the local tribes, and, apparently, the smaller the local tribe, the more intermarriage occurred. For the Aramai, which is considered a smaller group, this meant that more than half of the children from Aramai parents were born and raised in another local tribe's territory. Most certainly intermarriage served to create a degree of community for the Aramai with their neighbors.

The mission records tell us that Yagueche, the head man at the Aramai village of Pruristac, had actually been born at Satumnumo in Chiguan territory, now Princeton. His younger brother by 10 years became the head man of that local tribe. Yagueche's daughter lived at Urebure (San Bruno) as wife to its head man. Another daughter married the Urebure's head man's son. One of Yagueche's sons married a Ssalson (San Mateo). The mission records indicate similar relations among many of the Aramai people.¹⁹ Something on the order of eight out of every ten of their marriages involved a person from another local tribe. The range of this social activity took the Aramai north to the Golden Gate, south to at least Half Moon Bay, east to San Bruno, and then south-east, including all the territory down to and possibly beyond San Mateo.

As a general comment about Ohlones, this socialization through intermarriage allowed for a spirit of understanding and commonality. The early observers remarked upon their peacefulness. Nevertheless there were difficulties that led to violent clashes as

recorded by the Spanish in the 1770s - - between the Ssalson and Lamchin, and then the Ssalson and Yelamu.

The Aramai, who Portolá met just before ascending Sweeney Ridge, probably numbered less than 55 people. Theirs was indeed a little group. Most of the Ohlone local tribes numbered between 200 and 300, some were as large as 400 or more.²⁰ On the San Francisco Peninsula the groups were smaller, but even among those, the Aramai were minute in number. They occupied just the two villages, Pruristac and Timigtac. While linked enough to make up a local tribe, the people of the two villages were of independent bands.

Because of their proximity it is most likely that Portolá met the people of Pruristac, rather than Timigtac. Mission records indicate that eventually 35 people from Pruristac were baptized. Considering that when the time came, all living Aramai people were brought into the church, it can be speculated that the entire village consisted of but three or four tule houses.²¹

As with most Ohlone people, the villagers of Pruristac ate wild seeds and acorn mush as their staple foods. They also consumed roots, berries and a variety of greens. The men fished and hunted. Because Pruristac was close to the ocean, and a shell mound is present at the village site, we know they added shellfish to their diet. Their tools and implements were likewise not different from Ohlones of other parts of the Bay Region.

Because the San Pedro Valley did not have all the resources necessary for a fully comfortable life, it was necessary for the Aramai to move about to find foods and raw materials, or trade for them. Because of their close family network with other local tribes, they had access to resources throughout the Peninsula. Probably of most importance to them were oak trees with their acorns, in the San Andreas Valley over Sweeney Ridge to the east. In fact Pruristac may not have been inhabited all year long. While Portolá met the people who lived there in early November, 1769, on his expedition's return trip in mid-November, no persons were present at the site. Similarly, in December of 1774, the Rivera party, on their way to the Golden Gate, noted the place to be deserted.²²

It has been long accepted that there are no living descendants of the people of Pruristac and Timigtac. In fact, it had been felt that the last of the Indians of the Peninsula had died in the 1920s. However, recently Jonathan Cordero, a sociology professor at California Lutheran University, has traced his ancestry back to Francisca Xavier of Timigtac. He found that Francisca was baptized at Mission San Francisco de Asís in 1779, married Jose Ramos, a blacksmith from Mexico, in 1783, and had a son, Pablo Antonio, in 1785, who is a descendant of Professor Cordero.²³

SPANISH INTEREST IN ALTA CALIFORNIA (CONTEXTUAL)

Within thirty years of Columbus' "discovery" of the new world, Hernán Cortés had conquered the great Aztec empire of Central Mexico. The tremendous wealth that this *conquistador* gained inspired him to think of the possibility of more treasures that might lie to the north. He was reminded of Medieval tales about an island of Amazons led by their Queen Calafia, from whom the "Golden State" of California would eventually get its name.²⁴ Legends filtered through to him of "Seven Cities" possessing fabulous fortune and *El Dorado*.²⁵ The year after the conquest, Cortés founded the city of Zacetula on the west coast of Mexico.²⁶ It took 10 years, but in 1532 he dispatched an expedition northward by sea. Both the ships were lost. In 1533, he tried again, sending Diego Becerra up the coast. He was killed in a mutiny led by the ship's pilot, Fortún Jiménez. Under Jiménez's command a land believed to be an island was discovered. This was, of course, *Baja California*. Jiménez was killed, possibly in a battle with local Indians. The survivors of the voyage returned giving Cortés a favorable account of the new land with its pearls and other wealth. Cortés attempted to establish a settlement there, but the environment proved too harsh and the natives too hostile.

In 1539, Cortés was replaced by Antonio de Mendoza whose mission was to consolidate Spanish gains in New Spain. Under Mendoza, Francisco de Ulloa was dispatched to further explore Mexico's north coast. His way was blocked when he discovered that *Baja California* is a peninsula. Also that year, Mendoza sent a Christian Moor named Estevanico and a Franciscan padre named Marcos north, overland toward the center of the American West. Estevanico had been with Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca in Florida, and had visited the Gulf of Mexico. He heard tales that indicated the Seven Cities of Cibola actually existed. While Estevanico was killed during the journey, Father Marcos returned and reported having actually seen the City!

And so, in 1540, Mendoza sent out two more expeditions. On land he had Vásquez de Coronado lead a well-equipped expedition with Father Marcos in tow, that ended up in western Kansas. When they reached the spot where Father Marcos had "seen" the silver City, they viewed a white washed adobe instead. Still they pressed on. The Indians they met repeated myths that encouraged the *conquistadores* to journey even farther into the wilderness; it is probable that the Indians hoped they would never return. However, they did return but with the report that no fabulously wealthy civilizations existed in the north.

The other party organized by Mendoza in 1540 went by sea. This time Hernando de Alarcón sailed to the mouth of the Colorado River with the thought of making a rendezvous with Coronado. While the meeting never took place, Alarcón sailed far enough up the River to be credited as the first European to see *Alta California*.

While none of this pleased Mendoza, in 1542 he gave it yet one more chance. This time he sent Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo (or his Portuguese name: João Rodrigues Cabrilho) with two ships, the *San Salvador* and *Victoria*. He left Mexico and sailed west and then north around *Baja* California. He stopped at San Diego Bay, San Pedro, Santa Monica, Ventura, Santa Barbara and made Point Concepcion by October 17. Adverse winds forced the ships back south. They harbored at San Miguel Island until November 11. Cabrillo and company had discovered what generations of sailors would experience - - that the winds and currents are mostly against you as you sail up the California Coast. They made it as far up as the Monterey area when they were struck by a storm and blown west, out into the Pacific. The vessels were separated and did not spot each other again for a few days until they neared Año Nuevo. They then sailed back to San Miguel. Cabrillo had broken his arm back in October, and attempted to recover there, but died on January 18, 1543. Under a new commander, Bartolomé Ferrello, the expedition proceeded north and nearly reached the Oregon border. Once more the ships were blown out into the Pacific. They made San Miguel Island on March 5 and returned to port in Mexico on April 14.

For Mendoza, and the Spanish, the lessons of their efforts in the early 1540s were all negative regarding the future of California. No great civilizations or fabulous fortunes existed there. Instead the environment was difficult to deal with and the Indian people primitive.

However, Spain's progress as the world's greatest maritime power continued. By 1565, it was controlling a lucrative trade from the Philippines. In 1566, Esteban Rodriguez and Andrés de Urdaneta established a reliable sea route from Manila, east across the ocean. The voyage made use of the currents and winds of the north Pacific. Ships would reach the western shores of North America and sail down the California Coast to ports in New Spain.

These Manila treasure ships or galleons risked many perils. In 1568, one was lost off Guam. Another was wrecked 15 years later. Some of the ships were forced back to Manila because of violent Pacific storms.

Interest began to grow in establishing a port, as a resting place, on the California Coast.²⁷ Ships' captains were therefore given instruction to survey the coastline for a likely choice for a safe harbor. This interest was made even more pertinent in 1578, when English raider Francis Drake rounded Cape Horn in his *Golden Hind*, searching to pirate Spanish treasure while exploring the Pacific for England. In 1579, he put in somewhere off the northern California coast (probably at Drake's Bay) to repair his ship. Just a few years later, in 1584, Francisco Gali, with orders to explore the California coast in his Manila galleon, the *San Juan Bautista*, made landfall at Monterey and then cruised southward. Three years later, Pedro de Unamuno was in command of the

Manila galleon and landed in the vicinity of Monterey after crossing the Pacific from Japan.

The final attempt by a Manila galleon to explore the Coast in the sixteenth century took place in 1595. Sebastian Cermeño aboard the *San Agustín* was returning to New Spain from the Philippines and followed the northern route, reaching California around Trinity Bay. He then worked his way south. Cermeño anchored his ship at Point Reyes, but it was hit by a storm. The *San Agustín* lost its anchor and ran aground at Drake's Bay, becoming *Alta California's* first recorded shipwreck. The crew spent some time exploring the local area. They then left their cargo of wax and silks behind and boarded the ship's launch, called the *Santa Buenaventura*. They set sail for Mexico. Along the way members of the party took notes describing the Coast, including San Mateo County's shoreline and Monterey Bay.²⁸

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, no port had been established for Spain on the California coast. Meanwhile, since the destruction of its Armada in 1588, Spain's strength as a great maritime power had been steadily diminishing. Recognizing the need for finding a suitable location for a safe harbor while being mindful of Spanish military reversals, Sebastian Vizcaíno proposed to New Spain's viceroy Don Gaspar de Zúñiga y Acevedo, Count of Monte Rey, to explore the coast at his own expense in return for being awarded command of a future Manila galleon.²⁹ The Count agreed to the deal. Accompanying Vizcaíno was Francisco de Bolaños who had been the pilot on the ill-fated Cermeño voyage. This time the mission was different. This time he was on an expedition specifically tasked to explore and discover with the particular focus of finding a safe harbor for future treasure ships from the Philippines. Vizcaíno and company were to chart and sound bays, islands, reefs and bars. They were to take solar and stellar readings, note wind directions, map locations of anchorages, reference wood and fresh water sources and establish place names with their topographical descriptions.³⁰

The explorers commanded three ships and a long boat. They set sail on May 5, 1602, and reached San Lucas on June 8, where they were forced to abandon the long boat. The ships found themselves continuously in difficult sailing conditions as they battled up the coast of *Baja California*, sometimes separated and usually short of drinking water. They reached San Diego on November 10, after more than six exhausting months. They rested here until November 20, landed at Santa Catalina Island, sailed through the Santa Barbara Channel, rounded Point Concepcion, caught an unusual favorable wind, sailed past Carmel Bay and, on December 16, entered Monterey Bay, which they named for their viceroy. Vizcaíno described the place as "sheltered from all winds,"³¹ and made Monterey out to be a perfect harbor. Perhaps Vizcaíno tailored what turned out to be an exaggerated account for the benefit of the man who could give him com-

mand of the Manila galleon. Perhaps he feared that without a positive report his reward might be lost.

At Monterey, the party pitched tents and found good water. Most of the sailors were suffering from scurvy; 16 had already died. From Monterey the expedition divided up. One of the ships, the *San Tomás* set out on December 29, carrying the sick back to Acapulco. Sadly, 25 perished during the voyage or shortly afterwards. Only nine men survived. On January 3, the remaining vessels sailed north, continuing their mission. After four days they became separated off Drake's Bay. Vizcaíno, aboard the *San Diego*, continued north and sighted Cape Mendocino on January 12. They were then hit by a gale. With only six able men left to work the ship, Vizcaíno decided to return to Mexico. The *San Diego* reached Máztlan on February 7, and finally arrived at Acapulco on March 21. The third ship, the *Trés Reyes* also suffered from the gale off Cape Mendocino, but proceeded on, perhaps as far north as the Oregon border. Because of sickness and lack of instruction on what to do next, the *Trés Reyes* turned back, making Acapulco on February 23 with only five survivors.

At first it appeared as if Vizcaíno's efforts had succeeded in getting him what he wanted. The Viceroy was pleased with the results of the expedition and liked the idea that a fine new port was named for him. However, Spanish colonial assignments were subject to change. Soon after Vizcaíno's return, Monte Rey was given a promotion to viceroy of Peru. His place in New Spain was taken by the Marqués de Montecarlos, who did not trust Vizcaíno. He revoked his Manila galleon reward and had the expedition's map maker tried and then hanged for forgery,³² (although not necessarily because of his chart of Monterey).³³

Looking at the larger picture, the results of the Vizcaíno expedition had little immediate ramification. Not very much more was discovered from what Cabrillo had noted 60 years earlier. Spain made no moves to establish any presence along the California coast for another 167 years. The thinking was that with the winds and currents behind the Manila galleon once it reached the shores of North America, that there really was little need for a port. The normal route of return from the Philippines was to steer north to latitude 30° and find the favorable winds and then turn south as soon as seaweed was spotted, indicating land was near.

And so the California coast remained mostly a mystery. San Francisco Bay had still not been discovered. Not another expedition from Mexico to *Alta* California was to be sponsored by the Spanish until Gaspar de Portolá's adventure in 1769. The Manila galleons were absolved of this responsibility of exploring the coast, with one exception, when Gamelli Carreri described his south bound voyage in 1696.

Nevertheless, barring his descriptions of Monterey, Vizcaíno's charts were highly

regarded for their accuracy, and his maps continued in use until the 1790s. Thus the myth of a safe harbor at Monterey was still on the minds of Spanish officials in the 1760s, when they finally got around to planning the colonization of *Alta* California.

Interest in *Alta* California was revived by José de Gálvez, who was made Visitor-General of New Spain in 1765 (a position actually superior to the Viceroy). Gálvez was given royal instructions to achieve three goals: to reorganize the inefficient government in New Spain, to increase its revenues and to remove the Jesuit missionaries in *Baja* California, replacing them with Franciscans. For reason of personal ambition, Gálvez also desired to give his sphere of influence the look of expansion and not decay. Citing possible foreign interest in California, he proposed occupation of that forgotten place as a defensive measure.

He not only discussed the ever-present concern of English interests, but also mentioned rumors of Russian fur trapping activity in North America. Lack of resources and the remoteness of California were finally put aside. The Spanish now felt compelled to settle *Alta* California before a foreign interloper could. They desired that California become a bulwark against possible aggression - - to protect Mexico and, indeed, all its New World holdings.

The strategy in settling *Alta* California was to establish overland communications and transportation. This seemed necessary because of the power of the English Navy. Lack of enough colonists to occupy the new frontier would be overcome by making the California Indians Spanish in their religion and in their language. That and a gradual intermixing of blood with the Spanish would create a new race of people loyal to the crown back in Spain.

In order to carry out his plans, Gálvez called upon a captain in the Spanish army, Gaspar de Portolá. Born in Balaguer, Spain in 1717,³⁴ the younger son within an aristocratic family, as a young man Portolá had no interest in joining the church or establishing a legal career, so he settled on becoming an officer in the army. He entered the service at the earliest possible age (17) at the lowest possible commissioned rank (ensign). He was involved with many military campaigns from the 1740s onward. However, promotions were slow; he was 8 years an ensign and 25 years a lieutenant before his promotion to captain, and that promotion came with an assignment that any officer in Europe would have thought a professional disaster - - for a job which he did not volunteer - - to permanent duty overseas to the "Army of America,"³⁵ part of Gálvez's military buildup to oppose possible foreign aggression.

The 50-year-old officer arrived in New Spain in 1767. Gálvez gave him his first major assignment - - to evict the Jesuits from the *Baja*. This was a delicate assignment, and there can be little doubt that Portolá's good family connections made him the choice

for the job. It is also likely that since he was fresh from Europe, he would not have the attachment to the priests who had been in the business of building missions in the area since 1697.

By the 1760s, the Jesuits had become target for legends about how they accumulated wealth and power where they served. While these accusations may have had truth to them in other places, in the *Baja*, they had little validity. In all of the Spanish empire, it would have been difficult to find a poorer, more inhospitable place.

Complicating matters, there was already an army captain in the *Baja*, with a long record of service, Fernando de Rivera y Moncada, who was now required to give up his governorship of the *Baja* to this newcomer, without knowing why. Sympathy for the Jesuits was manifest among the troops. A popular revolt among the people was feared, making the order of expulsion important to keep secret. Truly, Portolá's job required a tactful touch, and that he was able to carry this job out in a subtle way can be determined by the words of one of the Jesuits. Father Ducrue wrote:

This Officer of the King arrived full of false prejudice against the Company caused by ridiculous accusations. But then he saw the truth about California, and how false these slanders had been. He never ceased to deplore the disagreeableness of his orders, which notwithstanding he fulfilled in every detail, yet with every kindness, and sympathy for ourselves. And though never able to disregard these orders, he made plain the embarrassment they caused him. For these causes, we must feel. . . grateful to this Catholic gentleman and considerate judge, who lightened our sufferings with his compassion. . . The Governor not only treated us with all kindness ordered by the King, but supplied us most generously with everything needed for the Voyage. . . bewailing the fact that his position required him to carry out the order of expulsion.³⁶

Portolá assigned military personnel to govern *Baja* until the arrival of the Franciscans. For Gálvez, the completion of this assignment meant he could move on to the next task. Once more he called upon Portolá to lead the effort - - this one to explore and colonize *Alta California*. At this point too, Gálvez brought in the leader of the Franciscans just assigned to the *Baja*, Junípero Serra. Portolá would become the military governor of the two Californias, as Serra would become Father-President of the two. The strategy directed Portolá and Serra to begin the colonization effort at the two best harbors, San Diego in the south and Monterey in the north. A *presidio* (fort) and mission would be established at both places and then a system or trail of missions would be placed in between the two about a day's walk apart - - similar to the string of missions in the *Baja*. The principal contingent of the expedition would be on land. Again the possibility of English naval aggression necessitated good land connection, making the blazing of trails imperative for the future.

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While these plans were being finalized, Portolá had to become alarmed by the bout of temporary insanity Gálvez seemed to suffer. At one point during this time, he ordered 600 Guatemalan monkeys put in uniform to help quell a revolt among the Indians of Sonora.³⁷ Gálvez did recover and, in fact, went on in his career to greater things after leaving New Spain. (

THE DISCOVERY OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY

What the Spanish called the "Sacred Expedition",) started out in the early months of 1769. Three ships were assigned the duty of supplying the main body of explorers who were on foot and mule. The vessels *San Antonio* and *San Carlos* were to rendezvous with the land contingent at San Diego. The *San José* was to meet them at Monterey. The land party moved up the *Baja* in two groups. Together they consisted of a number of Christianized Indians to act as interpreters and examples, a few dozen soldiers, a small number of blacksmiths, cooks and carpenters, one engineer and one doctor.

The *San Antonio* reached San Diego first after 54 days at sea. Despite their reputation for accuracy, charts, drawn up during the Vizcaíno expedition, had marked San Diego too far north. The *San Carlos* arrived three weeks later with a scurvy-ridden crew. In the meantime the land parties reached San Diego with only about half of the original 300 who had originally set out. Portolá and Serra were certainly challenged. Dozens were sick. The sole doctor had gone insane. The *San Antonio* was sent back to Mexico for supplies.

Portolá, recognizing his duties, decided to move north to Monterey as ordered with about 60 of the healthy soldiers, the party's engineer, Miguel Costansó, and Franciscan Padre Juan Crespi. Costansó and Crespi turned out to be terrific diarists of the

journey. Crespi, who had been Father Serra's student back in Spain even before Serra became a Franciscan, was particularly enthusiastic about the things they saw and the people they met. Father Serra, meanwhile, took care of the sick and founded the settlement at San Diego, establishing *Alta* California's first mission and presidio. The route Portolá blazed was later referred to as *El Camino Real* (the King's Highway), which is close to U.S. Highway 101 today. His aim was to meet the *San José* at Monterey. Sadly, the *San José* was never heard from again - - lost at sea and lost to history.

Portolá's party anxiously scoured the coast for the *San José* as they came closer to Monterey. When they actually saw Monterey Bay, the men felt that this place could not be the location that Vizcaíno had described as a safe harbor. And so, they marched onward.

By October 23, Portolá's party had reached Whitehouse Creek at the southwest tip of today's San Mateo County. Here they met the Quiroste people, and they noted their "*Casa Grande*". Indicative of what was most on their minds, Crespi wrote about "eight or ten Indian men" who had come over "from another village". The natives seemingly communicated to the Spanish that within three days' march there existed two harbors, "and the ship is there: Divine Providence grant it be so, and that we reach there as soon as can be!"⁴⁰ Thus the hope that Monterey Bay still lie ahead with the promise of provisions from the *San José* remained alive.

The Quirostes sent guides along with the Spanish as they proceeded north. They crossed Pescadero Creek and then rested at San Gregorio Creek on October 25 and 26. Engineer Costansó noted that rest was necessary because Captain Rivera was "indisposed with the general ailment of scurvy and with a flux of the bowels which attacked a good many people. . ."⁴¹ In fact the soldiers ended up calling the place "*los Cursos*" (Diarrhea Valley). However, Crespi was impressed with the potential of the land he was seeing. He felt the area north of Pescadero Creek to be "a grand place for a very large mission, with plenty of water and soil. . ." At San Gregorio Creek he wrote: "A good deal of land could be put under irrigation with this water; outside the valley all the hills are good dry-farming land." Crespi noted the people at San Gregorio (the Oljons) were "fair and well-bearded. . ." Their men wore no clothes. They "go totally naked, with however much nature gave them in plain view."⁴² Crespi was also impressed by the food offered by the Indians: "They brought us large shares of big dark-colored tamales they make from their grass-seeds, and the soldiers said they were very good and rich." These tamales or pies and other foods provided by the Indians, probably assisted the expedition with fighting its problems with scurvy. However they probably exacerbated the diarrhea situation.

The party proceeded north. At Pillar Point a somewhat frustrated Costansó wrote:

*We could not tell. . .whether we were far away from Monterey or close to it. We were frequently rained upon; our provisions were running out and the men's ration reduced to a mere five flour and bran cakes a day. . .; the decision was made to slay mules for the soldier's rations, but they (the soldiers) refused it until needed for a greater want.*⁴³

Here they rested a day, this time because Portolá was ill with *los Cursos*. Crespi, looking south at Half Moon Bay, was again positive about what he was seeing: "(this) would be a fine place for a town." At Martini's Creek he recorded that the party named it *Arroyo Hondo del Almejas* for the deep creek and its musselbed. He also noted seeing *farallones* (island rocks) "in front of us."

On October 31, the party began its climb of San Pedro or Montara Mountain. Portolá wrote: "We travelled two hours of very bad road up over a very high mountain." When they got to the top, the commander noted that "25 heathens came up." These were the Aramai of Pruristac. Here Portolá dispatched Sergeant José Ortega with eight soldiers to move in advance of the main body. Meanwhile Costansó studied the *farallones* to the west and determined that "Monterey Harbor lay behind us."⁴⁴ That night they made camp in the San Pedro Valley. Crespi wrote about this place:

*Shortly after we reached here there came over to the camp a good-sized village of very good well-behaved friendly heathens, (who) . . .brought us a great many . . . tamales. . .There must be many villages. . .for we have seen many smokes from here; mussels are also very plentiful here, and very large. . . Many deer have been seen upon the hills here. . . Bear tracks and droppings have been seen. . .our sick men since we left the creek of La Salud (Waddell Creek in Santa Cruz County) have been improving more every day. . .*⁴⁵

On November 2, Costansó recorded how a group of the soldiers asked permission to go deer hunting. Some of these:

went a good distance from the camp and so far back up into the hills that they came back after nightfall. These men said, that. . .they had seen an enormous arm of the sea or estuary which shot inland. . .that they had seen handsome plains all studded with trees, and the number of smokes they had made out. . .left them in no doubt the country must have been well peopled with heathen villages.

Thus these hunters became the first Europeans to see the San Francisco Bay, most probably somewhere atop coastal hills now known as Sweeney Ridge. The other intriguing thing about this account is the reference to the "number of smokes" (from village fires), indicating the Bayside was "well peopled".

On Friday, November 3, Costansó reported on a party of scouts who were sent up to the ridge line. They returned at night firing their guns. Crespi tells us that they had “come upon a great estuary.” Some seven villages were close-by, and they saw “many lakes with countless geese, ducks, cranes and other fowl. . .” However, the camp became more excited with the news that Indians, encountered by the scouts, said that a ship was anchored in this estuary. Some felt they had found the *San José* and Monterey after all. However Costansó and Crespi realized that the existence of the *farrallones* so close-by, indicated that this body of water was something else.

The next day, Saturday, November 4, the main party moved up the hill on an Indian path, perhaps close to today’s *Baquino Trail*.⁴⁶ At Sweeney Ridge, they beheld the San Francisco Bay. Portolá wrote: “We traveled three hours, all of it bad road. Stopped with no water.”⁴⁷ Obviously, the commander was not impressed.

Costansó was more descriptive:

*. . .our Commander determined to continue the journey in search of the harbor and vessel of which the scouts had been informed by the heathens, and in the afternoon we set out. . .going along. . .the shoreline. . .until we took to the mountains on a northeast course. From their height we (saw) the great estuary. . .*⁴⁸

Certainly, Crespi was the most loquacious:

*About one o’clock in the afternoon we. . .went over some pretty high hills, with nothing but soil and grass, but the grass all burnt o! by the heathens. Beyond, through hollows between hills, we once more came to climb an extremely high hill, and shortly (saw) from the height a large arm of the sea, or extremely large estuary.*⁴⁹

He estimated that this body of water to be “four or five leagues in width in some places, and in others two, and at narrowest it may be a league wide or more.” A league for these explorers was a rather inexact measurement that could range in actual distance from 2.5 to 4.5 miles. Crespi continues with the view to the north: “About a league and a half or two leagues from where we were, some mountains we made out that seemed to make an opening, and it seemed to us the estuary must go in by there, and as if there were a sort of harbor there within the mountains; we could not see clearly, as the mountains, which were high stood in the way.” In other words, Crespi was describing San Bruno Mountain and Mount Tamalpais behind it. Because of these mountains the party could not locate the outlet of the Bay to the Pacific.

Portolá then made a fateful decision. Still in search of the *San José*, instead of proceeding north and finding the “Golden Gate”, he ordered his party east down Sweeney

Ridge toward San Bruno and then south through the San Andreas Valley in the direction of Millbrae. Costansó wrote that with the estuary “on our left hand,” they “. . . travelled through a hollow. . . in which we stopped at sunset, in the cluster of live-oaks, which fringed the skirts of the high hills on the western side.” Crespi described the place they camped, probably around U.S. Interstate 280, just west of Millbrae: “. . . we set up camp at the foot of these mountains, close to a lake where there were countless ducks, cranes, geese and others.”

The next day, Sunday, November 5, the column of discovery continued. Costansó wrote:

We skirted along the estuary, upon its western side not within sight of it since we were separated from it by hills of the hollow. . . The country was well-favored: the mountains we were leaving to the right. . . showed themselves topped with handsome savins, with scrub oak and other lesser trees.

They were travelling down the San Andreas Valley, still following today’s Interstate 280. Crespi commented on the abundant animal life:

Tracks have been encountered of large livestock here in this hollow, which. . . must have been made by bears, as droppings have been seen belonging to (them). . . Also a great many deer have been seen together, while the scouts aver that when they explored here they succeeded in counting a band of 50 deer together.⁵⁰

After marching about four and a half hours they came to rest near a creek (due west of Burlingame) and were visited by three natives - - most probably Ssalson people. They were, according to Crespi, much like Indians previously met on the Peninsula, “very well-behaved: with gifts of black pies and a sort of cherries.”

Portolá’s exhausted group marched another day trying to get around the estuary. They made it as far as San Francisquito Creek, near present-day El Camino Real at the border between San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. Here, near a tall tree that could be seen for miles around (*Palo Alto*), they made camp, and Portolá ordered Sergeant Ortega with a few soldiers to continue the search. The scouting party proceeded south, then east, then north, around the Bay, but did not travel far enough up the eastern bayshore to spot the Golden Gate or, of course, the *San José*. On Friday evening, November 10, they returned to camp “very downcast,”⁵¹ according to Costansó.

The gloomy report prompted Portolá to convene a council of his officers. Although Captain Rivera refused to believe it, somehow the expedition had missed Monterey, and the sick and exhausted party was at its end of endurance. They then broke camp and retraced their steps to Sweeney Ridge, then the San Pedro Valley and on down the

coast, eating their mules along the way.⁵² At Monterey Bay, they again could not come to grips that this was the place described by Vizcaíno. On returning to San Diego, most of the party revealed that they had not been much impressed with what they had seen. It seems only Father Crespi knew that something significant had been found at this great estuary: “It is a very large and fine harbor, such that not only all the navy of our Most Catholic Majesty but those of all Europe could take shelter in it.”⁵³

Back in Mexico, opinion sided on Crespi’s side of things. Early in 1770, under orders to continue his work, Portolá sent Serra, Costansó and his second in command, Pedro Fages, on to Monterey by sea in the *San Antonio*. He set out overland again with just 12 soldiers, leaving only eight to guard San Diego. He finally realized that what the first party had twice walked by was Monterey Bay. California’s second mission and second *presidio* would be established in the area. In the meantime he sent Fages north to try to figure out what it was that they had seen at the end of the first expedition. Fages and a small group of soldiers marched north-east via an inland route, reached the San Francisco Bay and made it far enough up the east bayshore to be the first Europeans to see the opening of the Bay at the Golden Gate.

Still, Gaspar de Portolá, the sophisticated Spaniard of noble blood, saw little in all this. He thought that if the Russians really wanted this God-forsaken part of the world, of which he had grave doubts, that they should have it as a punishment for their aggressive ambitions.⁵⁴ He was soon recalled to Spain, retired and never came back to the Americas.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISCOVERY OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY

Why had not the Golden Gate and San Francisco Bay been discovered previously? The California coast had been charted and charted again. Cabrillo’s crew, Drake, Vizcaíno and the many Manila galleons had sailed right on by. Certainly the persistent fogs of the Golden Gate could have hidden it from some. Most sailors, with or without fog, desired to sail west of the Farallon Islands to avoid catastrophe, making a discovery unlikely. Mostly though, the Golden Gate was difficult to see, even close by. Presently the famous Golden Gate Bridge marks the spot. Without it, the Gate is disguised. The opening itself is small. Moreover, the islands of the Bay, with the East Bay hills as a backdrop, give the appearance that the Gate is but another rocky cove along the Pacific Coast.⁵⁵

Thus the discovery was made by the first European *land* party to reach the Bay region, and the location of the event is today known as Sweeney Ridge. With the aid of San Mateo County historian Frank Stanger, California historian Herbert Bolton, of the University of California, after years of research, confirmed the location of the dis-

covery site in 1947.⁵⁶ The site at Sweeney Ridge was designated a National Historic Landmark on May 23, 1968.⁵⁷

Local historians have long hailed the discovery as crucial to the development of the Peninsula and surrounding areas. Had not Portolá happened upon “the great estuary,” it may have taken many more years before a land party might have encountered San Francisco Bay, further retarding the march of events of the Spanish California period.⁵⁸ While Monterey was established in 1770, it only lasted six years as the Spanish northernmost outpost, for in 1776, the mission and *presidio* at San Francisco were established as a direct result of the discovery of the Bay.

The 1769 episode encouraged more exploration. In 1772, the new military governor of California, Pedro Fages, went north from Monterey as he did in 1770, except this time he took along Father Crespi and penetrated much farther north and then east. In a failed attempt to get around the Bay, he charted the landscape deep into the East Bay and discovered Suisun Bay and the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta.

From the descriptions of 1772, the Spanish could now begin to put together the keys to the military protection and commercial promise of *Alta* California. They could now envision that if the Golden Gate was navigable then access to the greatest natural harbor on the west coast of the Americas could be gained. Because the Gate was so narrow, the entire San Francisco Bay might be sufficiently defended from the bluffs nearby against a naval threat. Advancing that train of thought, if the Golden Gate could be controlled and utilized, and if the Bay could likewise be controlled and utilized, then the deep waters of the Delta could be used by ships to sail into the interior of California. Further exploration indicated if the Delta could be sailed, then the Sacramento River might be navigated to the north and the San Joaquin River to the south. In the era before railroads, when maritime shipping was universally the most important type of transportation, these realizations had great significance.

It had all started with the Bay discovery in 1769. Although Spain lacked the personnel and resources to fully exploit the situation, and the later Mexican authorities were even less able to take advantage of it, after the United States military take-over of California in 1846 and the Gold Rush that followed three years later, the Americans were. They fortified the Golden Gate with a variety of forts and gun emplacements before the Civil War (1861-1865). The port and City of San Francisco grew in population and economic importance so that by the end of the nineteenth century it could be considered the “Imperial”⁵⁹ city of the American West. For thousands of years, California had existed as a difficult to reach wilderness inhabited by a native people unknown to the rest of the world. From Portolá’s chance discovery of the Bay forward, all would change. This California would become within 200 years the most populated, economi-

cally powerful and culturally influential state within the most important country in the world.

For the Spanish in the 1770s, they did aspire to move with purpose. In 1774, veteran explorer and now military governor of *Alta* California, Fernando Rivera, with Franciscan Padre Francisco Palou (like Crespi, a former student of Father Serra), proceeded north from Monterey with the charge of finding the Golden Gate, this time from the south. Along the way they passed through the “hollow” that had been written about back in 1769. They named the place *San Andres*⁶⁰ (today San Andreas Valley and Lake, just east of Sweeney Ridge). They succeeded in reaching the northern tip of the Peninsula to view the Gate from that vantage point. Imagine the irony, as Rivera realized how close the 1769 party had come. If not for the report by the Indians of the possibility of finding the *San José*, Portolá’s party might have discovered the Golden Gate and the Bay.

The next step was to determine if the Golden Gate could be navigated. In 1775, under the command of Juan Manuel de Ayala, the seasoned ship *San Carlos* successfully passed through on August 5. The crew of *San Carlos* were to meet up with a land party from Monterey led by Captain Bruno Heceta.⁶¹ They explored the Bay for 42 days and were the first, among many other firsts, to map the San Mateo County bayline. The soldiers they were to rendezvous with were caught up in other duties and never met the *San Carlos*.⁶² Using a canoe carried by a mule, Heceta with Father Palou, another priest, nine men, three sailors and a carpenter did some additional exploring about the time the *San Carlos* left the Bay. Although there exists no records to prove it, local historians have surmised that Heceta named San Bruno Mountain (north-east of Sweeney Ridge) after his patron saint.⁶³

Now that the feasibility of establishing San Francisco as a port had been proven, the Spanish needed to set in motion plans to create a mission and *presidio* there. Indicative of the military importance the Spanish assigned to San Francisco, although more than 20 missions would eventually be established in *Alta* California, only four *presidios* would be built - - one at San Diego, the southern bastion: one at Monterey, supposedly the northern sentinel: San Francisco in 1776: and, the last, Santa Barbara in 1782.

By the mid-1770s, the Spanish were beginning to concede that making a successful colony of *Alta* California would require more than simply making the Indians new subjects of the King. Additional colonists were needed. A trail from central Mexico was proposed by Spanish frontier military officer Juan Bautista de Anza. Beginning in 1774, he blazed the trail that would bear his name from Sonora clear to San Francisco.

The flurry of activity in these years, included further exploration of the Coast. In 1774, under Captain Juan Pérez, the *Santiago*, with Father Crespi on board, sailed as

far as Canada's Queen Charlotte Island. In 1779, Spanish ships *Princesa* and *Favorita* made more observations of the California Coast. In 1782, the same ships with different captains accomplished yet more exploring. However, the increased activity did not keep all foreigners away. For example in 1783 and 1786, French naval commander Jean François Galaup de la Pérouse visited the Coast. Finally in 1802, Martinez Zayas charted from north of the Columbia River to Monterey in the last Spanish venture to map the Pacific Coast of North America.⁶⁴

SPANISH OCCUPATION OF THE SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA (CONTEXTUAL)

Lieutenant Colonel Juan Batista de Anza's party of 240 settlers, in 1776, made the occupation of the San Francisco Peninsula possible for the Spanish. He recruited soldiers and farmers from the provinces of Sonora and Sinaloa in Mexico.⁶⁵ Anza described his conscripts to Antonio Bucareli, the Spanish Viceroy at Mexico City:

...with regard to the forty families... , let me say that the people... I considered best suited for the purpose... are those... in the direst poverty and misery, and so I have no doubt they would most willingly and gladly embrace the advantage which your Excellency may... offer them...⁶⁶

Included in the party were soldiers, 29 wives of soldiers and their numerous children (within this contingent was the Sanchez family that would come to own a large portion of the north San Francisco Peninsula including Sweeney Ridge), 20 volunteers, three *vaqueros* (cowboys), three servants, three Indian interpreters, three Franciscan padres and officers Anza and Lieutenant José Moraga.⁶⁷ They also took with them 1,000 head of livestock. After an incredible journey they reached Monterey on March 10, 1776.

While the settlers rested there, Anza took a small group with him, including Franciscan Padre Pedro Font, to pick out sites for a mission and *presidio*. They took the eastern route through the Santa Clara Valley (as opposed to coming up the Coast).⁶⁸ They marched up what became El Camino Real on the Peninsula. Anza had the party veer to the west about four or five miles north of today's Woodside (near the Phleger Estate) in order to survey the timber there to determine if it might be useful in construction of the San Francisco settlement. At about Belmont they received the word that the Lamchin to the south and the Ssalson to the north were at war. At a good-sized creek in Ssalson country, the group rested long enough for Padre Font to give it the name "San Mateo". The City and County of San Mateo would eventually take the name too. Why is lost to history. They crossed the Creek on March 26. The feast day for St. Matthew is September 21.

On March 27, Anza's group reached Yelamu country (San Francisco). They camped

just south of today's Golden Gate Bridge. They immediately found the Yelamu to be friendly; a couple of the natives brought them firewood as a gift.

Anza chose the site for the *Presidio* on bluffs overlooking the strategically important Golden Gate. Three miles to the southwest, the site for *Mission San Francisco de Asís* was selected. Font gave the nearby lagoon the name *de los Dolores*, remembering the sorrows of the Virgin Mary.⁶⁹ After two days in San Francisco, they headed back, but only after further exploring the Carquinez Strait, the junction of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers and the Diablo Mountain Range.⁷⁰

After his return to Monterey, Anza was recalled for other frontier service. The job of moving part of the party up to San Francisco fell to José Moraga. The pioneers numbered 75. They included 14 soldiers, the wives and children of the soldiers, some settlers (including the Sanchez family), fathers Francisco Palóu and Pedro Cambón and 13 young Indian servants to assist the priests. They moved forward with help of a mule train. They also drove up a herd of 286 head of cattle.⁷¹ These last mentioned animals were important resources for the days ahead. Meat kept the settlers fed, while the hides were used for shelter, beds, saddles, ropes, thongs and binding materials.⁷² The party dedicated the *Presidio* on September 17 and did likewise for the mission on October 8.

All the while, the leadership of the Spanish was in disagreement. Serra and the Franciscans quarreled with Pedro Fages about conduct of soldiers and treatment of Indians when he was military governor. After Fernando Rivera took over in 1774, they argued with him. Rivera, who had resented Portolá's presence in California, also had issues with Anza.

Worse than internal bickering was the closing of the Anza trail in 1781. In 1780, the Franciscans established two missions in Yuma Indian country, on the Anza trail just west of the Colorado River within today's southeastern California. Governor Rivera was there in 1781. The cattle of the Spanish destroyed part of the Yuma's supply of mesquite beans. Other antagonisms occurred. The Yumas had a more war-like culture than most other California Indians. They destroyed both missions, then surprised Rivera and his 30 soldiers. All the men were killed including Rivera and four padres. The women and children of the mission communities were taken as prisoners. Some of the captives were later ransomed, but the Spanish made no attempt to rescue the hostages or punish the Yumas. The Anza trail was closed for the rest of the Spanish period of California History.

Alta California now became sort of an island. Unfavorable winds and currents of the Pacific made maritime contact difficult to the west, Russians and wilderness lay to the north, the lofty Sierra Nevadas lined the eastern fringe of California, and deserts and

hostile Indians were to the south. Therefore the rate of colonial activity was slow. In 1781, about 600 people in California could be considered Spanish. By 1821, Spain's last year in control of *Alta* California, exclusive of Christianized Indians, the number had only increased to 3,000. Even this small augmentation was due to a robust birth rate, with practically no immigration from other parts of the Spanish Empire.

Spanish military presence was light. In the early 1790s, British Commissioner George Vancouver visited *Alta* California while working out details for a treaty. He observed all four *presidios* and found them weak. Monterey's had only eight cannon and Santa Barbara just two. At San Diego, none of its guns were mounted, and at San Francisco's *presidio*, the most important position strategically in *Alta* California, Vancouver noted that it had but two cannon. Incredibly, neither of these were serviceable, having been exposed to the elements and neglected. In other words, the lightest warship in the British navy could have taken the San Francisco Bay, if it could sail that far. As a result of Vancouver's visit, the Spanish did get busy in 1793 by constructing a land battery on the bluff where Fort Point is today (the bluff was cut away in the 1850s to build the fort). However this *Castillo de San Joaquin* also fell victim to inadequate upkeep within a short time.

While the Spanish government and military seemed incapable of gaining momentum in *Alta* California, the Catholic Franciscans made remarkable progress. Before he died in 1784, Serra had supervised the establishment of nine missions and the baptism of 5300 souls.⁷³

The Ohlone people were among the first to be brought into the *Alta* California mission system, and among the San Francisco Bay Costanoan language group of Ohlones, the Yelamu, of present day San Francisco, had the first experience with a permanent Spanish settlement. Initially, the missionaries noted that the Indian people seemed fearful of the newcomers. This was the first time they had seen families coming with Spanish soldiers. However, once work commenced on building the community, the Yelamu's curiosity and friendliness manifested in new feelings. According to Father Palóu: "They came to visit us frequently, bringing their rude gifts of mussels and wild seed, which were always reciprocated with beads and some of our food. . ." ⁷⁴

The padres must have been also encouraged by the respect given by the Indians to Christian religious symbols. At San Mateo Creek, Portolá had left a cross in 1769. The Indians had not destroyed or bothered it for seven years when Anza's party went by there. In fact they had left gifts to the new "white man's God"⁷⁵ of arrows, foods and feathers.

All progress on working with the Yelamu was disrupted on August 12, 1776, when Ssalson warriors attacked them. Palóu described the incident:

The heathens of the villages of San Mateo, who are their enemies, fell upon them at a large town about a league from this lagoon, in which there were many wounded and dead on both sides. Apparently the Indians of this vicinity were defeated, and so fearful were they of others that they made tule rafts and all moved to the shore opposite the Presidio, or to the mountains on the east side of the bay.⁷⁶

To no avail, the Spanish tried to reassure the Yelamu that the soldiers would protect them. Some Yelamu came back to hunt during the fall, but now an altercation took place between Spanish soldiers and the Indians which resulted in the deaths of a Spaniard and a Yelamu.⁷⁷

Not until the following spring (1777) did some of the younger Yelamu people overcome their fears and begin taking religious instruction. On June 24, the initial three were baptized at the mission. The first of these was 20-year-old Chamis from the Yelamu village of Chutchui, whose mother was from Pruristac. The other two were boys of about nine years of age.⁷⁸

It is unknown how much these youngsters understood about the significance of this commitment, but their lives would be changed tremendously and forevermore. They now lived at the Mission with its new foods, wore clothes of cloth, and lived under ceilings and behind walls. They learned to plant and cultivate crops, herd domesticated animals and tan hides. They found the padres stern. The work schedule was rigid, and there was no going back to the previous way of life. They knew if they were to run away they would be brought back by the soldiers and be whipped.⁷⁹

By the end of the year, 32 more neophytes (new Christians) were brought into the church. They were all young: 23 males and 9 females. Twenty-seven were Yelamu, four were Urebura (San Bruno) and one was a Lamchin (Redwood City).

Between 1777 and 1781, the converts continued to be predominantly children and adolescent Yelamu. In fact by 1780, most of the young Yelamu had joined the Mission. Not until 1783 were a number of married couples baptized.⁸⁰ Progress was steady so that by 1800 close to all of the Peninsula's Indians were within the mission system.⁸¹

The Aramai were among the first to be taken in of the people south of San Francisco. Indeed between 1779 and 1784, most of the Aramai had become Christians. The headman at Pruristac, Yagueche, was the first chieftain of the Peninsula people to become a neophyte and had his conversion completed before the Yelamu headman by one year. His baptism took place June 7, 1783, when he was believed to be 70 years old.⁸² He joined the church with one of his wives and two Aramai girls from Timigtac (Mori Point).

Most Chiguans (Half Moon Bay) were brought in between 1783 and 1787: the Cote-gens (Purísima Creek), 1786-1791 and the Oljons (San Gregorio Creek) 1786-1793. The Quirostes (Año Nuevo) were taken in by three missions - - San Francisco, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz during the 1790s.

A significant factor helping the Franciscans in late 1780 was the ending of antagonism between the Yelamu and Ssalson. That December, a Yelamu girl and a Yelamu village headman's son married Ssalsons (San Mateans) in Christian ceremony. Indeed by the end of 1783, of the mission's neophyte population of 221, 73 were Yelamu, despite the fact that no Yelamu chieftain had yet been baptized.

The year 1783 seems to have been a key one for *Mission San Francisco de Asís*. That year, almost as many married couples came into the church as had been the case for the seven years before. Previously only 10 couples had been baptized, but in 1783 there were nine, among them four from Pruristac, more than any other village. Considering the distance from the mission to Pruristac, and its small size, this village sent a proportionately large number of people to be converted that year.⁸³

The conversions of couples continued in 1784, including another two from Pruristac. Probably recognizing the progress being made, Franciscan Father President Serra visited San Francisco that year, at the seven-year anniversary of the first baptism at the Mission.

In 1785, larger numbers of Urebure, Ssalson and Lamachin people of the Peninsula's bayshore joined the Church. By 1787, the last of the Yelamu were in. Between 1786 and 1787, the members of Peninsula bayside conversions increased yet more rapidly. After a three year lull of activity, in 1790, more baptisms took place among the eastern Peninsula groups until by the end of the year nearly two-thirds of them were Christians. The final wave of conversion for the baysiders occurred in 1793, including the last of the Ssalsons.

The rapidity and completeness of the sweep of these people into the Church seems extraordinary. Randall Milliken in his 1995 study, *Time of Little Choice*, explains that this transformation resulted because of the shattering by the Spanish of the balances that had made Ohlones so successful in an unchanging world. While Spanish livestock took over the pasture land, Spanish law prohibited the Indians from burning brush to provide grasslands for the animals they hunted. Spanish diseases depleted local populations and broke the pattern of teamwork among the people. The survivors simply had not enough hands to continue the old ways. Stronger groups, less effected originally, could temporarily dominate their weakened neighbors.

According to Milliken the people "lost faith in the feasibility of continuing their

traditional way...,”⁸⁴ and, sadly, once the decision was made to be taken in by the Church “...they left behind a major portion of their identity.”⁸⁵ He elaborates that the Franciscans engaged in a campaign of “cultural denigration” in which they “...sought to make the native people feel ashamed of their traditional way of life and envious of Spanish culture.” In short, the old ways “...provided no answers in the context of the new social reality...” This acceptance of “...a foreign culture as inherently superior to one’s own is, in a sense, to depreciate one’s self.” The Franciscans simply replaced tribal elders as their “supernatural spirits seemed stronger.”⁸⁶ Thus the people were forced to seek a new identity.

Meanwhile the thought of any defensive alliances that the people might forge to oppose the Spanish was impossible. The Indian people of Central California, simply did not think of themselves as a single people.

Nevertheless, when one considers the few padres and soldiers involved with this cultural transformation, it is amazing that so many native people could have been indoctrinated into the new faith in so short a time. The dedication and philosophies of the Franciscans are to be acknowledged as some reasons behind their success.⁸⁷ The padres sincerely believed they were gifting the Indian people with a religion that would allow them a blissful afterlife. Without them, the Indians’ souls would be lost. By converting to Catholicism, an Indian became a *gente de razón*, that is a person of reason. He was now also a loyal Spanish subject, and intermarriage between the natives and Spanish was not discouraged.

In the eyes of the priests the new life was morally enriching for the Indians. The disciplined activities that came with their conversion was not just in their new religion but moved them from savagery to civilization. To transform the Indians from wild beings would take a huge effort that would be wrenching, even unnatural for the natives, and be of substantial work for the Franciscans.⁸⁸ Thus catechism and prayer needed the augmentation of a regimented work schedule to complete the Indians as “people of reason”.

In spite of spiritual philosophy, the realities of the mission system for the Indians were grim. By the 1780s, for the mission people at *Mission San Francisco de Asís*, this meant a life of confinement, spiritually and physically. Most lived beneath the bell tower, except for a few children of gentiles (the unconverted), who were allowed to return to their parents with the idea that they would try to tempt mothers and fathers into the mission fold as well.⁸⁹

The demanding life for the neophytes included frequent masses in which the people kneeled for long periods. They learned European skills such as spinning and weaving for the women and farming for the men. Long work days were expected, and soldiers

were in close proximity to maintain order.⁹⁰ Corporal punishment were inflicted frequently on both the men and the women.

By the 1780s, the Franciscans were realizing problems with the system at San Francisco. In order to have a successful mission community, it was necessary to have abundant fresh water, enough arable land and extensive pasturage. Mission San Francisco had none of these. Situated at the tip of the Peninsula for strategic reasons, it had limited sources of brackish water, sandy soil for cultivation and little close-by pasturage for livestock. As early as 1783, the priests were complaining to Spanish officials in Mexico about troubles feeding all the people. As the population continued to grow, so did the food problem.

Worst yet were the diseases that the Spanish brought with them, of which the Indians had no immunity. At *Mission San Francisco de Asis*, up to 30% of a population might die in a bad year. The high death rate combined with a low birth rate among the demoralized people was a disturbing trend to contend with for the padres.

The first epidemic hit San Francisco in 1785. The death rate jumped to 15.5% with 48 people dying. The particular sickness that did this awful damage was not identified in the records of the padres.

THE MISSION OUTPOST BENEATH SWEENEY RIDGE (CONTEXTUAL)

The creation of a mission outpost southwest of Sweeney Ridge in the San Pedro Valley (now the Linda Mar area of Pacifica) initiates an important theme of San Francisco Peninsula history. From this point through to our modern era, the resources of the southern part of the Peninsula (now San Mateo County) have been utilized to help San Francisco succeed, first as mission and then, later, as an important, internationally renowned city.

The idea of creating agricultural outposts for the California missions did not belong solely to the San Pedro Valley. Mission San Francisco itself would have at least two more active centers, at San Mateo and San Rafael.⁹¹ However no outpost was more important to the survival of a mission nor extensive in its activities in California than what became known as *Asistencia San Pedro y San Pablo* (Saint Peter and Saint Paul's Ranch).

What moved the padres to establish the outpost? The crowded conditions at San Francisco, and perhaps the lack of food too, had helped fester disease there. By moving down the Peninsula with some of the people the crowding could be somewhat alleviated. Moreover, the natural limitations of San Francisco required an agricultural site that could grow sufficient crops of grain, fruit and vegetables. Greater pasturage

for the livestock, especially cattle, was also needed. Finally, many potential neophytes lived south of San Francisco. Especially those on the coast were difficult to reach. An outpost closer to the gentiles would facilitate more conversions.

Why the San Pedro Valley? Back in 1774, when he was with Rivera, Father Palóu had noted the place as well-suited for a fully functional mission. Although timber for construction was not abundant, the valley did not “lack land, water, or pasture for cattle.”⁹² Indeed the Spanish were well acquainted with San Pedro. Here Portolá had camped just before discovering the Bay. Also the friendly Aramai of Pruristac came from here, and it was not far from the San Francisco Mission - - only about 10 miles. After some study, the padres agreed with Palóu’s assessment. The place appeared to have fertile soil, San Pedro Creek ran all year round, good grazing land was present, and the sun seemed to find a hole in the fog and clouds at San Pedro.

Padres Pedro Cambón and Miguel Giribet made the decision to move forward in 1786.⁹³ Construction began at the village site of Pruristac and made use of the wattle technique of erecting wooden poles upright in the ground and then plastering the framework with mud. The structures were then white washed with lime from the newly found quarry at Mori Point. By the end of 1786, the padres reported back to Mexico that they had constructed an outpost of six rooms at San Pedro, complete with palisade walls and thatch roof. The rooms consisted of a chapel with an altar, a presbytery, two living quarters, a tool room and a granary.⁹⁴ The buildings formed two sides of what might one day be a quadrangle. A 20-foot tall wooden cross was put in the middle of the complex. The padres reported that approximately 10 acres of corn and four acres of beans had already been sown, with another nine acres cleared for wheat. Two irrigation ditches had also been dug.

In 1787, three new rooms were added, forming a third side of the quadrangle. The padres also saw that 2760 yards of willow fencing was put up to keep livestock and grizzly bears from the crops. Bears had damaged the corn harvest the year before. Two more rooms were added a year later but could not be roofed before the winter. A temporary thatch cover was fabricated to protect this construction.⁹⁵ By 1789, the padres had in mind making the outpost’s construction much more permanent. A new building, 16’ x 110’, was erected, probably replacing previous construction. This time adobe bricks, one-and-a-half thick, were used to create walls. Two additional rooms were built with this material - - a new priest’s quarters and one for the *mayordomo* (or foreman).

Although the quadrangle was never completed,⁹⁶ in 1790 construction was still taking place, with more drainage ditches being completed.

The *Asistencia* was a success in its first year. By 1787, all the crops necessary for the

Mission San Francisco were grown here. The report back to Mexico even mentioned a surplus of food and that more could be cultivated if a market existed for sale of the produce. That year peach and quince trees were planted as well as grape vines to diversify the tables of the Mission population. In 1790, the Mission and *Presidio* were getting nearly all their provisions from the San Pedro Valley.⁹⁷ This included ample supplies from 36 acres of wheat, but also barley, beans, peas, rosemary, lentils and corn, plus various fruit from the plantings mentioned above.

The population count of *San Pedro y San Pablo* was never definitely stated in the reports of the Franciscans. However, we have knowledge that there was considerable activity there among the people, beyond the construction and successful farming endeavors. The first recorded birth took place on March 10, 1786 - - a baby girl. The church of the outpost recorded its first baptism on June 15, 1787. Father Cambón wrote:

*I solemnly baptized a child, who was born on the 7th of the month, the legitimate child of Hilarion and Ursula, neophyte Indians of this Mission of San Francisco. . . He put on the name of Tito Maria. Diego Olbera, a servant of the mission, and his wife Maria Josepha, were sponsors. . .*⁹⁸

In fact 25 of the 109 baptisms recorded by the priests at *Mission San Francisco de Asís* were conducted at San Pedro that year. The neophytes included people from both the coast and Bayside communities. The padres were delighted with the activity there and remarked that the new outpost would allow them to recruit neophytes as far south as Año Nuevo. In his report to Mexico, Governor Pedro Fages, despite his differences with the Franciscans, commented on the hard work of the missionaries and the “fortunate results” at San Pedro.⁹⁹

During the years of the outpost’s greatest activity, although most coast people still received baptism at San Francisco, a significant number were brought into the Church at the *Asistencia*. The first were Cotegan (Purísima Creek) and Oljon (San Gregorio Creek), including the Oljon headman, 30-year-old Ysus. Indians from as far down as Año Nuevo (the Quirostes) would eventually receive baptism there.¹⁰⁰ By 1791, operations were still robust. That year 70 baptisms were recorded at the *San Pedro y San Pablo* Church.¹⁰¹ Eventually, 160 baptisms would be performed there.¹⁰²

The first recorded burial at the outpost took place May 5, 1786. Another death that summer was a granddaughter of Yagueche, once the headman at Pruristac. In 1787, Father Giribet conducted five more funerals there. Eventually more than 135 people were buried in the Valley, in a cemetery that has been lost in time. By mid-1787, Padres Cambón and Giribet had recognized that the number of people at San Pedro warranted their commitment to having one priest say Mass there every Sunday. Between 1789 and 1791, there were nearly equal numbers of burials at the Mission as there was

at the *Asistencia*. This might infer that an equal number of neophytes lived at the two places, giving San Pedro a possible population of 300 people.¹⁰³

Among those baptized at *San Pedro y San Pablo* in 1791 was a Quiroste named Charquin. Within just a few days of his new Christian experience, this neophyte fled to hide in the Santa Cruz Mountains, near Año Nuevo, the place he had lived before. That winter he became the first San Francisco Bay Area Indian to organize active resistance to Spanish authority. A Spanish patrol captured Charquin. He was imprisoned at the San Diego *Presidio* in May of 1793. Some have speculated that this hostility may have played a part in the eventual decision to withdraw, or at least partially withdraw from the San Pedro Valley.

From the point of view of the Franciscans, the founding of Mission Santa Cruz, in 1791, may have led to consideration that less activity on the Coast would now be required of the priests at San Francisco. Also that year, Padre Cambón, who had helped establish *San Francisco de Asís* with Palóu back in 1776, decided to retire. His energy may have been a crucial factor in keeping the activities at *San Pedro* so vital.¹⁰⁴

There can be no doubt that disease, which first struck the *Asistencia* in 1791, had influence in diminishing activity there. It might have been measles. By the end of the year the death rate at San Pedro had jumped from an average of about a dozen a year to 47, while baptisms dropped to practically none. Perhaps witnessing the devastating effects of this illness caused Charquin to flee. He was joined by others. In 1792, another 50 people died.

Activity at San Pedro dropped substantially in 1792. The last wedding there took place January 10. Only ten people were baptized that year, all before July (in San Francisco, there were 123 baptisms in 1792). Seemingly, an abandonment was occurring.

The next year a new farming center was established at San Mateo Creek on the Bayside of the Peninsula (at today's Baywood and El Camino Real). Livestock found good grazing there, and the Franciscans built an adobe building and began planting corn, vegetables and wheat. No report came from San Pedro in 1794.¹⁰⁵

With determination, but with fewer neophytes, the padres made San Mateo a huge success. At the start sheep ranching was its primary mission, but because San Mateo's adobe building existed at El Camino Real, about mid-way between the San Francisco and Santa Clara missions, it also became sort of a half-way house or "Mission Hospice."¹⁰⁶ Other centers of activity augmented the work at San Mateo during the time of *Mission San Francisco de Asís*' domination of the Peninsula landscape. Eventually a cattle herd of 10,000 head and an equal number of sheep, with hundreds of horses and mules

grazed on “open range” as far south as San Francisquito Creek on the Bayside and Tunitas Creek on the coast.

By 1810, cattle raising had become the most important economic activity of the Spanish, and this was extended into the following Mexican period of California and Peninsula history. San Mateo County historian Alan Hynding termed all California “a sprawling cattle kingdom”¹⁰⁷ of which the Peninsula was certainly a part.

The cattle were of the rugged longhorn variety, animals that needed little care as they roamed the Peninsula free of fences. At first, two herds existed: one owned by the Church and the other belonging to the soldiers. By 1790, the Church’s herd, which had been about 200 to start with in 1776, had grown to nearly 1,800. With horses, mules and sheep, their livestock numbered about 3,600. The *Presidio*’s herd by that time was 1,215. The animals were differentiated by branding. Those belonging to the priests carried an “F” for Franciscan. Those wearing an “R” were property of the soldiers and their King (*Rey*).¹⁰⁸

Over the objections of the soldiers, in 1791, the missionaries convinced the Spanish government that just one herd was necessary. They argued that space was limited on the Peninsula and that only one herd of animals could survive. They lobbied for the “King’s” cattle to be moved to Monterey.¹⁰⁹

The soldiers complained bitterly about the way in which cattle were made available to them for the ensuing five years. Protests from the Commandant of the *Presidio*, Jose Dario Arguello, finally led to a report (1796) to the Viceroy which in turn resulted in action. *Alta* California Governor Diego Borica designated a special ranch be set aside of more than two square leagues for the troops. They called it *Rancho Buri Buri*. It was equivalent to a 15,000 acre foot print that included the south side of San Bruno Mountain, and today’s South San Francisco, San Bruno, Millbrae and the northern half of Burlingame. In other words, it extended from the San Andreas Valley, just beneath Sweeney Ridge, down to the Bay. Cattle branded with the “R” certainly grazed on the Ridge. *Buri Buri*’s corrals were situated on El Camino Real.

A revival, of sorts, was occurring on the other side of the hill. In fact, activity never really stopped in the San Pedro Valley. Even in 1793, a year after the devastating epidemics, a baptism occurred on April 14 (the last). Eleven burials took place, nine in the spring and two in the fall. Perhaps this indicates more farm workers on the site during seasons associated with planting and harvesting. After 1793, the records of the Franciscans are sketchy about crop production. However, Sweeney Ridge and San Pedro Valley saw increased ranching, as the Franciscans’ herds grew throughout the Peninsula. The previously cited 1796 report to the Viceroy insists food production from San Pedro was still important; the document asserted that without the outpost: “it would be impossible (for the mission) to subsist.”¹¹⁰ Thus while the ecclesiastical function of the *Asistencia* ceased, it was still

important to the sustainability of the San Francisco mission community. Mission records of 1798 and 1799 tell us that children were still being born at San Pedro, but were later baptized at San Francisco.

A letter written by Franciscan Martin Landecta, in 1800, speaks of many cattle in the Valley: “20 cows are killed each week.” Also he cites an incredible number of sheep - - 6,000 - - “are at San Pedro” and that “. . .much frijole and maize has begun to ripen.”¹⁰⁹

As late as 1828, Father Tomas Estenaga of *San Francisco de Asís* reported that at San Pedro there was still “cultivation” and pasture for “horned stock”. A census completed that year lists eight men, eight women, six boys and four girls living in the Valley. These 26 Indians compare with only 22 living at San Mateo at the same time. The difference was that six “religious” people lived at San Mateo, while the Indians were on their own at San Pedro.¹¹²

Mission San Francisco de Asís began undergoing secularization in 1834, and the Mexican government confiscated the properties of the Franciscans. While an inventory mentioned a corral at “Pillar,” (or *Rancho Corral de Tierra*), no mention was made of buildings or any improvements at San Pedro. Five years later, the Valley and surrounding lands including Sweeney Ridge was granted to Francisco Sanchez.

The year after the disaster of 1792 at *San Pedro y San Pablo* was also the peak year for Coastal Peninsula people counted within *Mission San Francisco de Asís*. Some 197 neophytes (28%) were among the total of 711. Because of continuous epidemics, their number fell to 128 in just two years. By 1800, mission Indians from the San Mateo Coast numbered only 81 individuals.¹¹³

Among the Aramai, of the 40 that had been baptized since the 1770s, only 25 were still alive by 1794. As the years went by, some of these became important in the mission community. Hilarion, son of Yagueche (Christian name - - Luciano Tiburcio) the ‘old’ Pruristac headman, was known as an *alcalde*, or village boss at the mission. He and another Pruristac man, Jorge, were killed in the service of the Spanish in a skirmish with Indian people across the Bay.

By 1822, only one of the original Pruristac people still survived in the mission community. This was Manuel Conde, born about 1767 and also a son of Yagueche (or Luciano Tiburcio). Children born to the villagers were referred to as mission Indians. Some of the native people counted in the San Pedro census of 1828 may have descended from the original people of Pruristac.¹¹⁴

Of course the larger story of the fate of the Ohlone people is not a happy one. By 1810, all of them had been taken into the missions. Of the 17,000 people that once made-up this culture, few were left after 41 years of contact with the Spanish.

THE MEXICAN ERA (CONTEXTUAL)¹¹⁵

Sweeney Ridge came into the possession of a single individual for the first time in 1839, when, as part of *Rancho San Pedro*, it came to be owned by Francisco Sanchez. Sanchez's property included the San Pedro Valley, and on the site of *Asistencia San Pedro y San Pablo* (and before that Pruristac), he built an adobe home that still stands today as a museum. His land grant consisted of about two leagues of property, approximately the footprint of the City of Pacifica today.

The process by which these lands came into the hands of Francisco Sanchez began with the successful ending of the Mexican Revolution in 1821. Part of the promise of the struggle for independence was to complete the process of secularization that had been the commitment of the Church when it first helped colonized *Alta California*. According to the plan after 10 years, the Indians were supposed to get their land back. Now the Revolution called for secularization to actually occur and occur it did, but not as the Franciscans or the framers of the Revolution had envisioned it.

Under the new Mexican government, real thinking about secularization was set aside at first, while other problems were addressed. Nevertheless, most everyone realized that the end of the mission era was coming.¹¹⁶ As the missions fell apart, the morale of the resident Indians plunged. Most eventually abandoned their mission communities.

On August 17, 1833, the Mexican Congress authorized a law to secularize the California missions. The decree implied that the original pledge of the Franciscans would be enforced - - that each of the native mission communities would receive its own local government, with its own leaders. The Indians themselves would be given lands they could cultivate; the properties of the missions such as animals, tools, seed, etc. would also be given to them.¹¹⁷ The next year the immediate secularization of ten of the missions took place,¹¹⁸ among them *San Francisco de Asís*. The process of confiscation began immediately, including the Church's holdings in the San Pedro Valley. In September, Joaquin Estudillo was appointed commissioner to inventory and preside over the secularization process for the San Francisco mission. The mission Indians seemed poised to receive what had long been promised to them. Missionary control over them did end immediately. However, local authorities such as Estudillo and those that came later, never followed through with giving the land back to the Indians.¹¹⁹

In California there was much at stake. Millions of acres of land, many tens of thousands of livestock and other properties once owned by the Church would eventually come into the hands of individuals through the issuance of some 500 land grants.¹²⁰ Instead of distributing all this property among the mission Indian communities, the commissioners in charge of the process worked with the various Mexican-Californian governors to give these grants to well-placed individuals who had been part of the

military during Spanish times or political favorites within the new regime. Governor Juan Alvarado, who presided over some of the division of the San Francisco Peninsula, explained that the mission Indian population was decreasing as the needs and numbers of the old Spanish families were increasing. The commissioners and governors issued the grants demonstrating considerable favoritism; many times the transactions benefited themselves.¹²¹ All up and down California, huge parcels were given out, some as big as 100,000 acres. On the San Francisco Peninsula, where land was valuable and more people were present, the grants were smaller, the largest, of 35,000 acres, was given to the Arguello family.

The old soldiers' ranch, *Buri Buri*, became the focus of José Antonio Sanchez. Sanchez came to San Francisco as a baby with the Anza party of 1776. He grew up at San Francisco becoming a soldier, first under the Spanish and rose in rank to lieutenant under the Mexican regime. His value as a soldier was well-known, having taken part in over 20 campaigns of Indian skirmishing and expeditions of exploration. Sanchez actually occupied *Buri Buri* in 1825, before secularization had occurred. He built his adobe house at the site of today's Peninsula Hospital in Millbrae. Governor José Castro finally awarded him his 15,739 acre land grant in 1835. *Buri Buri*, with its prime grazing land, was regarded as the prize grant of the Peninsula.¹²²

Of the 17 land grants issued on what would be considered San Mateo County land today, four went to members of the Sanchez clan. Bordering *Buri Buri* to the west at Sweeney Ridge and down to the coast, was *Rancho San Pedro* which went to José's son, Francisco Sanchez, in 1839. North of San Pedro, Francisco de Haro, José's son-in-law, gained *Rancho Laguna de La Merced* in 1837. In 1844, another son-in-law, Domingo Feliz, acquired *Rancho Feliz*, which was down the San Andreas Valley, southwest of *Buri Buri*. Adjacent to *Buri Buri* to the south, and to Feliz to the east, was *Rancho San Mateo*. The Sanchez's petitioned for this property, but it was held in reserve for the Indians still living at the old mission outpost at San Mateo Creek.

As during the mission times, the *rancheros* used the land primarily for cattle grazing. Thousands of the half-wild longhorn animals roamed the open ranges of the Peninsula with brands that told to whom they belonged.

The great numbers of cattle changed the Peninsula's landscape. They grazed nearly to extinction many native shrubs and grasses. At the same time the missionaries, and later Mexicans, unintentionally brought with their new crops a variety of Old World invasive weeds that competed with the native plants.¹²³ Observers also commented on the many rotting carcasses on the open range. *Vaqueros* killed and skinned the cattle during the *matanza* (slaughtering time) and let the bodies lie where they fell. This last mentioned phenomena was due to the advent of California's first great trading endeavor - - the hides-and-tallow industry.

Besides secularization, another promise of the Mexican Revolution was the concept of “free trade”. As people of a Spanish colonial possession, the *Californios* were forbidden to engage in commerce with representatives of any nation except Spain. The new Mexican government opened the long shut door. The thirst among the people here for finished manufactured items, from weapons and tools to clothing and furniture, was substantial. However, what could be bartered? The cash poor, land rich *rancheros* had much of just one commodity, and that was cattle. The meat would spoil on long voyages without refrigeration, but the by-products of the beasts, hides and tallow, could be successfully traded.

The business developed into a lucrative one, enough that the hides became known as “California Dollars”. Back east the hides were made into leather shoes and for dozens of other uses. Tallow had many applications as well, including use in manufacturing candles, soap and fuel.

Trading ships from all over the world, but especially the United States, came to California. Estimates from the years 1826 to 1848 suggest that something on the order of 1,250,000 hides and 62,500,000 pounds of tallow were shipped out of California. Among the most active ports was the village at *Yerba Buena* Cove that would evolve into the City of San Francisco.

Cattle raising was considered a gentlemanly pursuit among the *rancheros*, farming being deemed beneath their dignity. Some planting took place for a few necessities. Most *ranchos* had a field which was fenced to keep out the livestock. The fences were made of willows for posts with saplings strapped to the posts with rawhide to serve as rails. The fenced area was never more than about 40 acres, which might contain a combination of beans, peppers, corn, pumpkins and a few vegetables. The diet of the *Californios* did not vary too much. Beef, beans and tortillas accounted for the most meals.¹²⁴

For the owners of the *ranchos*, life could be easy and relatively carefree. Their hospitality to travelers was legendary. Entertainment, food, even use of a horse could be counted on as a courtesy without charge.¹²⁵

Historians of San Mateo County speculate that the 17 *ranchos* families and their workers probably numbered no more than 500 individuals, a substantial decrease of people from when Ohlones had the Peninsula, before 1769.¹²⁶

What of the San Francisco mission Indians? Yet another disaster hit them. With the new government’s policies the Franciscan priests could no longer provide for the neophytes. Starvation joined continued problems with communicable disease to devastating effect. Some Indians ran away. At the time of the Mexican Revolution, about

1,100 Indians were still included in the population of people controlled by *Mission San Francisco de Asís*. The number dropped to about 200 at the time of secularization.¹²⁷ When the *rancheros* took control of the landscape, many of mission Indians simply went along with the property as laborers.

By 1839, all the Indians still assigned to the mission (between 80 and 90 individuals) lived at the old outpost at San Mateo Creek. Governor Alvarado sent William Hartnell as an “Inspector General” to see to the needs of these people. Hartnell recommended that they be given the land known as *Rancho San Mateo*, which extended from San Mateo Creek to the Sanchez’s *Rancho Buri Buri*. Nothing came of the recommendation except holding off the ambitions of the Sanchez family, as mentioned. The land was eventually granted to Governor Pio Pico’s clerk, Cayetano Arenas, in 1846. With the advent of the Bear Flag Revolt and coming of the Mexican-American War, Arenas sold *Rancho San Mateo* to the American mercantile firm of Mellus and Howard. About 1850, W.D.M. Howard bought out Henry Mellus to establish the first of the great Peninsula estates. After Howard began making his improvements, no more was recorded about the Indians.

Time was running out for the *ranchero* owners as well. While the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that ended the Mexican-American War guaranteed their property rights, the former Mexican citizens were rendered landless in time. Their problems stemmed from the original form of their wealth in land and not cash. California, before the American takeover and the Gold Rush, had no credit system or banks. There was some silver coin but little currency. When it came time to defend their land grants in court, the *rancheros* had little recourse other than selling parcels or mortgaging their real estate. Property taxes became a problem as well. In a general way, one can say that the old *ranchos* came into the hands of the lawyers and bankers of the new American regime.

FRANCISCO SANCHEZ AND RANCHO SAN PEDRO

Rancho San Pedro, awarded to Francisco Sanchez in 1839,¹²⁸ consisted of two leagues of land (approximately the footprint of today’s City of Pacifica). It, of course, included within its boundaries Sweeney Ridge. Sanchez decided to build a house at the site of the old Mission *Asistencia* at San Pedro Creek, before that the Indian village of Pruristac. Despite the ever present threat of grizzly bears, this proved a very good choice. Here in the fertile valley, the sun seemed to shine, even when the rest of the coast was fogged-in.

Sanchez’s grandfather had come to California with Anza back in 1776 with Francisco’s father, who was but a baby at the time. Francisco was the second son (of four in total) born to José Antonio Sanchez II and Maria Ana Josefa Soto. The date of his birth was

April 13, 1805, and the place was San José.¹²⁹ It is probable he began schooling at San José in 1812 at the age of seven. That he could read and write with some skill was unusual for the *Californios*. After the Mexican Revolution, Francisco decided to follow family tradition by entering the military. In 1824, at the age of 19, he joined the local militia, the San Francisco Company at the *Presidio*. In 1830, he was made quartermaster there, and by 1837 he had become captain, a rank he held until the end of the Mexican era. Between 1838 and 1839, and again between 1841 and 1843, he served as the Commandant of the *Presidio*. Sufficient evidence exists that the militia was not extraordinarily active at this most strategic of all California locations. In 1840, the troops there included 12 privates and a sergeant. After 1843, apparently there were no troops serving there at all. When the Americans came to take California in 1846, Francisco was again the Commandant, mostly in title only.

He was also involved in civil matters. In 1834, when a small local government was being organized at San Francisco, he was made secretary of the Council. It began to function in 1835, as secularization of the Mission was taking place. In 1842, he was made *alcalde*, the sort of combined mayor and judge of the community. In 1844, now serving as Captain of the Port at Yerba Buena, he was called on to put down a mutiny on a ship at anchor. Sanchez reportedly killed one of the mutineers by running him through with a sword. Afterwards, he resigned from that post.

He married Maria Florencia Teodora Higuera in 1833. The 15-year-old bride was marrying a 28 year-old man. She went by the name Teodora and descended from an original Anza pioneer man and a California Indian woman. Between 1834 and 1858, the Sanchezs' apparently had 13 children, seven sons, four daughters and two babies that died in infancy. At first the family lived at the *Presidio*. Francisco owned two lots in Yerba Buena but sold one and rented the other. Most of the people living at Yerba Buena were "foreigners," that is, people from the United States and other places.

As his father had, Francisco started living at his *rancho* before it was officially given to him in 1839. He built a temporary dwelling and then, in 1842, began to build his substantial adobe home.¹³⁰

He constructed the house on the foundation of part of the outpost and probably used some of its adobe bricks and other materials such as brass nails and timbers. It has been estimated that he used 15,000 bricks in the construction of this 64' x 24', two-story, six-room structure. Lime for the plaster work most likely came from the quarry at Mori Point that had been used by the Franciscans 57 years before.¹³¹ The shingles were cut from redwood trees southeast from San Pedro, in the Woodside area. Labor for this project was almost certainly California Indian. Even as late as 1860, the United States census shows that Sanchez still employed two Indians, a cook and a herdsman.¹³² Undoubtedly, when completed in 1846, his adobe was the most substantial

home on the Peninsula. That Sanchez was the most influential man among his peers is demonstrated by the series of events that culminated in the Battle of Santa Clara.

Sanchez, at first, was friendly toward the Americans in California. In January of 1846, Captain John C. Fremont of the United States Army and American Vice Consul at Yerba Buena William Leidesdorff visited him at his San Pedro Valley home. Fremont, officially surveying California for reasons that remain vague to history, wished to feel out the *Californios* about their loyalty to Mexico, in certain anticipation of the coming war. After “a savory supper” and sleeping in a “good bed,” Fremont went away impressed and spoke of Francisco’s “cordial hospitality”.¹³³

And Francisco had a favorable opinion of the Americans. A short time after Fremont’s visit, he attended a *junta* in Monterey at which the *Californios* were attempting to reach consensus about the political future of California. It was given among them that Mexico had little chance of holding this place much longer. Some wanted to face the inevitable and become one with the greatest maritime power in the world - - the British Empire. Others wished to side with France, since it was powerful, and also a Catholic nation. Sanchez joined Mariano Vallejo and suggested that annexation to the United States ought to be the course, based on the similar history of the Americans and *Californios*. Both had thrown off colonial domination and now were challenged with making the American West a suitable place to settle and develop.

Sadly for Sanchez and the *Californios*, by June California was in a state of great confusion. American settlers in the Sacramento and Napa valleys joined with Fremont and his 60 armed men to initiate the “Bear Flag Revolt,” whose purpose was to create a “California Republic”.¹³⁴ Tragedy struck the Sanchez family when Fremont issued orders that resulted in killing three *Californios*, Francisco and Ramon de Haro, Francisco’s nephews, and José de los Berryessa,¹³⁵ another uncle of the boys. Fremont had made camp at Mission San Rafael and received reports of enemy spies in the vicinity. The three *Californios* were unarmed and had merely landed a small boat on the Marin shore in order to visit relatives. Fremont’s scout, Kit Carson, spotted them at long range and asked for orders. Fremont’s reply was to gun them down. It is reported that their bodies were stripped of personal possessions and then left unburied at the conclusion of this - - the most heinous episode of the Revolt.¹³⁶

Of course the news was bitterly received by Sanchez. The nephews belonged to his brother-in-law, Francisco de Haro, who lived close-by at his *rancho* at Lake Merced. The 19-year-old twins were favorites of Sanchez, and were often in his company when he visited Yerba Buena.

With great relief, Francisco received word that on July 7, Commodore John D. Sloat had landed at Monterey and raised the American flag. The Bear Flag Revolt was

thankfully concluded. While proclaiming California a possession of the United States, Sloat made two important promises. First, that the former Mexican citizens would be treated the same as American citizens. Second, that all private property, including livestock, would be respected. Any confiscation of property for the war effort (now people also learned that the United States and Mexico had been at war since May 13), would be repaid at fair market value. The words and demeanor of Sloat had a calming effect on Sanchez and the *Californios*.

However, on July 23, Sloat gave in to an illness and relinquished his command of the Pacific squadron to Commodore Robert F. Stockton. The ambitious Stockton had a different attitude about the *Californios*. Desiring to distinguish himself in the field, he allowed enough provocations that the *Californios* were in revolt by the end of the year.

In the Bay Area, Stockton sought to ally himself with Carlos Weber. Weber was an ex-revolutionary from Homberg, Prussia, who was forced out of Germany. In 1836, he showed up in Texas where he became involved with the war for independence. In 1841, he came to California and settled at San José. Here he gained the reputation of quite an entrepreneur, establishing a flour mill, general store, salt works, bakery, candle-making operation, blacksmith shop and a “disreputable” saloon, known as the Weber House.¹³⁷

Stockton asked Weber to organize a force of 10 men to maintain order at San José. Weber used the authority to recruit 65 “Rangers,”¹³⁸ with the emulation of the Texas Rangers certainly in mind. Using his appointment as sergeant, but without orders to do so, Weber directed his militia to confiscate livestock from the various local *ranchos* to supposedly support Fremont’s activity in southern California. Apparently, less than 300 animals were ever delivered of the estimated 6,000 taken. His raids reached as far south as the San Juan Bautista neighborhood and as far north as the Sanchez family’s *Rancho Buri Buri*.

Francisco Sanchez’s patience with this state of affairs gave out when on December 11, his brother, Manuel, and another *Californio* were arrested at Yerba Buena as spies and held on the naval vessel, *Savannah*, apparently on trumped up charges. A few days later on the 16th, the American *alcalde* there, Washington Bartlett, rode down the Peninsula with a party of five armed men, on a reconnaissance of some type. They stopped at *Buri Buri* with the stated purpose of purchasing 30 head of cattle. Francisco Sanchez took the opportunity to capture the men, perhaps as a reprisal for the taking of his brother. Rallying to Francisco’s side, about 100 *Californios* joined him in the Peninsula hill country. They ended up camped just north of *Mission Santa Clara* while another revolt was occurring simultaneously in southern California.

At Yerba Buena an expeditionary force was organized to rescue Bartlett under the

command of Marine Captain Ward Marston. His force consisted of 35 Marines, 15 sailors, 36 of Weber's Rangers, and 15 volunteers from Yerba Buena. Marston, whose ancestors were present at the Boston Tea Party, had 32 years of military experience behind him, as he moved his column south. What his men faced was a long forced march at the end of December and early in January when the Bay Area was in the midst of its winter storm season. Peaks in the vicinity were snow-capped. The muddy roads made the march difficult.

The forces were about evenly matched, both with about 100 men. The *Californios* had the advantage of being mounted on horseback. The Americans were on foot, but were better armed. They also towed a cannon which frequently became stuck in the mud.

On New Year's Day, 1847, Marston's contingent became tired of the search and decided to head to San José and then find passage back to Yerba Buena. The day after, they stumbled upon the *Californios* at present-day El Camino Real and the Lawrence Expressway.

At a safe distance, out of range of the Americans, Sanchez and his men sort of circled Marston. When the Marines' cannon became stuck in the mud, yet again, the *Californios* took the opportunity to move forward. At the *Mission Santa Clara* there was considerable excitement from the sounds of battle.¹³⁹ However, although there was much noise, the casualties were remarkably low. In fact there were no casualties.¹⁴⁰ Later that day, calmer heads prevailed, as Sanchez rode into *Mission Santa Clara* to meet with Marston. A deal was hammered out whereby all the *Californios* would be granted amnesty in exchange for releasing their hostages and laying down their arms. Sanchez's brother was later freed, and the unnecessary depredations of Weber ended. On January 7, the *Californios* formally gave up their weapons to the Marines. Afterwards, members of both sides mingled in a friendly fashion. Obviously everyone was relieved that no one had been hurt. Thus concluded the Battle of Santa Clara.

AMERICAN PERIOD AND SANCHEZ'S RANCHO SAN PEDRO

The United States and Mexico signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848, ending the Mexican-American War. In a great territorial grab, the United States picked up most of the future states of California, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah and parts of Colorado and Wyoming for just \$15 million, and promised that former Mexican citizens in the new American lands would be protected. Ironically, nine days before, on January 24, an employee of Mexican land grant recipient John Sutter - - James Marshall - - spotted something shiny, glimmering at him on a bank of the American River at Sutter's Mill at Colma. Communications were not good and it took months, but by the end of 1848, tens of thousands were on their way to find their fortune in gold. California had finally become the *El Dorado* that Cortés had dreamed about.

The transformation of California was monumental. Among the many changes brought to the San Francisco Peninsula was the dismantling of the *ranchos*, most of which disappeared after 15 years.

At first, the new American laws recognized the responsibility of the peace treaty and protected the property rights of the *rancheros*. The Peninsula, being so close to the hub of economic activity at San Francisco (renamed from Yerba Buena by Washington Bartlett in 1847), saw immediate ramifications that came with the “rush” of new people. A clash of values between the new and old people was inevitable.

In 1841, the United States Congress passed a law permitting individual settlers to claim up to 160 acres of frontier government land for purposes of establishing farms. Some of the new Americans applied these “squatters rights” to the great *ranchos* of California, and the *Californios* soon found themselves under siege by people living and working on their properties.

A terrific blow to the *rancheros* occurred in 1851 with the passage of the Gwin Act. This legislation placed the legal burden of proving the validity of the land grants on the *Californios*. The long, expensive process to achieve confirmation left many of the original *rancheros* bankrupt. Attorneys, money lenders and bankers gained substantial portions of the California landscape. *Rancho Buri Buri*, for example, came to be owned by 50 individuals by 1865, with just 5% of the land still in the possession of the Sanchez family.¹⁴¹

Somehow, in all this confusion, Francisco Sanchez managed to hang on to his *Rancho San Pedro*. Local legend has it that one of his first actions was to dig a five-foot ditch on Sweeney Ridge to keep the squatters on *Buri Buri* off *San Pedro*.¹⁴² Certainly his reputation as the fighting leader of the Battle of Santa Clara bolstered his image as one not to trifle with. Another reason could be that while it was close to San Francisco, the hilly, hard-to-get to nature of *Rancho San Pedro* may have discouraged the Yankees, who were grabbing up parcels on the flatter, easier-to-access Bayside.

Sanchez successfully piloted his confirmation of *Rancho San Pedro* through the courts. His 8926.46 acres were awarded to him on March 20, 1857.

In fact, Sanchez did well under the new regime. In August of 1849 he was elected an alternate delegate representing San Francisco at the California Constitutional Convention at Monterey. After California became a state in 1850, he was elected to San Francisco County’s first Board of Supervisors. Then, when San Mateo County was formed in 1856, he became the first *Californio* to run for local office. Although he lost the election, he was consistently listed as one of the County’s greatest property owners, right up until his death in 1862. He was 57 years-old when he fell from his horse

and died a few days later. His body rests at *Mission San Francisco de Asís*.¹⁴³

Teodora was left with the responsibility of the house, property and family. Four of her children were still under 12 years old. Eventually, financial problems set in, and she had to liquidate portions of the *rancho*. She still had the house until selling it in 1871.

In 1879, General Edward Kirkpatrick acquired the house. He enlarged it and added rooms. He installed formal gardens. In the late 1880s the house became "Hotel San Pedro" with rooms for sportsmen renting for \$10 a week. During Prohibition (1919-1932), the adobe served as a speakeasy - - and maybe more than that. Later, as artichoke growing took over the San Pedro Valley, at times farmers used it as a bunk house for workers. In 1946, the San Mateo County Historical Association drew attention to it as a relic of the past. The County bought it and five surrounding acres the next year. Today, it stands as a house museum and historic park.

Before his death, Francisco Sanchez witnessed enormous change on the San Francisco Peninsula. Roads in the new San Mateo County replaced Indian foot paths and Spanish oxcart trails.¹⁴⁴

The most dramatic metamorphoses occurred at the tip of the Peninsula. The Gold Rush had made San Francisco internationally known.

For the San Pedro Valley, it had its own school district by 1869.

For Sweeney Ridge, the biggest change brought by the Americans was the type of cattle that grazed on it. The Spanish longhorn had disappeared with the old hides-and-tallow industry of the Mexican Period. Now dairy cows roamed where *vaqueros* and grizzly bears had only a generation before.

THE DAIRY INDUSTRY AND SWEENEY RIDGE

The Spanish-Mexican longhorn cattle were fine for hides and tallow, but the meat of the animal was tough and the breed made poor dairy cows. With the great influx of people coming to California during and following the Gold Rush of 1849, a market instantly developed for better beef and dairy products - - especially milk, cheese and butter. Profit-motivated Americans, such as the Johnston brothers of Half Moon Bay,¹⁴⁵ early on decided to take advantage of potential demand and drove herds of dairy cattle from eastern locations to California.

The dairymen realized success in California, not just because of the new market, but because of the favorable environmental conditions here. Henry DeGroot, commenting for the *Overland Monthly* in 1870, wrote this about the Peninsula:

This, formerly the great cattle-raising (country), is now the favorite dairying district of the State – the moisture brought in upon the ocean air tending to the constant recuperation of the pasturage: while the comparatively cool summer climate facilitates the making of butter and cheese. . . . Apart from its genial and equable climate this is one of the most fertile, picturesque, and beautiful regions of California. . . . With a climate so mild, and pastures ever renewing themselves, cattle thrive without fodder or shelter, living wholly in the open fields, and subsisting on the native herbage throughout the winter.¹⁴⁶

Indeed as early as 1853, the Johnston brothers and Graham Knowles established California's first commercial dairies in what would be called San Mateo County. Knowles' ranch was on the north Peninsula, in today's Daly City. His operation included a home delivery service into San Francisco. By 1860, there were many small dairies down the Peninsula. Those close to the City sold milk to consumers; those farther away (because of the lack of refrigeration) made butter and cheese. These dairies produced more than 200,000 pounds of butter and 23,000 pounds of cheese in that year.¹⁴⁷

At the same time that dairies were changing the Peninsula's landscape, the eucalyptus tree (introduced to the Bay Area in 1856)¹⁴⁸ was also altering the appearance of such places as Sweeney Ridge's east and west hillsides.

Some things still had not changed. As late as 1859, a rancher in the San Pedro Valley lost 15 cattle in one week to grizzly bear attacks. The rancher baited a trap and caught an 800 pound monster.¹⁴⁹ Newspaper reports from Half Moon Bay, in 1861, spoke of grizzly bear depredations on ranches there as well. The critters were finally poisoned out of the San Mateo County hill country in the 1870s.

Along with dairy ranching, the Peninsula also saw the proliferation of small farms. During the late 1860s, settlers purchased or leased Sanchez properties in the San Pedro Valley. Irish and American farmers planted potatoes and cabbage. Later Italian immigrants brought irrigation to the Valley and grew artichokes and other truck garden crops. In 1909 they introduced Brussel sprouts and became the first to commercially produce them for market in San Francisco.¹⁵⁰ Between 1907 and 1920, growers in the Valley were boosted in their work by the existence of the Ocean Shore Railroad which chugged by up to the City with their crops.¹⁵¹

Whether farmer or dairy rancher, probably the most famous of the new agriculturists on the Peninsula was John Donald Daly. He acquired 1,000 acres of property in 1865 to establish his San Mateo Dairy just south of the county line with San Francisco. His 235 cows produced about 300 gallons a day for San Francisco consumers. After the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, many refugees from the City came to live on the dairy

lands. The place would eventually be named for this dairyman pioneer - - Daly City.¹⁵²

Speaking of place names, a family in San Francisco engaged for many years in the livestock business was probably the source for the naming of Sweeney Ridge. Daniel McSweeney and his family were involved in the cattle business in the City as early as 1854. Daniel was born in Ireland in 1831. He and his brother James decided to come to America in 1850, a year of famine in Ireland. Their brother Edward also came to the United States, but a little later. Daniel and James first arrived at Philadelphia, but Daniel, hearing about the Gold Rush, decided to go to California. He took a ship to Panama, crossed the Isthmus and then found passage to San Francisco. He tried gold mining for a couple of years until he broke his leg in an accident. Recovering in the City, he decided in 1854 to engage himself in the growing cattle business centered in San Francisco. He dropped the “Mc” from his name and opened stockyards at Sutter and Stockton Streets. His company, D. Sweeney and Company, did well, and he invested in real estate with his profits. In 1876, he took a trip back to Ireland. The next year, he decided to retire there, but because of the political turmoil in Ireland he found himself deeply involved with land reform issues, encouraging the peasants to stand-up to British landlords. In 1881, he was arrested and thrown in prison, and stayed in jail for a year and a half. After being freed, he was immediately on his way back to California, now adding back “Mc” to the name McSweeney. He died in San Francisco in 1893 at the age of 62.¹⁵³

Daniel included his brothers in the Company, which evidently engaged in livestock sales of all types - - horses, dairy cattle, beef cattle - -¹⁵⁴ and also butchered meat for sale.¹⁵⁵ The family had land holdings down the Peninsula in a variety of locations and at different times. Edward Sweeney did most of buying and selling of this property. Purchased were parcels near Pilarcitos Lake, in today’s Daly City, and also land within the old *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, *Rancho de las Pulgas* and *Rancho San Pedro*, including portions of Sweeney Ridge.¹⁵⁶

Edward bought Sweeney Ridge parcels in September of 1874 from E.W. Burr and J.M. Shotwell, and then sold them less than a year later to Spring Valley Water Company (June, 1875). Others in the area were also selling out to the Water Company, as it was buying up property in the area to protect its watershed. Because of their various holdings, the Sweeney family could have been raising cattle in the area for some time. The Ridge was sometimes known as Irish Ridge too. For whatever reason, by 1892, the United States Geologic Survey had given the Ridge its name as we know it today.¹⁵⁷

Certainly the most successful name associated with the dairy industry in San Mateo County (and whose cows grazed on Sweeney Ridge) was Richard George Sneath. Born in Maryland in 1826, he was the oldest of three brothers. The family moved to Ohio, manufacturing agricultural tools. With his father’s death in 1842, he ran the

family's company until 1850, then came to California via the Isthmus of Panama. He decided to engage in business in Sacramento, becoming involved in the building trades. He opened a hay lot there and also entered into the livestock business. He then bought a quartz mine in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada and operated one of the first stamp mills in the state. This business was not successful, so he returned to Sacramento to establish a grocery store. By 1852, he had moved to San Francisco, travelling back and forth to Sacramento as business demanded.¹⁵⁸ With the excitement involving San Francisco's famed Vigilance Committee of 1856, he became involved in City politics,¹⁵⁹ successfully running for Supervisor in 1858 on the People's Party ticket, which was supportive of the work of the Vigilantes. In 1862 he opened a wholesale house on Front Street in San Francisco and a branch followed that one up in Oregon. In 1869 he began purchasing property in San Mateo County. He maintained a variety of entrepreneurial interests in San Francisco (in banking mostly) but is best remembered for his dairy business down the Peninsula, where his cows grazed on lands known today as San Bruno, Pacifica, Sweeney Ridge and holdings of the San Francisco Water Department.

By 1875, Sneath had what many felt was a model operation in place. He called it Jersey Farm and claimed it to be the largest Jersey (Jersey is a breed of bovine) dairy in the world with 1,000 head. More than 100 workers produced, from these cows, on average 1,100 gallons of milk everyday for consumption in San Francisco. Six-mule teams pulled large wagons up to the City. These wagons could carry 200 milk cans each. Twice a day the teams lumbered up the Peninsula to the Dairy's offices at 835 Howard Street. From there the company delivered milk to San Francisco customers.¹⁶⁰

By 1882, famed California author John S. Hittell could write this about the growing business:

The most notable milk rancho of California is the Jersey Farm Dairy, of R.G. Sneath, at San Bruno, 14 miles south of San Francisco. It has an area of 2,700 acres, extending across the peninsula from the ocean to the bay. Its herd of neat cattle numbers about 1,000, and from 500 to 600 cows are milked daily. It has about 20 bulls and 50 cows of pure Jersey blood, and about 150 half-breed Jerseys, and 50 three-quarter bred. None but pure Jersey bulls are used on the place. The milk product of 1880 and 1881, amounted to 400,000 gallons for each year, of which about 380,000 gallons were sold yearly in San Francisco, and the remainder used in rearing calves. This, so far as we know, is the largest fresh milk dairy on the globe.¹⁶¹

In an *Overland Monthly* magazine article in 1888, Sneath, himself, described a portion of the Dairy's work force:

*...the milkers receive twenty-five to thirty dollars per month and... are generally Swiss. They commence milking at eight A.M. and eight P.M., and take two and one-half hours to milk thirty cows each. They are mostly strong, healthy young men, and generally do not speak English. They are much more reliable than men of other countries, and do not drink and squander their time or money.*¹⁶²

Jersey Farm stretched four miles, from north to south, and three miles, from El Camino into the coastal hills. Within the main building complex, at what was called “Ranch One,” stood Sneath’s house, which was destroyed by fire about 1900. There was also a blacksmith shop, carpenter shop, flour mill, slaughter house, vegetable gardens and water ponds. This Ranch One was the Jersey Farm’s center of activity. The blacksmith shop was referred to as the “hospital” since this was where all the battered milk cans were repaired. The mill ground feed for the cattle; it was powered by the wind and sometimes by a steam engine. The largest barn at Ranch One was 248’ x 48’ and three stories high. Two hundred and forty-eight cows enjoyed individual stalls on its first floor. The upper floors stored hay. At the center of the building’s first floor, Sneath developed a unique cooling system for the milk as it passed through several tin tanks. These containers were chilled by spring water running alongside. Next door to the barn existed a building for cleaning the milk cans. At its center, Sneath installed an iron tank with a furnace under it. The tank was sectioned in thirds and contained boiling water in one part, warm water in the second and soapy water in the third. The cans and can tops were scrubbed out with a unique brushing device.¹⁶³ Ranch One was west of El Camino and east of Sneath Lane in the Golden Gate National Cemetery of today.

Ranch Two was located on Skyline Boulevard and included today’s San Francisco County Jail. Ranch No. 3 was also known as the Sweeney Ridge Ranch. It was at the highest elevation of the Sneath property (about 1300 feet) and was used for spring pasturage.

By 1894, a road wound its way to the Ridge, up from Ranch One. Buildings on the Ridge serviced Ranch Three. Their concrete footings can still be seen on National Park property about a football field northeast of the Portola gate on the south end of the Sweeney Ridge trail.¹⁶⁴

By the turn of the century, Sneath was leasing some of his property to farmers who grew artichokes and other crops. In 1906, Sneath combined with John Daly and the D.O. Mills family to create a larger firm, called the Dairy Delivery Service. In 1929, Borden Dairy absorbed this partnership.¹⁶⁵

During the 1930s, the Sneath family began divesting itself of its San Mateo County properties. In 1932, Richard’s son, Lee J. Sneath, sold about 250 acres of pasture land to San Francisco City and County for the purposes of building a jail. The six-story

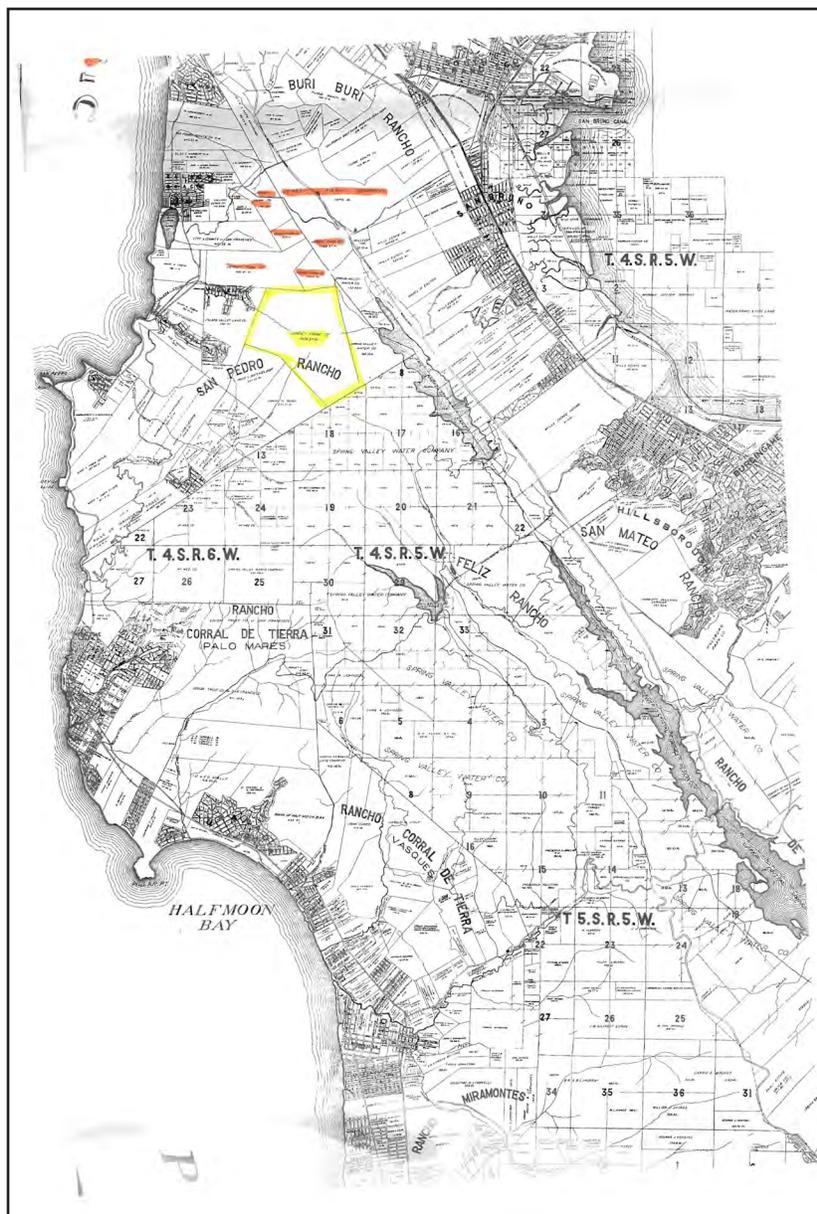


Fig. 2.2: The Jersey Farm Company's lands in 1927. Outlined in yellow is Ranch No. 3.

structure was constructed in 1935 to hold 554 prisoners. Today this original building still stands next to San Francisco's new jail. It is visible from the northern portion of Sweeney Ridge. Also visible from the Ridge is another 162 acres that the Sneaths sold for \$180,000 to the United States government in 1938, for the purpose of creating the Golden Gate National Cemetery.

The Works Progress Administration directed the Cemetery's construction. The superintendent, foreman and office employees were all veterans of World War I. The first coffin was laid to rest at the cemetery on July 25, 1940. Neighboring the cemetery that year was an outfit called Avensino-Mortonsen, that leased Sneath land for raising commercial flowers.

In that same year, San Mateo County had reached its peak in the realm of dairy production, with some 13,575 milk cows still producing food products within its borders. But the Sneath real estate holdings continued to diminish, giving way

to suburban real estate speculation. Up and down the Peninsula's east side, housing tracks replaced farmlands, especially during the 1950s and 1960s. However, the Sneath's held their mountain pasture on Sweeney Ridge until the early 1970s.¹⁶⁶

THE WATERSHED (CONTEXTUAL)

When a visitor hikes to Sweeney Ridge and turns east to view the Peninsula's Bayside from the discovery site, two bodies of water are immediately visible, the San Francisco Bay, of course, and San Andreas Lake. This lake stands where Portolá made his right turn in 1769, when he proceeded down the valley. The San Andreas Lake is a man-made feature of the landscape. A dam was constructed to create it in 1868, in order to

help solve a critical water problem for the City of San Francisco.

The Spanish had recognized the water problem, which in part was a major reason for their establishing the mission outpost in the San Pedro Valley. By the time of the American take-over of California in 1846, brackish water sources (probably deemed undrinkable by today's standards) were just adequate for the 500, or so, people living at Yerba Buena. However, with the discovery of gold, San Francisco rapidly became the most important city in the West, with a population of 78,000 by 1860. Lack of water was universally recognized as the new city's greatest resource problem. Between 1850 and 1852 alone, San Francisco was destroyed by fire six times, resulting in staggering financial loss due to the absence of water to fight fires.

San Franciscans even found drinking water difficult to obtain. During certain shortages, the precious liquid had to be barged in from Marin County. Water peddlers then distributed water on regular routes. Some strapped barrels to the backs of donkeys and sold water by the bucket. As much as a gold dollar was charged for a bucket during particularly dry times.

Recognizing the possibilities for profit, several entrepreneurs formed the Mountain Lake Water Company in 1851 to bring water to town from the Presidio. A competing company, the Bensley Company, went into business in 1856, and under the direction of its engineer, Alexi Waldemer Von Schmidt, it dammed the mouth of the Presidio's Lobos Creek to create a 2 million gallon a day supply.

However, these efforts were not enough. In 1858, yet another firm, the Spring Valley Water Company was formed. At first its chief supply consisted of a spring near Portsmouth Square.

While Bensley was clearly the most important water provider for San Francisco, in 1860 it lost its engineer to the smaller Spring Valley Water Company. It seems Von Schmidt had a falling-out with the Bensley Company and left to become chief engineer and the largest investor of Spring Valley.

Not long afterwards it was Von Schmidt who got the idea of looking South to the newly created County of San Mateo for more abundant supplies.¹⁶⁷

His first pick for building a reservoir was Pilarcitos Creek, due south of Sweeney Ridge, and not visible from it nor any of today's Peninsula highways. He made this choice because of the good rainfall and the elevation (benchmark 724 feet, 697 at the Spillway)¹⁶⁸ of the place, allowing for rapid flow of water by gravity feed to the City. By August of 1862, a preliminary system of earthen dam, tunnel and flume allowed water to flow from San Mateo County to San Francisco.

In 1864, Von Schmidt left Spring Valley, and Calvin Brown became chief engineer. That same year, Brown hired Herman Schussler as his assistant at \$50 a month. Schussler became the principal architect for the Company for a generation. The German-born, 21-year-old immigrant from Zurich spoke little English, arriving in town on horseback with just a carpet bag. However, his engineering education was superb, and he began his work with improvement projects for Pilarcitos.

In the meantime, Spring Valley's major competition was encountering difficulties. The Bensley Company suffered as soil was eroding into its Lobos Creek reservoir. Customers complained about muddy water. Not long afterwards, Bensley was caught tapping into a Spring Valley main. Consequently, it was forced out of business, leaving Spring Valley as San Francisco's sole provider of fresh water until it was bought out by the City in 1930.

In May of 1866, Schussler replaced Brown as chief engineer. While completing his Pilarcitos project in 1867, he was already planning for a much larger project, to create a reservoir in the San Andreas Valley.

Farm lands were bought up, and a system of pressure piping and tunnels was engineered to carry water 3,400 feet from Pilarcitos Creek to the San Andreas Valley. Schussler's reputation was enhanced in a major way as few projects like this had been attempted before.

Construction of the San Andreas dam commenced in April of 1868. According to records kept by the Company's superintendent, William H. Lawrence, the work crews consisted of many Chinese laborers.¹⁶⁹ The earthen dam took two years to construct. It stood 95 feet high and was 710 feet long. It had the ability to store 6 billion gallons of water for San Francisco consumption, six times the capacity of the Pilarcitos reservoir.¹⁷⁰

Schussler's work was hardly done. In 1877, Upper Crystal Springs Lake was formed by building an earthen dam at today's Highway 92, the road to Half Moon Bay. By this time the business methods of the Spring Valley Water Company, a private monopoly, came under criticism. In order to avoid problems that had hurt other water providers, such as the Bensley Company, Schussler called for buying up not just enough land to establish the reservoirs, but many surrounding acres as well. To this end, the Company enlisted the aid of the courts to condemn farmlands and even the resort community of Crystal Springs and the town of Searsville. These properties, at times, were bought up at 10% of their actual value, igniting protest.

Schussler's greatest engineering achievement, and the most heralded project of the Spring Valley Company, was the building of Crystal Springs dam between 1887 and

1890, to create lower Crystal Springs Lake, visible from Highway 280 at the Doran Bridge. This 150-foot high interlocking concrete block dam was the largest of its kind when completed, and it remains the largest of its kind to date. Its successful construction can be measured by the earthquakes it has endured (without damage in both 1906 and 1989).

By 1900, the Spring Valley Water Company owned 20,000 acres of Peninsula watershed. As a private monopoly it continued to be the focus of community criticism. That year, the citizens of San Francisco adopted a new city charter which allowed for them to own their own water supply. A copious source of water was located at Hetch Hetchy within Yosemite National Park. The City built a new system to deliver this mountain water to the reservoirs in San Mateo County. The Hetch Hetchy project was completed in 1934.¹⁷¹ Today San Francisco Water Department lands border Sweeney Ridge to the east and south.¹⁷²

DEFENSE INSTALLATIONS AT SWEENEY RIDGE

When Sweeney Ridge visitors stroll north from the discovery site markers, they come across buildings formerly occupied by the United States military from the 1940s through to the 1970s.

Before December 7, 1941, few Californians believed that the state might be subject to foreign attack. The bombing of Pearl Harbor changed everything. Within San Mateo County the reaction was practically instantaneous. On December 8, armed military sentries appeared on Crystal Springs Dam, the Western Pipe & Steel shipbuilding plant and the San Francisco Airport. Soon after, the United States Coast Guard instituted a Beach Patrol on the Coastsides, with stations in the old McCloskey home (“the Castle”) in Pacifica and in Half Moon Bay (see the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* and Milagra Ridge sections of this study for more about World War II defense activities on the San Mateo County Coast).

COAST GUARD RADIO STATION NORTH OF THE NOTCH

Those responsible for the nation’s security at the federal level had a different take on the possibility of war and what it might mean for California. Thus military preparations on Sweeney Ridge began more than a year before the Pearl Harbor disaster. On October 11, 1940, the United States Coast Guard was authorized to initiate negotiations with the City and County of San Francisco to acquire Sweeney Ridge property directly west of San Francisco County Jail for the purpose of creating a radio station. At the same time the Coast Guard gained authority to inquire of the Jersey Farm Company its willingness to sell a right-of-way for purposes of constructing a road.¹⁷³ The Sweeney Ridge installation was to replace the San Francisco radio station at Fort Funston.

It had been commissioned on February 1, 1937. This station's building was a former life boat house on the beach about a mile south of the zoo at Golden Gate Park.¹⁷⁴

On July 29, 1941, the Jersey Farm Company formally offered the sale of the road right-of-way for \$1,000, and on August 6, 1941, the U.S. Attorney General's Office agreed with the terms of the deal.¹⁷⁵ The Attorney General then consented to the expenditure of \$8,750 for purchasing the San Francisco Jail property on November 27, 1941.¹⁷⁶

The Coast Guard characterized its new land holding as "rough, elevated land, varying from approximately 650 ft. to 950 ft. in elevation."¹⁷⁷ On March 31, 1944, exclusive jurisdiction over the property was accepted by the Secretary of the Navy as the Coast Guard had become part of the Navy's efforts during the War. Today most of this 86 acres is the portion of the GGNRA that lies south of Skyline College and north of the "notch" (the cut that separates the old Coast Guard parcel from the former Nike radar site).

Surveys and plans for the radio station were completed about February, 1942. A bid from contractor J.H. Pomoroy and Co. was accepted February 26. A fixed fee for the contract was signed on March 18, and the construction was completed on June 23, 1943. Costs broke down as follows:¹⁷⁸

Site and rights of way from City and County of San Francisco, Calif.	\$8,750.00	
For road right of way from Jersey Farm Co.	1,000.00	
Preliminary surveys	1,600.00	
Contract Teg-34320 with J.H. Pomoroy & Co., Inc. for construction		240,000.00
Approximate cost radio receiving, transmitting and control equipment	58,126.00	
Miscellaneous minor improvements	2,000.00	
Total		\$311, 476.00

A Coast Guard map from April, 1943, of what was first called the San Francisco Radio Station, showed the topographical characteristics of the property and the improvements (see accompanied map). The Coast Guard's roads hooked around the parcel, beginning at a parking lot to the east which is probably the San Francisco Jail's parking lot of today. The "Jersey Farm Road" led to the barracks and equipment building that, until recently, stood on Skyline College, and are now covered by its new maintenance buildings. The present trail leading west and then south on the GGNRA is the continuation of the Coast Guard road to the ridge, then called "Radio Station Road." As it turns south, the map depicts the proposed site of a water tank for the City of San Bruno that was eventually completed. The first edifice encountered on the ridge line

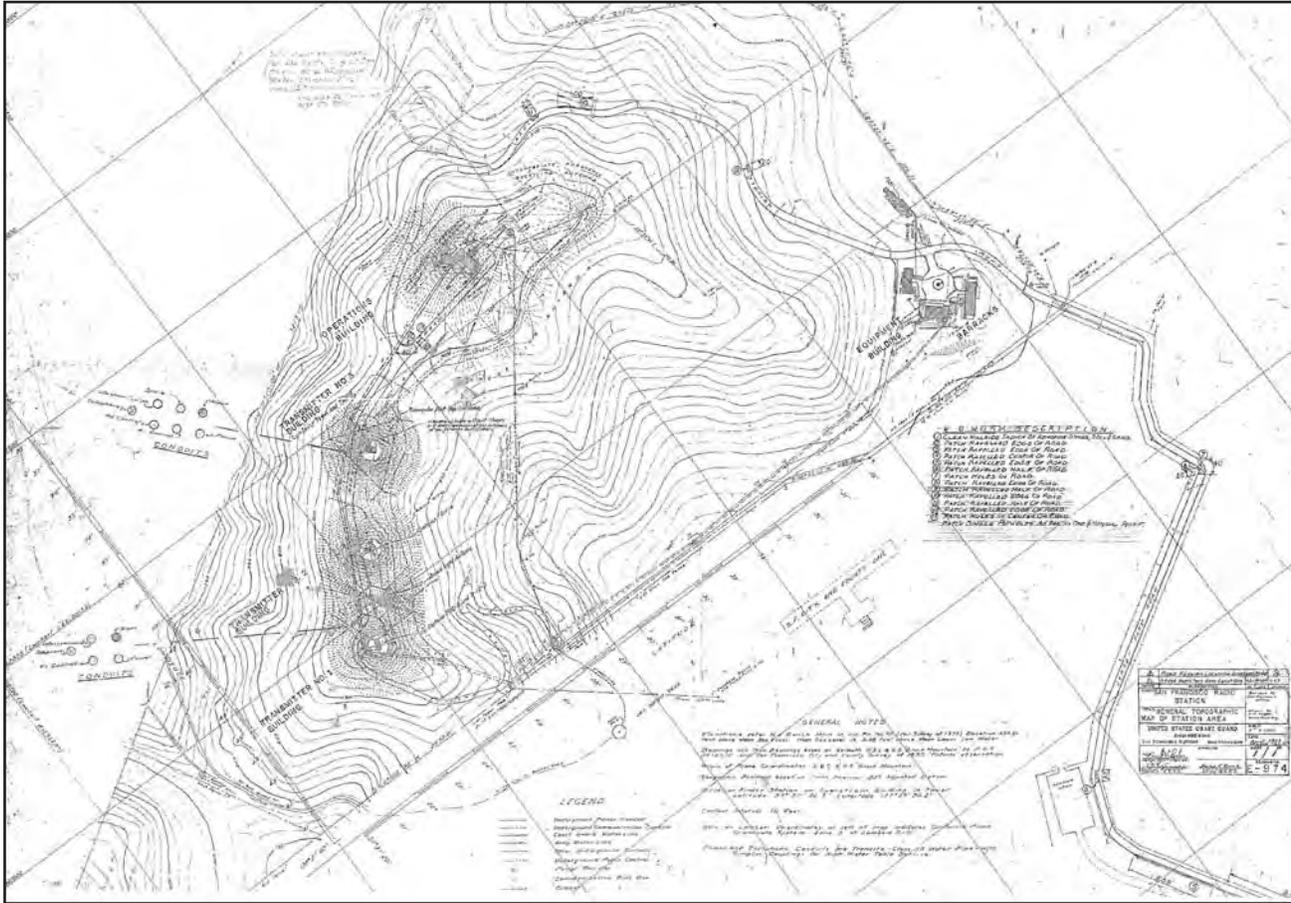


Fig. 2.3: Coast Guard map from April 1943, showing topography of Sweeney Ridge and improvements. United States Coast Guard.

Fig. 2.4: Aerial photograph of Sweeney Ridge. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives.



was the Operations Building, now gone; however the building pad is still visible, and some debris can be detected. Next to be viewed was Transmitter Building Number 3, then Transmitter Building No. 2. Both of these structures are also gone, but building pads and debris are visible. The last in line, Transmitter Building No. 1, still stands. Why it was the only survivor will be explained below. Other improvements that were part of the Coast Guard station include antennas, a water tank, a pump house and utility poles.

Below are two photographs. One, an aerial, shows the barracks and equipment building on the far left, the road to the Operations building, which is just right of center, and the

Fig. 2.5: The operations building. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives.



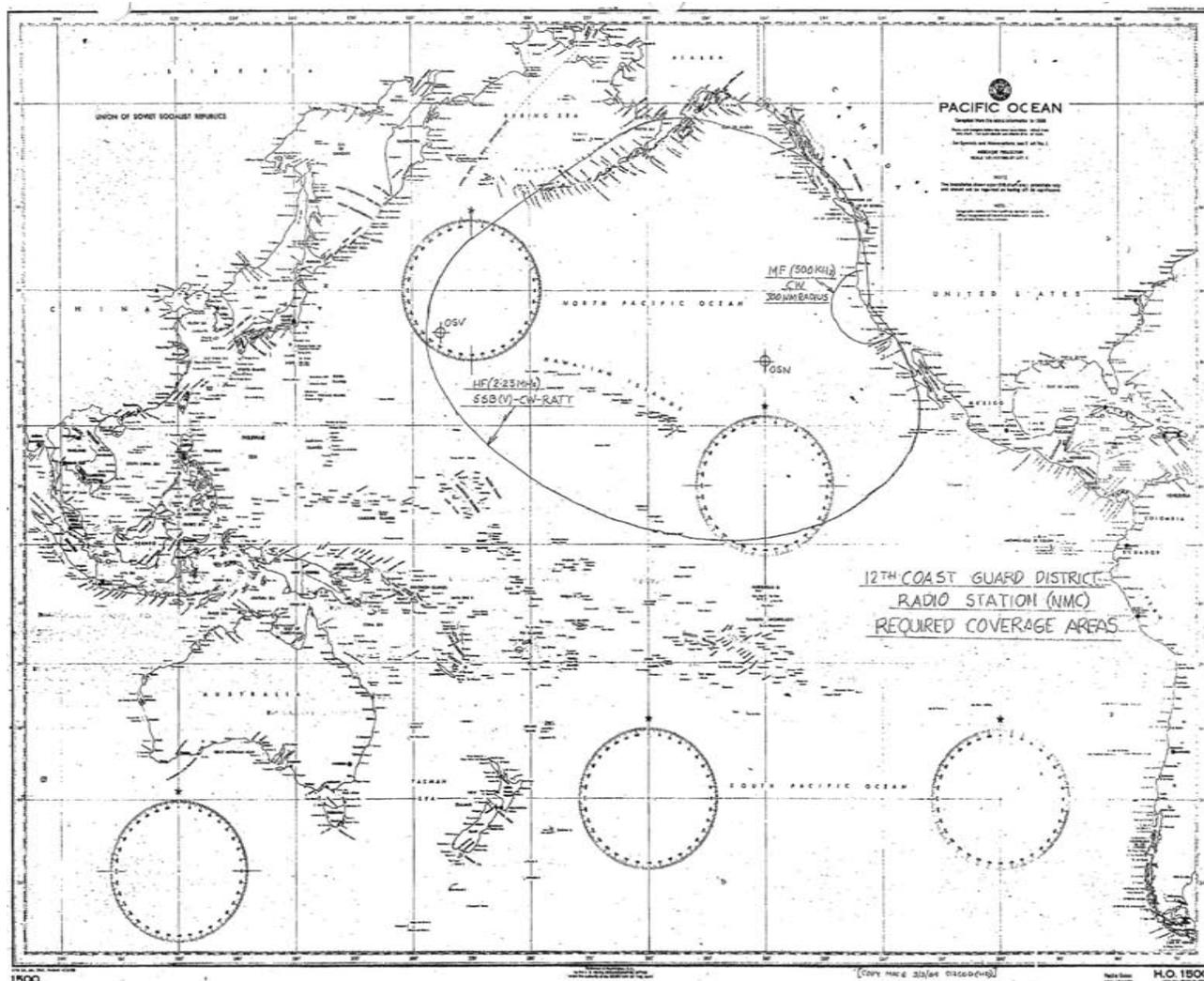


Fig. 2.6: Map showing the range of the radio station at Sweeney Ridge. United States Coast Guard.

three transmitter buildings on the far right. At the top, center, is San Francisco County Jail, with the road to the parking lot, top left. The second photo is the Operations Building. The map following the photos shows the radio range of the station. It could receive messages as far north as Oregon and far south as Los Angeles, and at least 300 miles out to sea.

See Appendix VIII for the Coast Guard's "Telephone Line Record" from July 14, 1955. Now under the Coast Guard's District 12, this report reveals how the buildings of the station were linked with telephones. It also shows the layouts for the barracks and garage.

By the beginning of the 1970s, the Coast Guard was preparing to declare its "U.S. Coast Guard Radio Station San Bruno, Calif." surplus. In an August 30, 1972 "survey"¹⁷⁹ of properties, the structures of the station were listed along with their size, construction type and monetary value. (See Appendix IX for this document). The report reveals that the completion of the Point Bollinas/Point Reyes Radio Station, slated for

early 1973, meant that the Coast Guard would have no further purpose for this installation and that “the property can be put to better use by another agency.” The Coast Guard recommended the station be turned over to the General Services Administration “for disposal.”

In this account all structural improvements are listed, described, dated and valued in dollar amounts. The extent of the station can in part be determined by the number of antenna masts (“wood poles with guy wire”). There were 20, 90 footers, one at 106 feet and two at 116 feet. For the “Communication Antenna System,” there were an additional six wooden poles at 90 feet and 5 aluminum antennas. All antennas were recommended for removal along with other equipment and materials. The barracks and garage were deemed “suitable for storage and maintenance purposes only.” All other buildings, except the Operations Building, were judged usable only for their original missions.

The Operations Building was seen as convertible for a variety of purposes. This was still a substantial structure valued at \$96,000. From its elevated first level, it had commanding views: of the ocean to the west, the Bay, watershed and jail to the east, coastal mountains to the south and San Francisco to the north.¹⁸⁰

Of course all that remains standing of the buildings is a portion of Transmitter Building #1. While buildings #1 and #2 were only 300 square feet, #3 was 540. The values of #1 and #2 were estimated to be \$7,300 each. #3 was much more, \$25,224. In a Coast Guard “Report of Excess Real Property,”¹⁸¹ completed on November 10, 1972, the value of the station’s land was placed at \$9,750. The buildings, utilities and facilities at \$300,511 (see Appendix X).

The August Survey recognized that revocable permits existed with the City of San Bruno for its water tank and a transmission line, and that since 1964, the San Mateo County Community College District had a permit for use of the barracks and garage as storage facilities for Skyline College. This included 6.7 acres of land. It acknowledged that a letter from the San Francisco Sheriff’s Department indicated interest in reacquiring the station’s real estate.¹⁸² The survey recommended “. . .that the property adjacent to the Barracks & Garage area be donated to the San Mateo [County] Junior [Community] College District. That the City of San Bruno [be] allowed to retain the land on which their water storage reservoir is situated, and that the remaining property be donated to the City and County of San Francisco.” While the College District and San Bruno received their properties, San Francisco’s request was not approved.

Since 1943, the function of U.S. Coast Guard Radio Station San Bruno was to receive and send messages all over the Pacific. Far beyond its accepted range, the radio crews received distress calls from ships at sea sometimes 2,000 miles away. A Christmas card,

from 1962, indicates that personnel at the Station consisted of a commanding officer, an executive officer, three radiomen “in charge,” and 28 operators and technicians.¹⁸³

By February of 1973, the Coast Guard’s new computerized base at Point Reyes was ready to replace the Radio Station on Sweeney Ridge. The last message was sent out by Warrant Officer John W. Hammack:

*Final transmission: 1. After more than 32 years of faithful continuous 24 a day service this radsta has been relieved of responsibilities as of this date by CGCom-msta SFran. 2 CGRADSTA SFran at San Bruno Ca. Signing O. CWO4 J.W. Hammack commanding o# cer.*¹⁸⁴

The next year the Army shut down its installations on Sweeney and Milagra ridges as well.

As the Coast Guard began removing its properties from Sweeney Ridge, it still had responsibility for its maintenance and protection. Commander R. T. Nelson in a memorandum, as Operations Division Chief, indicated that it appeared that it would be at least April, 1973, before the General Service Administration could turn the property over to another entity. In the interim, he warned that vandalism might occur as soon as the old station was unattended. He also mentioned that: “. . .there are groups of people such as the Indians that might try to occupy and lay claim to it if vacated.”¹⁸⁵ Perhaps a repeat of the takeover of Alcatraz Island (1969-1971) was on the minds of federal officials.

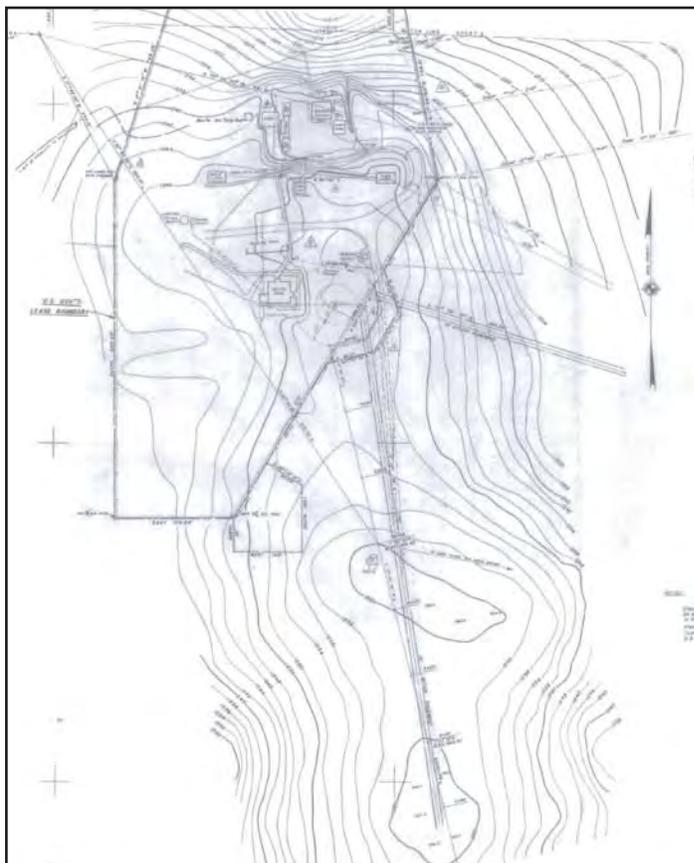
On August 28, 1973, the United States government granted a permit to the San Mateo County Community College District for the old barracks and garage plus some surrounding land. Then in April of 1974, the land south and west of the College property was given over to San Mateo County for parks and recreational purposes.¹⁸⁶ This parcel included acreage west of San Francisco County Jail, the road to the ridge, the Operations Building and Transmitter Buildings #2 and #3.¹⁸⁷ The land starting at Transmitter Building #1 and south to include most of the “notch” up to the Nike radar site was reserved for Cal-trans for a project that would have extended Highway 380 (which never materialized).¹⁸⁸

San Mateo County’s acquisition of the old Coast Guard Station was made possible by President Richard M. Nixon’s Land and Water Conservation Fund. In November of 1977, the County’s Architectural and Engineering Division created a demolition plan for the site (see next page) which included destruction of the Operations Building and Transmitter Buildings #3 and #2. Transmitter Building #1 was spared because it was within the Cal-trans property. The plan included drawings of the buildings and a map indicating where activities took place (see drawings and map on the next page). As the County prepared for the work, a report from March 13, 1978 stated that the intention



Fig. 2.9: Building #1, the lone remaining structure at the old Coast Guard Station. Lee Davis photograph, San Francisco State University.

Fig. 2.10: Original topographic study of the Nike radar site. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives.



of this work was to “...keep Sweeney Ridge in its Natural Preserved state.” Instructions to the contractor and the plan itself is present in this report as Appendix XI.

As the County prepared to turn the site over to the GGNRA, historian L. Guidry created the 1993 map displayed on the next page to show the sites of the various buildings and improvements torn down in the County’s work. Please note that Guidry’s “Building #3” and “Building #1” are reversed. Building #1 is the structure that survived.

In 1994, the County turned over the former radio station property to the National Park Service and, at that same time, granted its southern Sweeney Ridge property and Milagra Ridge to it. See the portions of this report on the Nike radar site on Sweeney Ridge, the preservation of Sweeney Ridge and Nike missile site on Milagra Ridge for more on this transference.

NIKE RADAR SOUTH OF THE NOTCH

On the south side of the “notch” and about . of a mile north of the present discovery site markers, the Army began installation of a guided missile Nike radar site in 1953.

The below map refers to an original topographic study completed on October 8 of that year and shows the original improvements. The remnants of this site are now on GGNRA Sweeney Ridge lands. This property, listed by the San Mateo County Assessor as parcel number 018-170-020, was leased by the Army which never purchased by it.¹⁸⁹

In the Milagra Ridge portion of this study, the relationship between it and Sweeney Ridge is explained in more detail. Basically, both were together known as battery SF 51. Milagra was SF 51-L - - L for Launch, and Sweeney was known as SF 51-C - - C for Control. Control meant radars to spot an enemy plus radars to guide the missiles launched from Milagra to the target. The Milagra section of this study explains the Cold War strategies involved with the Nikes, the evolution of the missiles themselves (from Ajax to Hercules missiles)

and how SF 51 was the best of its kind at the end of the Nike era (1953-1974).

David Bridgman and his father, Richard H. Bridgman, Jr. were stationed at Sweeney when it was manned as a radar site by the National Guard. David has volunteered considerable time to this study in order that its writers understand how the missile system functioned, at least in a general way. By 1963, after the replacement of the original Ajax missiles by the Hercules (which had nuclear capability), the radars on Sweeney worked in the following manner:

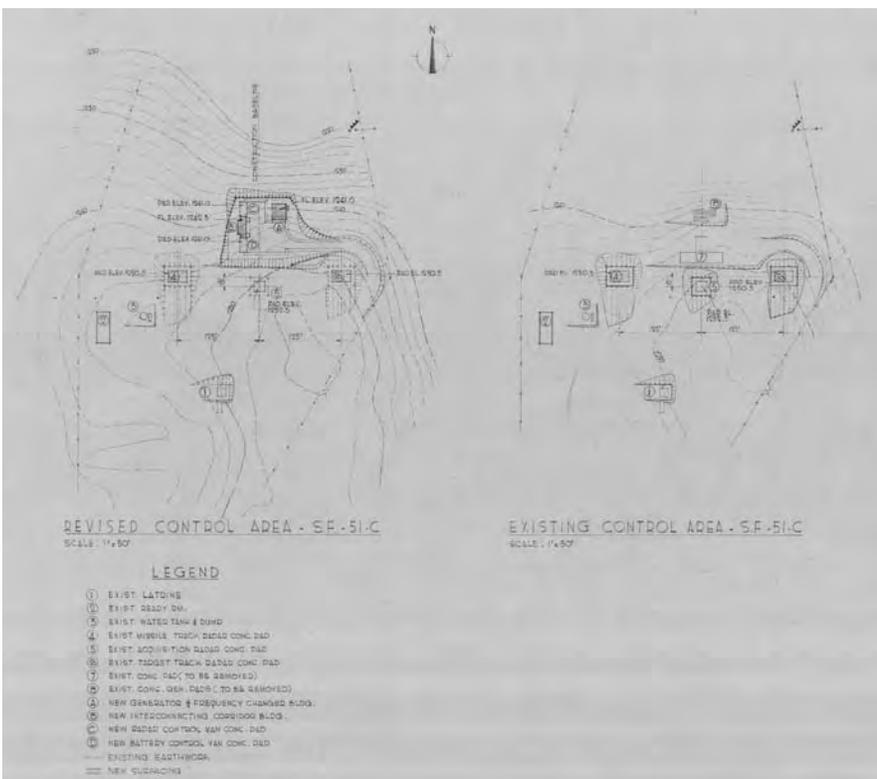
High Power Target Acquisition Radar - - worked 24 hours a day scanning 200 miles out for possible enemy attack.

Low Power Target Acquisition Radar - - with more resolution could then pick up a single target, or an air fleet, 140 miles out and more precisely follow it.

Target Tracking Radar and Target Ranging Radar - - locked in the path of the enemy. The “tracking” unit showed the angle to which the target(s) was (were) flying; the “ranging” indicated how far away the enemy was.

Two Computer Vans RC and BC - - assimilated all this information to tell the missile set to be launched about the flight of the target(s). RC meant radar controlled, which tracked the enemy with scopes. BC meant battery control, whose grids guided the missile to the enemy.

Fig. 2.11:
Map showing improvements made to the site in 1956. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives.



Missile Tracking Radar - - guided the launched missile to the intercept point. It then triggered a conventional or nuclear explosion which would hit above the target(s), knocking it (them) out of the sky.

A variety of improvements were made to SF 51-C for better performance of the Ajax and eventual deployment of the Hercules. The next map shows improvements made in 1956.

In place already were systems for the Target Tracking and

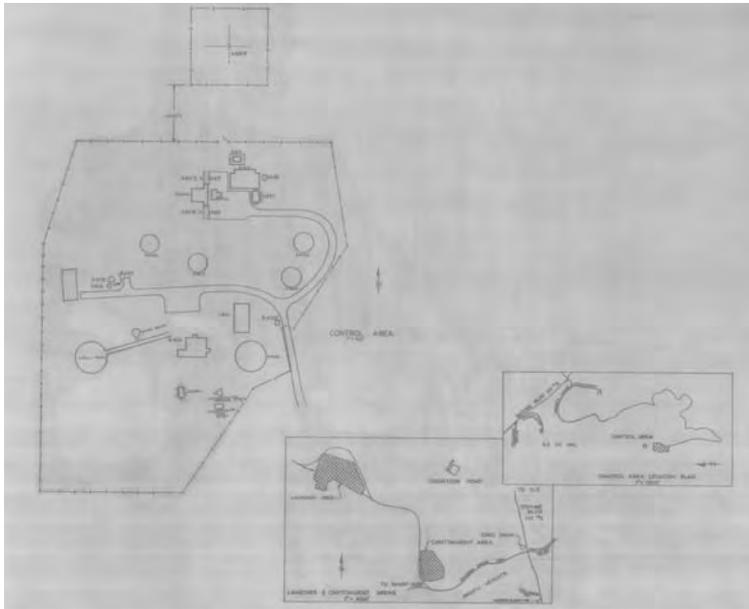
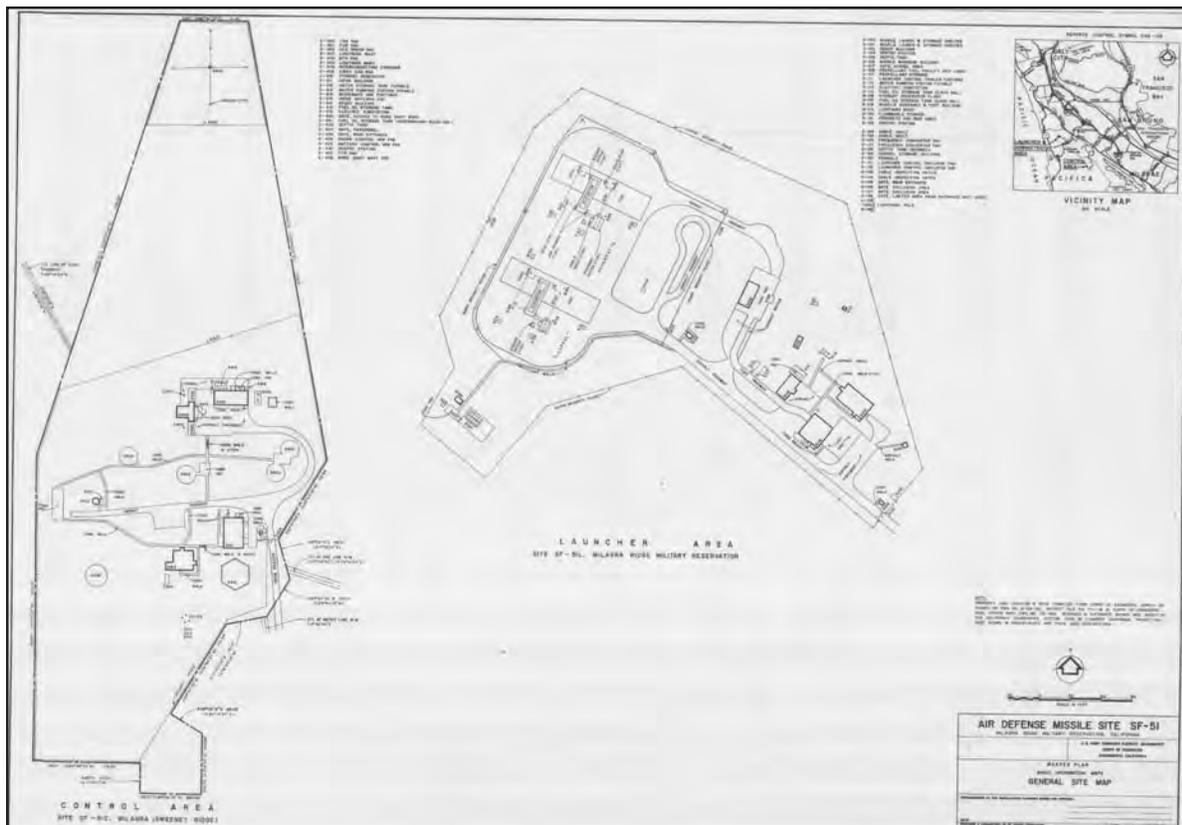


Fig. 2.12: 1967 map showing final layout of the site. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives.

Low Power Acquisition radars. Just added on the north side were the generator building and “corridor building” (both still standing) plus new pads for the computer van. After this construction the next map, July 18, 1967, shows the final improvements. Most notably, to the south a High Power Acquisition radar has been installed, along with a Target Ranging radar. This map also shows the road to the control area, from San Bruno; today it is used as a trail for hikers visiting this GGNRA park. Also shown is the road to the launch area at Milagra.

The next map shows both Sweeney and Milagra in their final form as a fully functioning missile battery capable of launching nuclear armed Hercules missiles. The last map was recently drawn by David Bridgman, which also shows Sweeney’s final appearance. The photograph following this map shows in the foreground the

Fig. 2.13: Map of Sweeney Ridge and Milagra Ridge. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives.



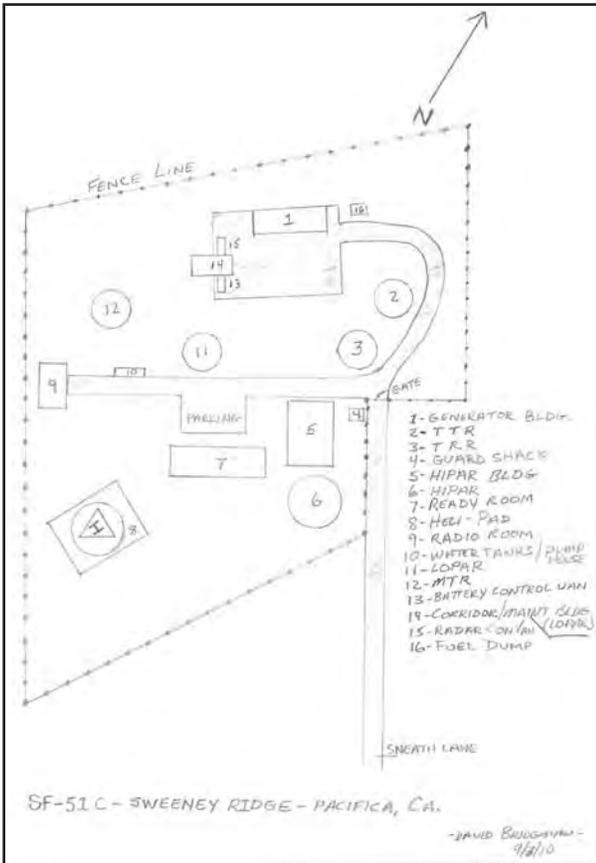


Fig. 2.14: David Bridgman's recent map of the installation at Sweeney Ridge.

Fig. 2.15: Aerial photograph showing the installation and Milagra Ridge in the background. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives.



massive High Power radar dome. Nothing is left of it today. Even its pad is covered by vegetation. To its left is the ready room, which still exists, and to its left is the helicopter pad now also covered by chaparral. To the right of the helicopter pad was the communications building, now gone. The small dome radar just to the right of the High Power unit is the Missile Tracking Radar. Its pad has disappeared, under the brush. To its right, the T shaped radar is the Low Power unit. Its pad can be seen. The “corridor building” and generator building are to its right. The Target Tracking and the Target Ranging radars are just in front of the generator building. Their pads still exist. In the background are some interesting features as well. At the top right is Milagra Ridge. Some of its improvements are visible in this shot. Lower, on the right, are the municipal water tanks and to the right of those are the Coast Guard’s improvements, including the antennae farm and, on the far right, the Coast Guard’s main building.

The next photo, a 360° panoramic shot, is lent to this project by David Bridgman. Taken about 1968 from the east side of SF 51-C from the center of the site,

from left to right at first we are looking south. In the foreground on the left is the Tracking Radar dome. Behind it is the High Power unit. Note that the High Power support building is obscured in this photo. Inside this building were the electronics necessary to operate this radar. The vacuum tubes of the electronic components, before the days of the silicon chip, made it so hot within the building that a massive air-conditioning device was a crucial component of its operations. The High Power building and the next building in this photo, the ready building, still exist. Next, to the southwest, is the Low Power dome. The T is covered. To its right is the Missile

Tracking Radar. Now looking west to the right of it, down the steps and behind the Volkswagen, is the radar control computer van. To its right is the Low Power building, renamed from “corridor building” as previously referenced. It too had essential air-conditioning, and it too still exists. To the northwest is the generator building and then the fuel dump. We are now looking north. All three of the Coast Guard’s transmitter buildings are visible as its

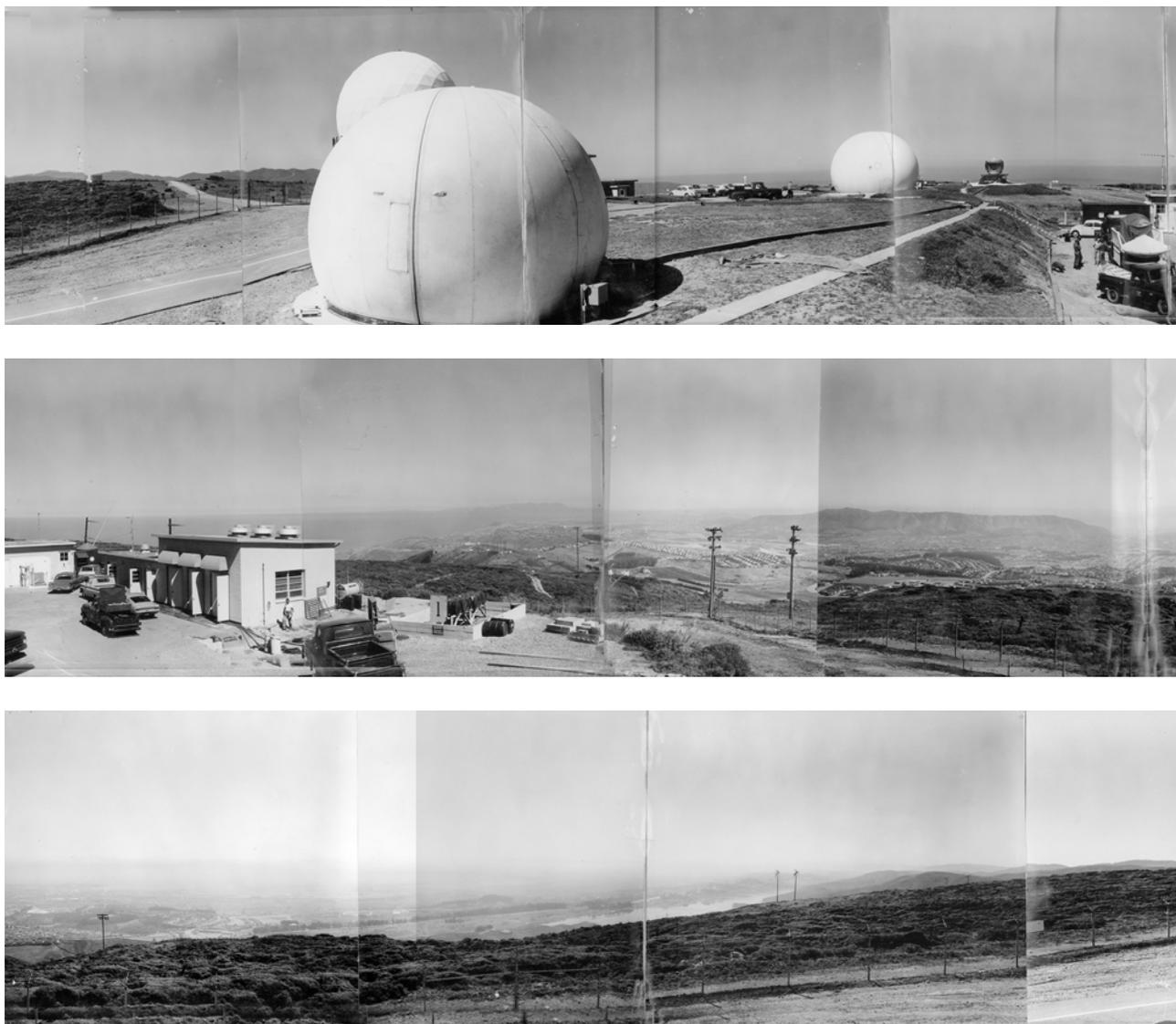


Fig. 2.16: Panoramic photograph of the Nike radar installation at Sweeney Ridge, taken around 1968. David Bridgman photograph, San Mateo County Historical Society.

main building. Also note the various Coast Guard antennas. To the northeast can be seen San Francisco County Jail, then San Bruno Mountain. The paved road to the site can be seen to the southeast along with San Andreas Lake behind it.

The surviving buildings were diagramed as the National Guard prepared for decommissioning SF 51. The resulting drawings were collected by the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Department and then given to the San Mateo County Historical Association. Note the generator building was about 1400 square feet. The High Power building was close to 1600. See the large space for its air-conditioning unit at the lower right. It alone took up some 225 square feet. The Low Power building was smaller with about 900 square feet. The ready room included bunks, kitchen and toilet facilities. It was less than 1450 square feet. The tiny guard house was forty square feet.¹⁹⁰

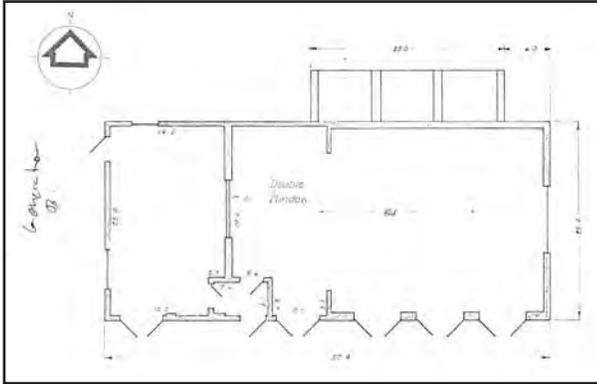


Fig. 2.17: Diagram of the generator building.

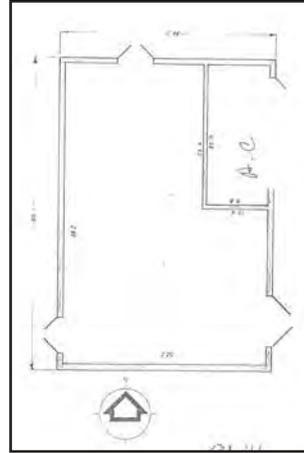


Fig. 2.18: Diagram of the High Power building.

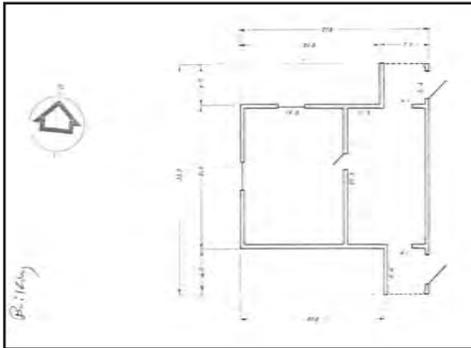


Fig. 2.19: Diagram of the Low Power building.



Fig. 2.20: Diagram of the ready room.

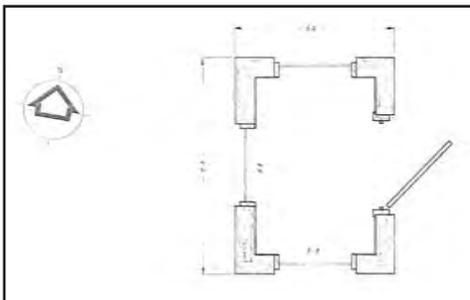


Fig. 2.21: Diagram of the guard house.

SF 51-C was decommissioned along with SF 51-L in 1974. Again, for a more thorough description of its history, see the Milagra Ridge section of this study.

FLYING TIGER CRASH AT SWEENEY RIDGE, 1964

Historic Sweeney Ridge is notable for a tragic event in its past. The night of December 23-24, 1964 was a wet one. Pacific rain and winds were battering the San Francisco Bay Area as they frequently do in late December. A Coast Guard helicopter had already been lost during that series of storms. That night a combination of light rain and fog hindered visibility and rendered atmospheric conditions unstable.

San Francisco International Airport Flight 282 was Flying Tiger Line 1049H N6915C MSN 4812,¹⁹¹ scheduled for departure for New York City. The plane was a Lockheed Super H Constellation, a four engine propeller craft.

These “Super Connies” had achieved distinction because of their long-range which allowed for non-stop transcontinental airfreight routes. This particular flight had originated in Japan and had come to San Francisco for refueling before proceeding on its second leg to the east coast. It carried 41,000 pounds of cargo, including electronic equipment, bolts of fabric, women’s scarves, bandanas, purses, and costume jewelry.¹⁹² It also carried 136 pounds of mail and 5,000 gallons of fuel. Its total weight equaled 142,073 pounds, only 27 less than the maximum allowed.

Flight 282 was originally scheduled for a 9 p.m. departure but had no flight engineer. Flying Tiger requested Paul M. Entz,

down in Los Angeles, to catch a flight up to San Francisco to take on the duty. The 37 year old from North Hollywood arrived at 11:15 p.m.

The other two members of the crew were Pilot Jabez A. Richards and Co-pilot Daniel W. Hennessy. Richards lived in New Jersey. The 49 year-old had been with Flying Tiger since 1950 and had 14,911 hours in the air, 3,942 of them flying Super Constellations. Hennessy was local to the Bay Area. The 33 year old lived in Hillsborough. He was a Korean War veteran with 3,636 hours in the air, 1,277 of them with the Super Constellations.

At 12:13 a.m., December 24, San Francisco International Airport's Ground Control granted 282 permission to taxi to Runway 28L. The planned flight path was to pass through the "gap" between San Bruno Mountain on the right and Sweeney Ridge to the left. The "Super Connie" took off at 12:28.

Witnesses to the take-off later reported that the plane veered far to the right and then turned to the left making a steeper turn than usual before leveling-off. The conjecture here is that the crew was attempting to correct their heading after experiencing strong crosswinds.¹⁹³

Within three minutes they asked the airport: "Departure Tiger... you got us - ah over?" The ground controller advised them to progress to 11,000 feet. Then from the plane: "Roger, how do you have us tracking toward the, ah, gap?" The controller then asked what their altitude was. "900" was the answer. The controller then radioed: "You're left of course..."¹⁹⁴ There was no response to this warning and then 282 disappeared from the radar scope.

Up on Sweeney Ridge, Coast Guard Watch Officer Paul Anderson said that he heard 282's engines "throbbing at full power," normal but it sounded too low. The building then shook as the plane crashed just 25 to 100 feet away from Transmitter Building 2 (the building that still stands today is Building 1). Apparently, six Coast Guard men were in the transmitter building at the time.¹⁹⁵ "The motors were going along, and then there was suddenly a big ball of flame."¹⁹⁶

Sadly, 282 was 2.5 miles left of the "gap." Only 4.3 miles from the airport, its left wing had struck the east side of Sweeney Ridge at about 820 feet above sea level. The "Connie" exploded on impact. Momentum carried debris over the 930 foot top of the Ridge and about 75 feet down its western slope. In what was a bit of an exaggeration, in its afternoon edition of that day, the *San Mateo Times* quoted Sherriff Earl B. Whitmore as saying: "Had it been 20 feet higher, it might have cleared the ridge."

Coast Guard Senior Chief Radioman Philip Ellia lived in Pacifica and had just gotten

in bed when he received a phone call about a “big explosion” from the watch crew. He arrived on the scene about 20 minutes later, along with local police and fire fighters. He remembered the ridge “littered with debris”.¹⁹⁷ In fact, he heard reports that women’s scarves and white gloves were found in many places in west San Bruno the next morning. The largest pieces of the plane still left were portions of the rear fuselage and some of the tail. The scarves and costume jewelry were everywhere along the ridge.

The reaction of the Coast Guard men on the scene was admirable. In the barracks (at today’s Skyline College), Radioman Fred Goodwin was on the phone with his wife when it happened. All the men on the watch rushed the quarter mile up to the ridge and encountered flames. They became frantic, not knowing if the plane was a passenger craft or not. Luckily it was not, and luckily it had missed the Coast Guard Building 2, and it had missed the Main Operations Building, and even more luckily it had not hit San Francisco County Jail, which was downhill from the crash site. Sadly, however, all three crew members of 282 were killed instantly.

Of great concern for the Coast Guard was the loss of power and thus most of its transmitting capabilities. This was highly undesirable in the midst of Pacific Storm Season. However, they were able to get a generator functioning in the Operations Building, and then regained power.¹⁹⁸

The Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) and the County Sherriff roped off the area and closely guarded it until a CAB investigating team could be called to the site. Unfortunately, unlike today’s commercial jets, the “Connie” carried no flight recorder. At first, local newspapers were full of reports about the physical health of pilot Richard.¹⁹⁹ The official investigation found that a faulty switch in the plane’s radio transfer assembly could have contributed to the confusion of the crew, and problems were found on other “Connie’s” immediately afterwards,²⁰⁰ but the probable cause of the accident, determined by the CAB team, was that the pilot, for unknown reasons, had gone off course into an area of rising terrain. Downdraft activity and turbulence hindered the plane’s climb enough that it could not clear the Ridge.²⁰¹ (See the CAB “Investigation:” report as Appendix XVIII of this study.)

The Sweeney Ridge Trail is just 25 yards away from the initial point of impact (Latitude 37°37’28” by Longitude 122°27’48”) which is within the National Park. A report from 2002 mentioned that much debris could still be encountered, including pieces of the aircraft’s outer skin, components of its landing gear and costume jewelry from its cargo bay.

In 2007, another interested party found that remains of the old Coast Guard buildings had been mixed with the “Connie’s” wreckage. However, large pieces from the plane

could still be found, including “one or two flaps, a door complete with latch-handle-and-locking mechanism, and the radio blade antenna. . .” Also of interest was “a portable am/fm radio that was brutally twisted” which “bore scars of the crash including a small pebble imbedded in its face.” Another find was “one of the wing fuel cell caps, still wearing top coat of red paint.” The report mentions “dozens of pieces with Lockheed pat numbers” and of course portions of the cargo. In fact some of the costume jewelry, gloves and scarves were still wrapped in “melted or scorched”²⁰² plastic packaging.

SHELLDANCE BROMELAID & ORCHID NURSERY

Natural wonders seen looking west from Sweeney Ridge include views of the Pacific Ocean, the Farallon Islands and the rugged San Mateo County coastline. Manmade features include the Pacifica Pier (1973) and suburban development from Daly City to the north to Pacifica directly in front of the visitor.

Also within the Park is the Shelldance Bromelaid & Orchid Nursery just below the Ridge on National Park lands at 2000 Cabrillo Highway in Pacifica. Herb Hager began building this establishment in 1949 on an artichoke field. He had been an employee of Rod McLellan at McLellan’s substantial flower growing operations over the hill.²⁰³

McLellan took over his father’s Burlingame floriculture business in 1926, and then moved it, in 1937, to South San Francisco. Here he developed the gardenia as a corsage flower. By 1945, he was shipping three million gardenias annually. In the meantime, he began cultivating orchids as houseplants. Orchids up until that time were thought to be too difficult to grow for the mass market. However, McLellan believed otherwise and made his company, renamed Acres of Orchids, the greatest orchid grower in the world.²⁰⁴ While the McLellan family sold the South San Francisco location in 2005, and divested itself from the flower business, the Shelldance nursery continues today.

Hager originally named his establishment Vallemar Orchids. The state-of-the-art greenhouses (for the 1950s) that he built are still present. He relocated to Salinas to continue his work, where he earned world-wide attention for hybridizing new lines of orchids.

In 1976, Nancy Davis, and Michael and Bruce Rothenberg leased the property and renamed it Shelldance Nursery. They met Hager’s widow, Gladys, and continued in the orchid business. Their greatest success was selling 20,000 plants to the government of Singapore for placement in its National Botanical Gardens. The three proprietors favored environmental preservation of the lands around them and were supporters of the GGNRA becoming stewards of the property they held. Nancy Davis recently

stated that before Hager and his 1950s era redwood greenhouse buildings, it is her understanding that there were no structures at this location.²⁰⁵

SUBURBS TO THE WEST (CONTEXTUAL)

The view to the West shows suburban development from the shore up the valleys of Pacifica, stretching like huge fingers, east toward Sweeney Ridge. Suburban development on the San Mateo County Coastside began with the Ocean Shore Railroad, which was organized in 1905. Despite being damaged by the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, the railroad was operational through to the Tobin station (which still stands near Point San Pedro) by the fall of 1907.²⁰⁶

A subsidiary of the railroad, the Ocean Shore Land Company, sold lots to prospective commuters as track was laid southward. Five communities were established that would eventually become Pacifica: Edgemar, Salada Beach, Brighton Beach, Vallemar and San Pedro Terrace. The Land Company launched an ambitious advertising campaign that included such promotions as free train rides and lunches for prospective buyers from San Francisco that were met at the beaches by multilingual salesmen and brass bands. In anticipation of a growing community, mail service was established at Salada and Rockaway in 1907.

The next year, successful San Francisco attorney, Henry Harrison McCloskey, decided to become one of the new commuters. He built Bendemier as his residence. The large home on the hillside overlooking Salada Beach was completely walled with the only access through a gate. A caller would announce himself from a telephone outside the gate. Its turrets and other embellishments gave the house a medieval appearance, enough so that locals called it “The Castle.” After McCloskey’s death in 1914, the place gained a disreputable reputation as an abortion factory, and then, under the name of Chateau Lafayette, a speakeasy. It is said that a still was present in the house, and that rumrunners were signaled from its towers. As mentioned previously, during World War II the Coast Guard used the house for defense purposes. Today, it is owned by a private party, but is still known as “The Castle.”

With the sale of lots, a school was established at Salada in 1914, and in 1919, local legendary entrepreneur, Charles Gust, opened a hamburger stand at Rockaway. His son, Nick, later built the popular “Nick’s” restaurant there.²⁰⁷

Even with this progress, the isolation of the Coast was only slightly breached by the Ocean Shore Railroad. Although lots were sold, few individuals actually built homes. The real estate bubble burst. The railroad never completed service to Santa Cruz, as originally promised, and it stopped operating trains in 1920. Automobile roads and highways began servicing coastsiders, but artichoke fields still covered the San Pedro

and other local valleys. The San Mateo County shoreline remained a sleepy place for a while longer.

From Sweeney Ridge, the visitor will see a green belt that runs from the hillside down to the beach; this is the Sharp Park Golf Course and Sharp Park Archery Range. Mrs. Honora Sharp gave this 450 acres to San Francisco for recreational purposes in 1935. That same year, the residents of Salada Beach and Brighton Beach decided to combine their communities and changed their name to Sharp Park.

The greatest transformation for the San Mateo County Coast, and indeed for San Mateo County on the whole and actually for all of California, came with World War II. Defense works and industry became ubiquitous. For the County and State, war-time defense industry meant jobs and jobs meant new people and new people needed places to live. Between 1940 and 1960 the County experienced sharp population growth, and now the north coast saw substantial development.

The most important economic engine for the Peninsula was San Francisco International Airport.²⁰⁸ Its construction projects, directed by Mike Doolin, resulted in a vastly improved utility by 1954. On August 27, San Francisco Mayor Elmer Robinson dedicated the new \$15 million Central Terminal. The jet transportation era began in 1959, and by 1966, the work force at the airport was more than 20,000, with a payroll higher than \$165 million. The next year, 12 million passengers used it, bringing with them millions of dollars in revenue. By 1977, 30,000 worked at the airport.²⁰⁹

The north coast's proximity to the airport and the availability of inexpensive property inspired developers like Henry Doelger in Daly City's Westlake District and Andrew Oddstad in the Linda Mar area (San Pedro Valley) to begin building hundreds of houses over what had been sand dunes and farms. In 1955, only one year after the completion of the Central Terminal at the airport, Pacifica got its first shopping center at Linda Mar, near where Gaspar de Portolá had camped in 1769.

By the late 1950s, the north coast was transfigured. From an area mostly known for its discouragingly damp windy climate, it had been totally altered by inspired developers. One environmentalist wrote: "One hundred and sixty-seven years of farming was virtually over."²¹⁰

In fact between 1940 and 1950, the population of the north coast doubled and then doubled again between 1950 and 1960. For many of these new homeowners, their ranch style houses gave them, these children of the Great Depression and veterans of World War II, a piece of the "California Dream." For others, the development of the monotonous housing tracks of "Little Boxes" (song by Malvina Reynolds) spreading across the landscape equated to urban sprawl and environmental disaster.

People, living within the coastal communities that had been originally laid out by the Ocean Shore Land Company, saw that municipal services were needed. They feared loss of self-determination by being swallowed up by the City of San Bruno, just over Sweeney Ridge to the east; and so, in a close election (2601, yes to 2113, no) they voted to incorporate into the City of Pacifica in 1957. They named their city for the statue created by Ralph Stackpole for the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition at San Francisco's Treasure Island; the statue symbolized the hope for peace in the Pacific region.

The same year that Pacifica incorporated, the *San Francisco Chronicle* took note of the developing activity on the north coast. Its Sunday, February 17 edition declared:

Destiny, as both San Mateo county officials and most Coastsiders see it, is a solid strip of cities rivaling the urban string down the Bayside of the Peninsula.

The pressures are mounting. Subdividers are running out of land on the Bayside.²¹¹

Three years later, the *San Mateo Times* announced that "The Coastside Giant Is Stirring" and named the key ingredient to make future growth on the Coast possible:

The giant has been stirring. Now he is about to awaken.

But total awakening of this giant depends, all experts agree, on one thing. Roads.

When San Mateo county's Coastside will begin to reach towards its ultimate depends on how soon an adequate system of freeways is developed to serve the area between Pedro Point and Half Moon Bay.

Plans for these future freeways are already on the drawing boards. Survey crews from the state division of highways have been busy during recent months mapping a route around Pedro mountain - - bypassing Devil's Slide.²¹²

Imagine what *Times* reporter Vern Krogh would have said in 1960, if he could have known that in 2010, fifty years later, the Devil's Slide bypass is still not a reality. Krogh concluded his article with the County's predictions for the future. Officials had informed him that San Mateo County's population of 440,000 would expand to 800,000 by 1990, and 219,000 of these people would be Coastside residents.

Startling predictions like this helped create an environmental backlash. Awareness in the 1960s about the potential for more building on the Peninsula manifested into political action. On the Bayside, the Crocker Land Company was turned away from

its efforts to develop San Bruno Mountain. On the Coastside, the key ingredient to growth, as described by Vern Krogh in 1960 - - roads and freeways - - was held up because of opposition to Highway 380, that would have created a cross-county (east to west) freeway (through the “notch” on Sweeney Ridge), and the Devil’s Slide bypass, which would have opened the coast (from north to south).²¹³ Political action in the 1970s, and a movement to fund preservation through land trusts in the 1980s, continued to slow growth in San Mateo County, especially on the Coastside. Today the population of San Mateo County is about 700,000.

PRESERVATION OF SWEENEY RIDGE

Consumers Ice, a holding company formed by the Sneath family of the old Jersey Farm Company still held ownership of Sweeney Ridge as the Nike missile radar installation faced decommissioning. In the new age of suburbanization, Consumers began planning residential building that would have added 4,550 housing units to the north Peninsula.²¹⁴ However, forces were long in motion to recognize the historic and natural values of Sweeney Ridge and to preserve them as a public benefit.

As San Francisco prepared for its Portolá Festival of 1909 (marking the 140th anniversary of the Bay’s discovery), a variety of translations of the journals of the original members of Portolá’s party began appearing. A wide disparity of ideas about the location of the discovery site resulted. In fact a monument was built in Montara (which still exists) claiming the final climb up to the discovery site started from there.²¹⁵

Finally in 1927, Dr. Herbert Eugene Bolton, Chairman of the History Department at the University of California at Berkeley, published a translated version of Father Crespi’s journal in which he mentioned Sweeney Ridge as the probable site. One of his students, Dr. Frank M. Stanger, became founder of the San Mateo County History Museum and naturally had an interest in furthering the understanding of the Portolá story. In 1947, he took a jeep excursion with students from San Mateo Junior College in search of the place of the great discovery.²¹⁶ While driving down the coast he read Crespi’s account. At Rockaway Beach Stanger noted what he thought to be the most practical ascent and took that route up to Sweeney Ridge. From that experience he visualized Portolá’s path and appreciated the Ridge’s sweeping views. Afterwards he called his old professor for help in launching a drive to recognize Sweeney Ridge as an important historic site. That year the San Mateo County Historical Association sponsored a tour of Sweeney Ridge. Bolton and about 100 San Mateo County and San Francisco people, including elected officials and representatives of the California Historical Society, made the trip. Among those present was George T. Brady, an ancestor of Sergeant José Ortega. Bolton confirmed at that time that this was where Portolá’s expedition had first seen the Bay. As the most esteemed California historian of the time, his testimony gave impetus for further acknowledgment of the site.²¹⁷

While Dr. Stanger hoped to create a large momentum on the Ridge, little progress was made until March 30, 1965, when Nita Spangler, President of the San Mateo County Historical Association, called for a special meeting to discuss the future of the site. Two things were at work. First, within four years the bicentennial of the discovery would occur. Second, the expansion of highway systems and suburban development could vastly alter the Ridge and obliterate the discovery site. That afternoon, Spangler inspired the formation of the Portola Expedition Bicentennial Foundation. Authorized by the County, and formally incorporated on July 1, 1965, the Foundation elected Spangler as its first president. Other founding members included Pacific Telephone executive George Dean (who also led the early movement for preservation of Fort Point), Director of the San Mateo County Development Association, Henry “Bud” Bostwick, Director of the Wells Fargo Bank History Room, Irene Simpson, Co-publisher of the Pacifica Tribune, Peggy Drake, Superintendent of the Jefferson Union High School District, Ed Morgan, San Mateo Times Publisher J. Hart Clinton, builder L.C. Smith, plus a representative of the San Mateo County Fair Association, St. George La Fitte, Ronald Cambell of the David Bohannon organization (developers of Hillsdale in San Mateo) and, of course, Dr. Stanger. The local enthusiasm had to weather outside skepticism. The state park commission judged Sweeney Ridge as of only secondary in historic importance.²¹⁸

However, the oncoming bicentennial of the discovery kept momentum building. In April of 1968, the Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation for the United States Senate Committee on Internal Affairs gathered at the San Francisco Presidio to discuss a variety of issues. Testifying on the importance of the Ridge were United States Representative Pete McCloskey, members of the Portola Foundation, Pacifica political luminaries, including Grace McCarthy, and State Assemblyman Leo Ryan. Ryan stated his specific concern for the dwindling natural beauty of the Peninsula due to development.

A month later, on May 17, 1968, Secretary of the Interior Stuart Udall had Sweeney Ridge listed as a National Historic Landmark (National Register of Historic Places No. 68000022). The State of California also declared it a California Landmark (No. 394).²¹⁹

Locals now turned their attention to preservation of the site. Beginning in 1968, an annual excursion to it, as a commemoration of the Portolá party’s march, took place. Hikers and equestrians joined supervised caravans of automobiles and met at the top to listen to a variety of speakers. In 1969, the Pacifica Ministerial Association initi-

Fig. 2.22: Plaque at Sweeney Ridge commemorating Gaspar de Portolá's discovery of the San Francisco Bay. Lee Davis photograph, San Francisco State University.



ated an annual Easter Sunrise Service on the Ridge.²²⁰ On the scholarly front, a variety of publications drew attention to the Portolá expedition, including Frank Stanger and Alan Brown's *Who Discovered the Golden Gate?* of 1969 (published by the San Mateo County Historical Association). Allowing for improved accessibility, the Boy Scouts established a hiking trail from Pacifica to the site in 1972. Not everyone within the diverse group seeking recognition for Ridge agreed about its future. Leaders within the Portola Foundation opposed environmentalists by favoring the extension of Highway 380 from San Bruno to Pacifica near the discovery site and championing an automobile road to allow tourists to visit it.²²¹

Nevertheless in 1973, San Mateo County and the City of Pacifica came to agreement with Matthew Dillingham, representing Consumers Ice, to purchase, for \$100,000, 18 acres of the Ridge encompassing two knolls which included the probable spot where Portolá made the discovery. Negotiations had begun in 1969. The County came up with the money by receiving matchable Housing and Urban Development funds.

In the meantime, Consumers Ice was making its own plans. By 1969, it envisioned leveling the Ridge and on 250 acres creating a town center, including building 2,700 (no longer 4,500) dwelling units with supporting community amenities. An additional 70 acres would be used for a high-rise corporate office center. The plan proved impractical almost immediately since it called for use of SF 51-C, which was still very much an active Nike radar site. The mounting opposition to the westward extension of Caltrans' Highway 380 was also a factor.²²²

Still, with its beautiful views and its prime location near San Francisco International Airport, those in the world of real estate development had continued interest. In April of 1972, the West Aspen Company, a subsidiary of Texas International, completed the purchase of 1000 acres of the Ridge surrounding the discovery site. Negotiations with Consumers Ice had gone on for two years and included resolution of a lawsuit brought by one of Consumers Ice's stockholders who wanted cash instead of Texas International stock for the buyout.²²³ West Aspen reportedly paid between \$2 million and \$2.5 million for the property.

The original West Aspen proposal for development called for the building of 3,500 homes. Consultant John Bus, with the planning firm Duncan and Jones, guided West Aspen in scaling down its plans to 1,500 homes and a shopping center. This last plan would have left 75% of the land as open space, but for many this was not enough.²²⁴

California State Assemblyman Leo Ryan was perhaps the most outspoken. In 1972, he was recognized as the central figure trying to dissuade development on the Ridge.²²⁵ He gathered together San Francisco and San Mateo County leaders from business, labor, environmental organizations and government, including GGNRA officials. A

group called “Common Ground” was formed out of these efforts as Ryan became a United States Congressman in 1973. He remained an important advocate for saving the Ridge, right up until his tragic murder during the Jonestown Massacre in Guyana, on November 18, 1978.

The year before Ryan’s death, in 1977, the North Coastal Reserve Committee had taken on the Sweeney Ridge cause, replacing Common Ground as the principal advocacy organization involved. Soon after a particularly intense Pacifica City Council meeting, the Reserve Committee handed over the Sweeney Ridge issue to Pacificans United to

Save Our Hills (PUSH). Pacifica activists had originally organized PUSH as their city began working on a new general plan. By the spring of 1978, PUSH volunteers were promoting the ideas proposed by Congressman Ryan about creating an urban park. They knocked on the doors of their neighbors and set up tables at shopping centers in order to convince local people that they must appeal to the Pacifica City Council to preserve Sweeney Ridge.



Fig. 2.23: Monument commemorating Carl Patrick McCarthy's efforts for the preservation of Sweeney Ridge. Lee Davis photograph, San Francisco State University.

Complementing the efforts of PUSH, the Portola Foundation continued its activities. Member Carl Patrick McCarthy (husband of Councilwoman Grace McCarthy) organized the creation of a 15 minute slide show to highlight the story of Portolá’s ascent to the discovery site. He also led tours up to the top. It is said that between 1966 and 1981, he escorted 11,863 people on 941 excursions.²²⁶ (A monument to McCarthy was erected at the discovery site in November of 1983.)

Feeling the pressure, West Aspen seemed ready to balk, but the passage of California’s Proposition 13 made local efforts at preservation more difficult. Since January of 1974, San Mateo County had assumed the lead in the effort to preserve the Ridge. With the November, 1978 passage of this initiative, the Board of Supervisors found itself needing to suspend its acquisition program. Proposition 13, in fact, had made it difficult to provide enough funds for simply maintaining and operating existing County Parks.²²⁷

The door seemed to open for West Aspen. On July 5, 1979, its representative, Douglas B. Martin, Jr., went before Congressmen Phil Burton (San Francisco) and Bill Royer (San Mateo County) of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Insular Affairs. He referred to an application his company had submitted in November, 1978, and remarked how Pacifica city staff would soon be finishing their evaluation of the project.

He also referred to the feasibility study being compiled by the Department of Interior, examining alternatives for Sweeney Ridge. Martin urged the Congressmen to do what could be done to have a decision made about what the federal government would do before West Aspen spent more time and money on the project. Martin then proposed that Congress allow for his company's plans to go forward. He pointed out that most of the Ridge would be left as open space, that housing was desperately needed in the Bay Area, that the 18 acre discovery site would be preserved and that views from the site would be unobstructed. He described how West Aspen would provide some commercial building near the discovery site in order that visitors could "stop and seek refreshment and shelter out of the coastal winds and to enjoy the views."²²⁸ He pledged that West Aspen was prepared to provide trails and areas for picnicking. Finally, he remarked how Proposition 13 and the "California Taxpayers Revolt" had made it clear that the people of the state were not interested in open space and parks that were "non-revenue producing."²²⁹ The logic here struck at the heart of the matter. Local and state ability to purchase and maintain Sweeney Ridge had disappeared. Only the federal government could stand in the way of development of the Ridge. The question became: should Congress take on the responsibility or not?

For most everyone at the hearings, the answer was a resounding "yes." According to the *Pacifica Tribune* of July 11, 1979, "40 of the 49 speakers went on record in supporting of extending the GGNRA to Pacifica and Sweeney Ridge."²³⁰

This included Amy Meyer, co-chairman of People for a Golden Gate National Recreation Area, John Wheeler of the Committee for Green Foothills, John Curtis of the Sharp Park Improvement Council, Ferd Simons, chairman of PUSH, Ruth Paige of Keep Pacifica Scenic, Julie Ann Williams of the Vallemar Homeowners, Dr. Jon Galehouse, geology professor from San Francisco State, Jane Gates, co-coordinator of United Citizens for Pacifica, Jan Dutton of the American Association of University Women, Sandy Damarco of the Ridgeline Association of Homeowners, Bob Scowcroft of Friends of the Earth, John Jacobs, Director of the San Francisco Planning and Research Association, Michael Rothenberg, co-owner of Shelldance Nursery, John Wade of the Sierra Club, Earl Schmidt, a trustee with the California Historical Society, and past Pacifica Mayor, Grace McCarthy. At the end of the hearing Phil Burton remarked how impressed he was with the large number of people "able to talk intelligently about a very complex situation."²³¹

The work of those advocating preservation continued. Feeling this pressure, on December 18, 1979, the Pacifica Planning Commission rejected the West Aspen plan by a unanimous 6 to 0 vote.²³² The issue of preserving Sweeney Ridge and making it park land was now left with the federal government, and leading the charge in Washington D.C. was Congressman Phil Burton. Burton was already credited as the person most responsible for creating the GGNRA. After Leo Ryan's murder, he took over the

Sweeney Ridge challenge. Ultimately, he too would die (in 1983) before the Sweeney issue was completely settled. His wife, Sala Burton, succeeded him in Congress and saw to the ultimate success of the effort.

By the end of April, 1980, Burton a Democrat, was ready to move legislation to purchase the Ridge. San Mateo County Congressman Bill Royer, a Republican, withheld his backing citing uncertainty over local support. Burton responded: "We're going to proceed."²³³

On May 20, 1980, the House of Representatives approved extension of the GGNRA and the federal purchasing of Sweeney Ridge by a vote of 300 to 102. The bill came in the form of HR3, a bipartisan measure co-authored by Burton and Royer. Royer had come around and had taken the floor "to urge immediate passage." Burton later praised Royer for "his very effective leadership."²³⁴

The same team of Burton and Royer then piloted the measure through the Senate. On December 28, 1980, President Jimmy Carter signed Senate Bill 2363. He had done it after fracturing a collarbone while skiing just before meeting with Algerian officials at Camp David in an effort to free the hostages held in Iran. The authorization became part of federal law, No. 96-607. Tom Constantino, an aid to Congressman Royer, commented that President Carter had eliminated bill-signing ceremonies, so none took place for the "Sweeney Ridge bill."²³⁵

While the original legislation allowed for as many as 26,000 acres of public lands to be acquired by the GGNRA in San Mateo County, this new law allowed for purchase of 1,050 acres of privately held property as well - - that of course was the West Aspen section of Sweeney Ridge. This process would take negotiation - - three years of it in fact. Stepping in to facilitate the acquisition was the Trust for Public Land, a non-profit organization whose mission is to enable such transactions to occur as smoothly as possible. Thus West Aspen sold Sweeney to the Trust as a paper transaction, and the Trust then helped urge Congress to fund the required enabling legislation. Trust director Putnam Livermore was credited with moving the final agreement forward with Secretary of the Interior William Clark in 1983. The federal government agreed to pay West Aspen (through the Trust) \$8.5 million in the end.²³⁶

The celebration for Sweeney Ridge becoming part of the GGNRA took place on May 12, 1984 at a "Dedication Day." Activities included hikes, horseback rides, shuttle bus service to the Ridge and postal cancellations. A program at the discovery site featured presentations by Pacifica Mayor Peter Loeb, Congressman Tom Lantos and Senator Alan Cranston. A conciliatory "Message to Pacifica Residents and Visitors" was included in the printed program for the day by the West Aspen Company.²³⁷

Hearings on what the public desired to do with the Ridge began in November, 1984.²³⁸ The coalition that saved Sweeney had acted in concert while the land was in danger of development; however, consensus about what to do with it fell apart in these initial meetings. A major point of contention was whether to install a paved road to the discovery site for automobiles. Other debates discussed the advisability of building restroom facilities, camp grounds, picnic accommodations and paved parking lots.²³⁹ To this day (2010), few of these improvements have been made.

In 1985, San Mateo County turned over its holdings on Milagra Ridge (see Milagra Ridge portion of this study) and those acres north of the “notch” that had been occupied by the Coast Guard to the GGNRA. At the same time the County decided to relinquish its right to the 18 acre discovery site. Two years later the City of Pacifica decided to do likewise (as it shared with the County, authority for those 18 acres).

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RANCHO CORRAL DE TIERRA (AND THE MONTARA LIGHTHOUSE STATION)

R*ancho Corral de Tierra* was a land grant issued in two parts during the Mexican Era of California history. It extended from the southern base of Montara Mountain in the north to Pilarcitos Creek at Half Moon Bay to the south and took up lands from the ocean on the west into the coastal mountains to the east. Francisco Guerrero y Palomares owned the property north of Miramar or *El Arroyo de en Medio*,¹ and Tiburcio Vásquez possessed the grant south of there.² Today, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area has park space on the eastern side of Guerrero holdings, encompassing real estate behind the communities of Montara, Moss Beach and El Granada.³ It includes open space, ranches and farms.

For the purposes of this study, topics will include not just the history of the Park's acreage, but the immediate surrounding areas as well that were part of the original *Rancho Corral de Tierra* which, of course, did not exist in isolation. Thus information is presented about the pre-Spanish contact in the vicinity, the stories of both land grant families, early agriculture on the San Mateo coast, the whaling station at Pillar Point, shipwrecks and the Montara Lighthouse, the commercial fishing industry and the history of Princeton-by-the-Sea, the Ocean Shore Railroad's El Granada, World War II defense installations, big wave surfing at Maverick's, San Mateo County's preservation efforts at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve and the activities of the National Park Service at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*.

PRE-CONTACT AND EUROPEAN ARRIVAL (CONTEXTUAL)

In 1994, archeologist Mark Hylkema discovered a portion of a crescent-shaped stone tool while completing investigations inside the fault at Seal Cove within San Mateo County's Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, west of the National Park's property at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. By use of radiocarbon dating of nearby shell and charcoal, the tool was determined to possibly be between 5,500 and 8,000 years old.⁴ The age of the artifact startled those interested in the San Francisco Peninsula's prehistory because it suggests the presence of previously unknown people that were here before the Ohlones by 500 to 2,500 years. (At the earliest, the Ohlones are thought to have arrived in the Bay Area about 5,000 years ago.) Who these people were is a mystery. Evidence of other ancients living in California going back as far as 10,000 years has been found. From the bone tools and few remains of such remnants, it is theorized that these early natives lived a nomadic existence; they followed the migratory patterns of large animals and waterfowl. The Hylkema crescent is made of Franciscan Chert

which is found east of the San Andreas Fault. The tool is on display at the San Mateo County History Museum in Redwood City.

Actually, Hylkema found four different earthen layers within the deposit, indicating that humans lived in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* neighborhood for many hundreds of years. Hylkema's most recent find included a cooking hearth between 600 and 800 years old. Meanwhile, geologists found it most interesting that the deposits seen in the different ground layers indicated two significant earthquakes had occurred locally during times before European contact.⁵

When Portolá came through in 1769, the people at what became *Rancho Corral de Tierra* were Ohlones that spoke the San Francisco Bay Costanoan dialect, as did all the local tribes that lived in today's San Mateo and San Francisco counties. Besides a number of archaeological sites, the only hint of their occupation of the land exists in some of the remains of their trail system. Perhaps for as many as 5,000 years, these people traveled over and back from Montara Mountain on paths, portions of which are still visible. At McNee Ranch State Park, just north of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, the Indian trail is visible uphill from Gray Whale Overlook near Saddle Pass on the North Peak Access Road. The Indian path probably followed the ridge line south, behind the Willow Brooks Estates area in Pacifica's Linda Mar District, up Montara Mountain to Saddle Pass, to the ridge above Green Valley, before dropping down to Martini Creek. When modern-day hikers stand on Saddle Pass, they are at the point where the Indian people crossed the mountain, and, where later on, Spanish explorers, Franciscan missionaries, hard riding vaqueros, and users of early American roads traversed it.⁶

The Ohlone people occupying the territory from Montara Mountain down to Half Moon Bay called themselves the Chiguan. At the time of Spanish contact (1769), the entire local tribe consisted of no more than 50 people. Mission records reveal the presence of two Chiguan villages. Ssatumnumo existed in the Princeton-Pillar Point area and was closer to National Park Service land. The other, Chagunte, was further south near Pilarcitos Creek, in today's Half Moon Bay.⁷

The first recorded European sighting of the area was accomplished by Francisco Gali aboard the sailing ship *San Juan Bautista* in 1595. As he cruised southward along the California coast, just before resting at Monterey, he described Pillar Point, due west of National Park property at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*.⁸

On October 28, 1769, Spanish soldier Captain Gaspar de Portolá, looking for sites for settlement in *Alta California*, crossed Pilarcitos Creek and entered into Chiguan country. His engineer, Miguel Costansó, described the place around Half Moon Bay as "lacking in wood" and "very little inhabited". As they approached Pillar Point he complained: "We were frequently rained upon; our provisions were running out, and

the men's ration reduced to a mere five flour and bran cakes a day; no grain, no meat (four bags of it that were left being saved for the sick)...⁹ It was here that the officers proposed slaying mules for food, but the men elected to put this drastic step off for a time of greater need. After all, the Spanish were able to hunt ducks and eat what the local people gave them. However, the native cuisine caused diarrhea among many of the men including Captain Portolá and Costansó. Once at Pillar Point, the party made camp. Costansó noted the weather changed; the winds, rain and fog let-up. However, overnight it began raining again. Costansó called the place *Llano de los Anseres*, or Goose Plain, because of the abundant water fowl.

Franciscan Padre Juan Crespi reported that because Portolá seemed too ill to continue, they rested at Pillar Point for a day. He described how the villagers of the nearby point (probably of Ssatumnumo) gave the Spanish tamales, as did all the Ohlone people Portolá's group met on the San Mateo County Coast.

Finally on October 30, the weather cleared, and they set out again. Portolá wrote that his men had to "make two bridges," and now it was his turn to complain about there being "no wood". Crespi also mentioned the lack of trees. They had awakened the camp at 4 a.m., crossed Martini's Creek and came up to the base of San Pedro or Montara Mountain. Costansó wrote:

We broke camp and went along the shore until, leaving the point with island rocks to the west of us [near the famous Maverick's waves], we passed over some knolls and across... hollows with... deep gulches full of water at which we were delayed by [having to] throw small bridges over them. We stopped close to the sea-shore, along which the way was entirely shut off by a high cliff hill at the root of which ran a small stream [Martini's Creek] of good water, coming out of a pocket in between various elevations... we placed the camp, up against the hills...¹⁰

Crespi's October 30 journal records his calling Pillar Point, *la Punta de los Angeles Custodios*, Guardian Angels Point. He named the campsite at Martini's Creek, *el Arroyo Hondo de Almejas*, the Deep Creek at the Musselbed, for obvious reasons.¹¹

The Chiguan next met Spaniards in 1774. Captain Fernando Rivera with Franciscan Padre Francisco Palou led a land party up from Monterey to further explore the San Francisco Peninsula. They became the first Europeans to spot the Golden Gate from the south. During the mission, they met the people at Ssatumnumo who were still friendly. Rivera offered the headman, Camsegmne, tobacco, cloth and toys. Camsegmne was, by ten years, the younger brother of Yagueche, headman of the Aramai to the north.

Between 1783 and 1791, most of the Chiguan were baptized at *Mission San Francisco de Asís*. In the 1790s, the Mission Fathers began grazing cattle in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* area. These lands that Portolá, Costansó and Crespi had criticized for lack of wood were perfect for livestock raising. For centuries the Indians had been burning the landscape to make it better for the herds of large grazing animals that they hunted. The Ohlones had made conditions perfect for the Spanish new intentions for the mid-coast.¹²

THE VAQUERO WAY (CONTEXTUAL)

Texas cowboy, artist and historian Jo Mora made a compelling argument in his 1949 book, *Californios: The Saga of the Hard-riding Vaqueros, America's First Cowboys*, that the *Alta California vaqueros* at the Franciscan missions were the first cowboys of the West:

I have had some grand arguments in years past as to who the first cowboys were. It is curious the twist lots of folks have on Western history. My last verbal tilt on this subject was with a "back East" professor who considered himself quite a rooster in his history and who had been touring the West making a "study" of the cowboy. He claimed that the first American cowboy appeared on our national scene in Texas in the 1850s, and with this I heartily disagreed. I maintained that the honor belonged to the California vaquero, who had arrived some eighty years earlier, and thus the argument started.

He asserted that my candidate should not be considered, since California was under the flag of Spain when the first vaquero arrived - - all of which should brand him as a "foreigner" and not a genuine American cowboy. That sounded logical at first, but for all that, the argument was full of holes and wouldn't hold water.

At the time California stepped into the spotlight Texas was under the very same flag - - Spanish - - and under the Mexican flag later, since both regions were contiguous parts of the same empire. Then the Texans, by force of arms, took their land away from the Mexicans in 1836 and established themselves as a separate nation under the Lone Star flag, and were accepted as such by the United States and other nations. Well, that wasn't the United States, was it? Then came the ups and downs of those turbulent, scrappy days with our sister republic across the Rio Grande. After a lot of this and that, Texas was finally admitted into the Union in 1845.

Now let's look back and see what was happening to Alta California during those hectic days. We'll find that while all the fireworks were going on south of the Rio Grande, the Stars and Stripes were hoisted at Monterey, California, by Com-

modore Sloat in 1846, and California became part of the United States and has remained so ever since. Texas in 1845 - - California in 1846. Pretty close timing, but as yet the Texas cowboy hadn't made his appearance on the United States stage as a distinct character.

You see, my professor claimed the cowboy came into being in the 1850s. Well, he was correct more or less, because with the Texas cowboy you just can't set a definite date. But we still find that the California vaquero had been taking his dallies on what was now United States territory for eighty years before the Texas cowboy came into the picture. And you can start a lot of broncs and take a heap of dallies in that time, brother.

My opponent in the argument had trouble trying to clear away this hurdle, except with hems and haws and then finally with the statement that the very name my candidate bore, "vaquero," really stamped him as a foreigner. Of course that was plain ignorance on his part, and I think, way down deep, he still thought the only "Americans" were the original tourists who came over in the Mayflower. I assured him, however, that even when I was a child, in much of the cow country in Texas the word "cowboy" was seldom used. They all called themselves "vaqueros" and, I believe, do so to this day in many sections.¹³

The Spanish soldiers and missionaries had brought cattle with them at the start of their quest to colonize *Alta* California. They considered these longhorns their most important resource right from the beginning, and this includes the party of settlers that Lieutenant José Moraga brought to the tip of the San Francisco Peninsula in 1776 to create the mission and *presidio*. Throughout California the favorable geographic and climatic conditions, coupled with the preparation of the environment through fires intentionally set for hundreds of years by the Indians, fostered vast increases in the population of these semi-domesticated animals. They roamed the coastal areas as they pleased, until taken by Franciscan-trained *vaqueros* at the *matanza* (the slaughtering time).

During mission days, people in California developed a diet that included wine for drinking, olive oil for cooking and beef for eating. Vegetables and grains were grown, but cattle-raising dominated all other economic and food producing pursuits by the end of the era. One would assume that cows' milk and butter and cheese would be part of the diet too, but they were rarely seen on the table. Instead goats' milk was preferred.¹⁴

By 1810, *Alta* California had become a meat-eating cattle empire. Although outlawed from doing so by the Spanish crown, the priests, soldiers and common people began to use the hides and tallow of the animals in bartering for finished products from other

countries. In part, they were compelled to do so because of the revolution in New Spain which caused the cessation of Spanish shipments from San Blas.

Whether speaking of the herds of the Church or of the military, someone had to watch the longhorns. The California *vaquero* had charge of branding calves, slaughtering the adult animals, butchering them for meat, stripping them for hides and rendering tallow from their fatty parts.¹⁵

Who were these *vaqueros*? Sometimes they were soldiers, but usually they were California Indians.¹⁶ Imagine that. The first cowboys of the West were the historically disrespected California Indians. One of the principle icons of American culture has its roots in California and in a people written off for decades as primitive and cowardly, almost subhuman.

Just before secularization of the mission lands, there were an estimated two million cattle in California, plus great numbers of sheep, goats and horses. In 1833, the Mexican Congress began the process of seizing Church lands. On August 9, 1834, The Act of Secularization provided for the dismantling of *San Francisco de Asís*.¹⁷

As discussed previously, secularization was originally meant to return land to the California Indians, but as it worked out, favorite political friends and former soldiers were gifted vast land grants instead. For example, a group of Indians at the San Francisco mission petitioned for property south of Pilarcitos Creek in today's Half Moon Bay, but the California governor at the time ignored them. The land was later awarded to Candelario Miramontes as *Rancho San Benito*.¹⁸

For an Indian to become a *vaquero*, he had to have the trust of one of the padres. Problems did occur, as an Indian on horseback had better ability to runaway, and then, even worse, create problems as a thief or a provocateur of insurrection. It is therefore not surprising that one of the differences that manifested itself after secularization was the preference by the *rancho* owners to recruit their cowboys among mixed-blooded men instead of full-blooded Indians.¹⁹ Of course, as the years rolled by, there were more and more mixed-blooded people.

The skills necessary in a *vaquero* remained the same. From horseback he had to be expert in herding and roping. On the horse he had to have the strength to wrestle a calf to the ground for branding.

The *rodeo* was the time in the spring when the calves were branded. They were identified by their mothers in order to distinguish what calf belonged to what *rancho* out on the open-range. It also allowed owners to sort out strays. Usually *rodeos* were held

in turns with the various neighborhood *rancheros* hosting *fandangos* which concluded the doings.²⁰

The *matanza*, when the slaughtering took place, was the second important time of the year. At times this operation was performed by *vaqueros* who, for the simple sport of it, would dodge the long horns of the critter and cut the animal's throat from the saddle while mounted on a speeding horse. Cattle were left where they fell. Then crews would skin them, and cut o! the fatty portions for melting. Bags from the hides were made to contain the hot tallow.²¹

One of the many hazards of the *matanza* was being menaced by grizzly bears. They could smell all this activity and loved the taste of tallow. At any rate, as the carcasses were left on the open range, the grizzly bears acted as scavengers. Their population, which had been numerous before, increased dramatically during the Mexican California period.²²

The hides were dried and then, with the bundles of tallow, were loaded on ox carts or pack animals to be taken to market. One of the promises of the Mexican Revolution - - free trade - - was particularly welcomed in California. For the San Francisco Peninsula, American William Richardson ran a warehouse and exchange business at Yerba Buena. From docks such as José Sanchez's embarcadero at San Bruno Point, the hides and tallow would be taken by vessels to Yerba Buena and then traded with Yankee and other ships' captains.²³

Mexican *Alta* California was a sparsely settled frontier. By the end of the period (1846), it is doubtful that more than 7,000 people could actually call themselves Mexican citizens in all of the territory. Few could read or write. There were no secular schools, newspapers, cities, banks or hospitals.

In 1841, American naval lieutenant Charles Wilkes, commanding a six-ship squadron, visited the San Francisco Bay and was astounded by what he perceived as an "absence of all authority."²⁴ He noted in his journal that the San Francisco *Presidio* was a garrison in name only and was actually abandoned. Civil authorities at Yerba Buena seemed lacking as well. He did meet the *Alcalde* of Yerba Buena (who happened to be Francisco Guerrero) but found him rather pompous. After some conversation with locals, Wilkes learned that the Governor of California was unpopular - - "so much that his orders have not been complied with, and have been treated with contempt..."

For the *vaquero*, this was an isolated place in which the people had to be self-reliant. That included their celebrations and entertainments. The *rodeo* and *matanza* became special times of the year during Mexican times, when the *vaqueros* could show-o! their considerable skills. There were also frequent dances and picnics. Their games

were as rough as the country. A favorite sport was “*carrera del gallo*” in which a live rooster was buried with just head and neck protruding from the ground. Teams of riders would attempt grabbing the bird and “carry him away” from horseback. The *vaqueros* also found enjoyment in playing with (of all things) grizzly bears. They would rope them for fun and sometimes bring them to a nearby mission community or pueblo for a well-promoted fight with a strong longhorn bull.²⁵ A bear and bull ring existed in the San Francisco mission neighborhood.

As far as diet went, there was not much difference in the fare from mission days. Most meals consisted of beef, beans and tortillas, seasoned with green peppers.²⁶ On the San Mateo County coast, there was some cultivation of crops, but activity was limited to the immediate tastes of the people. Most Coastside *ranchos* possessed a garden area, fenced to keep the livestock out. Small willows for poles and saplings for rails were strapped in place with rawhide, similar to mission days. A field of 40 acres was considered large. Some grains, beans, corn, peppers, pumpkins and a few vegetables were grown.²⁷

Also as in Spanish times, despite the presence of thousands of cows, dairy products were rare. It took three *vaqueros* to milk a longhorn - - one to grab the head, one to hold a rope on the beast’s back legs and one to perform the milking. California’s great nineteenth-century historian, H.H. Bancroft wrote that “milk pails were unknown, and the *ranchos*’ assortment of crockery was small, so that if several cows were milked, all the tumblers, tea-cups, and bowls were brought into requisition.”²⁸

The *ranchero* and his family took delight in watching *vaqueros* milk cows, coordinate bear-and-bull fights, lasso wild animals and display their skills during the *rodeo* and the *matanza*. The San Francisco Peninsula was a remote agricultural backwater,²⁹ but here, during the Mexican regime, cattle and land represented power. Thus the *rancheros* were considered rich, almost aristocratic.

Many of the ranch owners such as Francisco Guerrero y Palomares and Tiburcio Vasquez of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* rarely actually stayed on the ranch. They mostly lived at Yerba Buena and engaged in duties of politics, business and pleasure. Watching and caring for the longhorns and producing the byproducts from them were the jobs of the *vaquero*.

By 1840, California *rancheros* were selling between 50,000 to 80,000 hides to 20 to 30 foreign merchant ships each year. Visitors describing the landscape commented on the hideous nature of the carcasses of cattle rotting after the *matanza*.³⁰ However the *vaquero* “wrapped in his ‘serape’ . . . with huge spurs jingling like bells”³¹ made an impression of these horsemen as knights of the pastoral San Francisco Peninsula. From the

ocean, at the beginning of the Mexican period, French sea captain Auguste Duhaut-Cilly wrote while sailing from Santa Cruz to San Francisco this of the Coastside:

*The land is generally quite high in the interior and is everywhere crowned with conifers. It then slopes gently toward the shore but rises again to form a long line of hills, from which it descends at last to the sea, which here beats against vertical cliffs and then glides in sheets of white foam onto beaches of sand. . . Plains and hills were clothed in a splendid green, and everywhere we saw immense herds of cattle, sheep, and horses. . . this long strip of eighteen leagues is one continuous pasture.*³²

TWO LAND GRANTS³³

In 1839, Francisco Guerrero y Palomares and Tiburcio Vasquez were each given a land grant for property that was collectively called, and continued to be known as, *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. During 1790s, the Franciscans decided to graze cattle at what they called *El Pilar*, the land around Pillar Point. They selected this section of the Peninsula, only 22 miles distant from the mission, because of its fresh water streams, marine terraces (of alluvial fan deposits that made for fertile grassy fields) and natural boundaries (to keep herds from wandering).

This last mentioned feature factored into the naming of the place. If visitors stand on National Park property across from Half Moon Bay Airport, they will see what the Spanish saw. A ridge stands right on the coast to the west with hills to the north and east and the shore of Half Moon Bay to the south, forming an enclosure that appeared as a large natural corral, or *corral de tierra*, “corral of the earth.”³⁴ Thus the Franciscans changed the name of this part of the coast to *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Which padre gave the new name and when were not found during this study.

FRANCISCO GUERRERO Y PALOMARES

Francisco Guerrero y Palomares received title to the northern portion of the property that is now possessed, in part, by the National Park Service. He was born in Tepic, Mexico in 1811. At the age of 23, he joined the Hajar-Padres Colony of 1834 and traveled to California.³⁵ This group was formed to take advantage of the secularization policy and also to provide a buffer settlement against Russian incursion north of San Francisco Bay. They sailed from San Blas in two ships bound for Monterey, however the one carrying Guerrero put in at San Diego and those colonists traveled overland from there. The members eventually assembled as a group at *Mission San Francisco de Solano*, today’s Sonoma, where Mariano Vallejo and his men assisted them. Funding for the colony ran out, and they disbanded in March 1835, after only about three months together. The party scattered throughout California. American Charles

Brown, who is mentioned in the Phleger Estate portion of this study, had joined the group after it arrived in California, and he stayed briefly with them in Sonoma.³⁶

There is considerable confusion among local historians as to Guerrero's name and hence the name of his *rancho*. Commonly, English speakers do not understand the custom of those of Spanish heritage to add one's mother's name after that of one's father. Thus Guerrero, and not Palomares, is the correct last name for this *ranchero*, and his *rancho* ought to be referred to as the Guerrero, rather than Palomares, portion of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*.

After his arrival in California the young man acquired title to several properties in Yerba Buena, and, after five years, he had elevated himself enough among his peers as to be named *juez de paz* or justice of peace for the lands around San Francisco. As such, it was his duty to assist with the secularization process for the *Mission San Francisco de Asís*, including redistributing property, repair of Church buildings and establishing community necessities, such as a jail.³⁷ He also published police regulations for the *pueblo*. Later on he served as administrator of customs, in which he received 25% of the receipts collected. His abilities were recognized enough that he was named *alcalde* (sort of mayor), as had other men of importance, such as Francisco Sanchez, and then became sub-prefect for regions north of San Jose, with a salary of \$500 a year. He was, in fact, sub-prefect at the time of the United States takeover in 1846 and was held in high enough esteem to continue as a person of authority into the American period. As the renowned historian, Zoeth Skinner Eldredge wrote: "Guerrero was a man of high standing and well regarded by Americans as well as Californians."³⁸

He married the daughter of an *alcalde*, taking the hand of the beautiful Josefa de Haro, whose father, Francisco de Haro, was, in fact, *alcalde* of Yerba Buena twice. De Haro was also owner of *rancho*, north of his brother-in-law, Francisco Sanchez. Guerrero and Josefa would eventually have 10 children, but only two boys lived to adulthood, Augustin and Victoriano.

Guerrero applied for a land grant for *Corral de Tierra* in December of 1838. He cited his military record, proved his Mexican citizenship, drew up a *diseño* (a simple map of the land he desired), and promised to make improvements including building an adobe house. The next year, the same year that he became justice of the peace, he received his 7766.35 acre *rancho*.

On a current map, one can trace the grant as beginning at Montara Mountain to the north, the ocean to the west, *Arroyo de en Medio* (Medio Creek) to the south and the first mountain ridge to the east. The land grant area includes today's communities of Montara, Moss Beach, Princeton and El Granada. National Park properties are inland from these populated areas.

Arroyo de en Medio is maybe the most significant placename associated with *Corral de Tierra*. Its original application was *El Arroyo del Rodeo de en Medio* translated roughly as “Central Rodeo Creek.”³⁹ Here was the boundary between Guerrero and his neighbor, Tiburcio Vasquez. For the *vaqueros* of both *ranchos* this was a good location for rounding up cattle. The ravine with the beach in front of it and the hill in back made for yet another natural corral and a good place for shared *rodeos*.

The creek furthest north, on Guerrero’s land, was at the base of Montara Mountain and was originally known as *Arroyo de la Cuesta* (Creek of the Mountains).⁴⁰ In the 1890s, the Martini Ranch occupied the place and the Creek took its name as Martini Creek.⁴¹

Working southward, on Guerrero’s property, Pablo Vasquez, Tiburcio’s son, related in a letter in 1892 to Stanford professor Mrs. Earl Barnes, that San Vicente Creek (which first appears on maps in 1854) took its name from the “patron saint of the first civilized settler” in the vicinity, except no one has ever actually identified this individual.⁴²

The next creek down Vasquez called *Arroyo Guerrero*, after the owner of this part of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. After Guerrero died, Josefa married James G. Denniston, and in the next century, the creek took the name of this American pioneer.⁴³

Continuing south *Arroyo de en Medio* has already been discussed. Into Vasquez rancho property, today’s Frenchman’s Creek was originally called *Arroyo del Monte* (Timber Creek in this context),⁴⁴ because the *rancheros* found useable wood there. Why it was renamed Frenchman’s Creek is rather a mystery. Local lore tells of some French-Canadian horse thieves that were caught there about 1842.⁴⁵

Finally, separating the Vasquez portion of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* from Candelario Miramontes’ *Rancho San Benito* is Pilarcitos Creek. As mentioned, in the 1790s, the Spanish gave the area around Half Moon Bay the name *el Pilar*. It translates to mean “the Pillar” and was named for the rock visible o! Pillar Point. By 1838 the name changed to *los Pilarcitos* or “Little Pillars.” The creek took the name *Arroyo de los Pilarcitos* about the same time.⁴⁶

All three mid-coast grant recipients, Guerrero, Vasquez and Miramontes were absentee owners. Why was this so? As stated above, Francisco Guerrero had important official positions at Yerba Buena which stood in the way of his living on his *ranchos*. Similarly Tiburcio Vasquez was supervisor of the San Francisco mission’s livestock, and Candelario Miramontes was an officer at the *Presidio*.⁴⁷ Furthermore, travel to their coastside properties was a problem. The roads in every direction over the hills from San Francisco were primitive and impassable during certain times of the year.

The men also had personal business to take care of at Yerba Buena. For example, Miramontes grew corn, peas and potatoes in the present San Francisco downtown area, selling the produce to passing ships' captains.

For Francisco Guerrero, living at Yerba Buena gave him the chance to meet non-Mexican traders involved in the hides and tallow business. American entrepreneur William Heath Davis noted how Guerrero and his wife threw frequent dances at their home. He tells of a July 4 party held in 1836 when the couple invited him, some American seamen, local dignitaries and members of the Hudson Bay Company to attend. The affair lasted until dawn. He also writes of Guerrero organizing an 1844 strawberry picking, week-long camping trip, complete with picnics and barbecues. Davis mentions: "Evenings at the camp were spent in singing, telling stories and playing twenty-one and whist."⁴⁸ The outing ended with a grand dance at the mission. Davis described Josefa as:

*... a graceful woman, with full, brilliant black eyes, [who] wore her hair unconfined, flowing at full length, rich and luxuriant, reaching nearly to her feet; as she moved in the figures of the dance she presented a fascinating picture of youth and beauty that I could not but admire.*⁴⁹

As for Francisco, Davis indicates that he "encouraged the immigration of foreigners to California" and at times "defended their rights." According to Davis: "He saw that the country must necessarily pass from control of Mexico." In his official capacities:

*... he gave great satisfaction, showing no particularity to his countrymen over foreigners, treating all with equal justice. Albeit a thorough Mexican and loving his country, he had, as he often expressed it, no dislike to Americans.*⁵⁰

Davis regarded Guerrero "as one of the most important men in the district." His prominence can be somewhat determined in that Guerrero Street in San Francisco was named for him.⁵¹ Davis' remarks are indicative of his respect and friendship for this *Californio*. Out of concern for his future, he once suggested that Guerrero look out for himself by petitioning the governor for land: "He replied that he had already taken steps to secure a grant at Half Moon Bay, five or six leagues in extent."

About 1839, Guerrero had an adobe house built at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. It sat at the foot of the hills at Guerrero or Denniston Creek on what is today on GGNRA land. Its ruins were still visible in 1911, when the *San Francisco Chronicle* (June 20) reported it as "a few hundred yards of where Portolá passed on his way to discovery of San Francisco Bay."⁵² Indeed, passengers on the Ocean Shore Railroad could see it, as it was within a half mile east of the tracks, a little north of El Granada. It made for a picturesque scene, as it was surrounded by fields of flowers and vegetables under

an old magnolia tree. From the house, the Guerrero family had a view of Half Moon Bay, Pillar Point and the Pacific Ocean. The site is within a eucalyptus grove across U.S. Highway 1 from the Half Moon Bay Airport. In the opinion of the author of this study, an archeological investigation of the site is warranted.

The adobe itself was 24 feet wide and 60 feet long.⁵³ On the first floor it had four rooms. An attic was present. A porch existed across its entire front.⁵⁴

Until 1906, the house existed in good shape, but the great San Francisco Earthquake in April did considerable damage to it. In June of 1911, it was slated to be taken down by lease holders A. Belli and P. Marcucci of the farm surrounding it. Evidently the lease allowed for demolition of the adobe in order to capitalize on the lumber it contained. However, Harry C. Peterson, curator at the Stanford University Museum, found out about it and secured a delay. On June 19, accompanied by a correspondent from the *San Francisco Chronicle* and representatives of the heritage group, Sons of the Golden West, a meeting took place at the adobe. Peterson and company found it in the middle of an artichoke field with a farm hand, recently arrived from Italy, living there.

An article appeared the next day in the *Chronicle* trying to draw public interest in the house and support for Peterson's quest to preserve it:

*Here in the early days gathered the elite of the State who spent hours dancing, singing and feasting. Here were organized the grizzly bear hunts, the bull fights and horse races. Today it is but a relic of the past, replete with romantic memories, one of the few that can be shown to the Eastern visitor. . . It will prove a strong incentive to the fair visitor of 1915 [the Panama Pacific International Exposition] to take the trip by Ocean Shore Railroad down that side of the peninsula, and for that reason, if no other, it should be kept intact.*⁵⁵

As a result of the meeting, Belli and Marcucci agreed to suspend tearing down the old building for another couple of days in order that Peterson be given some time to raise the \$300 necessary to preserve the structure. Peterson approached the California Landmarks League and the Landmarks Committee of the Native Sons for help. Sadly his efforts failed, and the adobe was destroyed.^{56, 57}

During its heyday as a Mexican-era *rancho*, the adobe functioned to house the Guerrero family during *rodeo* and *matanza* times, when they expected to be entertained by *vaqueros*.⁵⁸ Land use at *Rancho Corral de Tierra* changed little from the mission to the *rancho* period. Longhorns still roamed over the open range. The grazing conditions of the coast remained ideal for cattle raising, and while the actual number of livestock owned by Guerrero is lost in history, it is recorded that, with their neighbors, the family staged festive round ups featuring sporting *vaqueros* who endeavored to prove their

superior horsemanship, in the midst of happy celebrations that included bountiful meals and plenty of music.

TIBURCIO VASQUEZ AND SOUTHERN NEIGHBORS (CONTEXTUAL)

Of course sharing *Rancho Corral de Tierra* to the south was Tiburcio Vasquez and his family. Vasquez's father, also Tiburcio, had come to California, like the Sanchez's, with the Anza party of 1776. His son served as a soldier during Spanish times and, as mentioned, he also worked at the Mission as a *major-domo*, supervising the cattle belonging to the Franciscans. In that capacity he learned much about the landscape and became familiar with the trail systems leading to the coast.

He applied for the southern half of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* in December 1838, about the same time Guerrero made his petition. On October 5, 1839, Vasquez received word that he had been awarded his 4,436 acre grant.⁵⁹ It extended from Pilarcitos Creek north to Medio Creek and from the ocean into the hills. Although, Vasquez was an absentee owner during Mexican times, it is said that Vasquez possessed 2,100 head of cattle and 200 horses at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, just to start with. The festive *rodeos* staged on his property are said to have lasted for days. At Pilarcitos Creek he built a wooden house to provide living quarters for his *vaqueros*. Indicative of the bartering economy of the Peninsula *rancheros* in those days, a glimpse at the ledgers kept by José Sanchez shows us that he owed Vasquez 21 calves.⁶⁰

With troubles commencing with the Bear Flag Revolt, Vasquez built a five room adobe house on his *rancho*, just across Pilarcitos Creek from the Miramontes *rancho*. It stood on the north bank of the stream at today's City of Half Moon Bay, about 100 feet away from the road to San Mateo. The 30' by 100' structure housed Vasquez, his wife and their 11 children.⁶¹

At the age of 50, writing about something that had occurred 46 years before, Pablo Vasquez told Stanford professor Mrs. Earl Barnes that a group of Indians, brought in from Tulare by Francisco Berrelleza, erected the adobe houses for the original families on the central coast. According to Vasquez: "They were a kind of slaves" and made adobe bricks by trampling dirt, water and chopped grass with their bare feet in pits dug out of the earth. They then mixed this concoction with straw and poured the mass into moulds. The sun dried the adobe into bricks.

He told Barnes that the door and window sills were made by an American the locals called "*Jorge Loco*" (crazy George). He remembered that a long porch ran in front of the house, as did Guerreros'. The five rooms included a dining room that served the entire family at one sitting and a bedroom for his mother and father.

Vasquez wrote to Barnes that in the early days of his father's occupation of the *rancho*,

there really were no roads to the coast; just old Indian trails. The only kinds of vehicles used were two-wheeled ox-carts, the wheels being made from solid pieces of timber connected with a wooden axle. The bed of the cart was made with two boards; stakes formed the sides, and cowhides covered the top.

Just on the other side of Pilarcitos Creek resided the Miramontes family. Candelario Miramontes received his 6,657 acres *Rancho San Benito* in January of 1841. As had both his northern neighbors, Guerrero and Vasquez, he had served in the military, in fact, he saw duty during both Spanish and Mexican times.

In review, we list the *ranchos* of the San Mateo County Coast. *San Benito* went to Miramontes in 1841. Francisco Sanchez at *San Pedro* and Guerrero and Vasquez of *Corral de Tierra* all received their grants in 1839. South of them, Governor Juan B. Alvarado granted 4,439 acre *San Gregorio* to Salvador Castro in that year, 1839, as well. In between *San Gregorio* and *San Benito*, Governor Alvarado gave José Antonio Alviso his lands, 8,905 acre *Cañada Verde y Arroyo de la Purissima*, the year before. Concluding the land grant picture, Governor Jose Figueroa awarded 3,282 acre *El Pescadero* in 1833 to Juan Gonzales, Governor Alvarado bestowed 3,025 acre *Butano* to Manuel Rodriguez in 1838, and Alvarado issued 17,763 *Punta del Año Nuevo* to Simon Castro in 1842.

AMERICAN TAKEOVER, FRANCISCO GUERRERO Y PALOMARES AND THE SAN MATEO COAST

For absentee land grant owners Guerrero,⁶² Vasquez and Miramontes, it was the Bear Flag Revolt and the following tensions between the Americans and the citizens of Mexico that convinced them to leave Yerba Buena/San Francisco and take up permanent residence on their Coastside *ranchos*. All three knew each other. In fact, Guerrero in January of 1846 complained bitterly about the job performance of Vasquez as *major-domo* of the mission's properties. He wrote that though Vasquez was receiving \$20 a month for his services, all he really did was sell brandy, while allowing his cattle to roam where they wanted.⁶³ However, the three shared much in common. They had participated in the process of secularization of mission property, had served in the Mexican regime's military and were regarded as substantially important individuals on the San Francisco Peninsula.⁶⁴

The three also were witness to the coming of American sea captains and merchants to California. The *Californios* in general welcomed the newcomers and the mutually beneficial trade established between them. American men married into *Californio* families which helped them start businesses and secure land titles.

No one was more accommodating to the Americans than Francisco Guerrero. As noted above, he entertained his friends from the United States lavishly. As sub-prefect

of Yerba Buena in November of 1845, he promised passports to Americans who were threatened by expulsion by other Mexican authorities.

In the early months of 1846, Guerrero's job as sub-prefect grew harder to perform. Quarrels among the foreigners, deserting sailors, building war clouds and the presence of John C. Fremont in California all added pressure. Guerrero had no assistant; he had not even an official office.

The murder of the de Haro twins during the spring Bear Flag Revolt must have hit him hard. Within the small *Californio* community at Yerba Buena, the shock of such a heinous act had to have had a stunning effect. Moreover, Francisco and Ramon de Haro were not only nephews of Francisco Sanchez, but, by marriage, were nephews of Guerrero as well.

Like Francisco Sanchez, Guerrero was more or less relieved when United States naval forces formally took California as an action of the Mexican-American War. The three week old Bear Flag Revolt was thankfully over. Naval Captain John Montgomery landed at Yerba Buena with 70 men and took possession of the village (soon renamed San Francisco by the Americans) on July 9, 1846. The stars and stripes were raised in front of the custom house complete with 21 gun salute. The foreign residents cheered. The Mexican officials were not present. Guerrero himself left with his family for *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. After the hysteria calmed down, he went up to San Francisco and delivered the papers of his office. He was not detained but was paroled. The *rancheros* hoped that peaceful, prosperous days lie ahead. Guerrero and Sanchez had predicted and even hoped for an American takeover; now they had it.

During the fall, San Francisco seemed quiet enough. In September, Lieutenant Washington Bartlett was elected *alcalde*, and Guerrero served as elections inspector.⁶⁵

Nevertheless, as we know from the story of Francisco Sanchez in the section of this study about Sweeney Ridge, by winter, the *Californios* endured a variety of insults plus the seizing of their livestock that led some into rebellion, like Sanchez, and others into hiding at their remote *ranchos* on the Coastside, like Guerrero, Vasquez and Miramontes.

Evidently, of the three, Tiburcio Vasquez had the most trouble with Captain Montgomery. According to him there existed constant friction between the two with threats to this *Californio* that he'd soon be locked in irons.⁶⁶ Vasquez knew the remote Indian and Spanish trails to the coast better than anyone, and he and his two neighbors felt fairly confident that they and their families could live out on the isolated Coastside and not be bothered by the Americans.

At Pilarcitos Creek the Miramontes family, that included 13 children,⁶⁷ built their adobe home just across from the adobe of the Vasquez family. The Vasquez and Miramontes' invited other Californian families to join them. By the end of the decade about 70 people lived in the vicinity.

Clearly, of the three mid-coast *rancheros*, Guerrero had the least problem with the Americans. United States authorities recognized his abilities and trusted him enough in the early months of the occupation to help them sort out di+ cult legal problems involving the land grants of the Mexican regime. With the Gold Rush that came in 1849, Guerrero's expertise became even more important. Tens of thousands of new immigrants flooded into California with little respect for the people that came before them. Many who did not get rich as quickly as they had hoped, settled for picking up occupations they had in their previous lives, including farming. Some decided to squat on the lands of the *rancheros*, forcing tangled legal disagreements. Francisco Guerrero's reputation as an informed *Californio*, but sympathetic to the new American authorities, gave him an important niche as he testified on the validity of certain claims.

Meanwhile, back at Pilarcitos Creek, Miramontes and Vasquez became the founding fathers of what locals have called San Mateo County's first town. Actually the cluster of adobe houses on the north and south side of Pilarcitos Creek can hardly be called a town; since it had no commercial center, it more resembled a Spanish-Mexican style *pueblo*.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, they called their community *San Benito*, after the title of the Miramontes land grant. On the other side of the hill, the people spoke of it as Spanishtown, because everyone there seemed to speak Spanish. Over the years it became known as Half Moon Bay.

At least in the beginning, the Vasquez, the Miramontes and their friends could feel secure in the isolation of the Coastside. A traveler in 1849 who attempted traveling from San Francisco to Santa Cruz on horseback chose the coast route and reported the going quite di+ cult. Much of the ride had to be accomplished when the tide was low. Meanwhile, according to Pablo Vasquez, the trail to San Mateo was possible by foot or horseback, but access by four-wheeled wagons was nearly impossible.

As had Francisco Sanchez, the owners of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* successfully confirmed the title to their land grants in American courts. Guerrero petitioned for his property in 1850. Interestingly, he referred to old trails already existing on his *ranchos*, probably Spanish *vaquero* or even Indian pathways. His widow finally received the patent from the United States Surveyor General's Office in 1866. Vasquez filed for his land in 1853, and had it confirmed by the Land Commission a year later and by the District Court in April of 1859. An appeal against his claim was dismissed in June of 1859. The patent for his land grant was not received until 1873.

With Miramontes joining Sanchez, Guerrero and Vasquez in receiving their confirmations, squatters were either driven off their properties or forced to purchase them. During the 1850s, the three more southern families did sell to many small investors. Unlike other areas in California which came to be owned by just a few landholders, the mid-San Mateo County Coastside became available to many, encouraging small farms and other rural ventures.⁶⁹

The last part of the story about the original owners of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* is sad and full of mystery, as both Guerrero and Vasquez were murdered.

In the summer of 1851, San Francisco was suffering through a crime wave. Reacting to this, the merchant classes of the city organized a vigilance committee. In the midst of this, Francisco Guerrero continued in his capacity of helping the authorities determine the validity of some of the old Mexican land grants and spent much time in town. On Saturday afternoon July 12, Guerrero was leading a horse belonging to acquaintance Robert Ridley to the Mission District, when at First and Mission he met up with another man, later identified as François LeBras, a French immigrant. Witnesses said that Guerrero allowed LeBras to mount and ride the horse. At about today's 11th or 12th Streets, Anne Greene (wife of Alderman William Green) saw Guerrero and a man riding horses as if in a race. They also seemed to be whipping each other's horses while engaging in "sort of a scuffle."⁷⁰ She then saw Guerrero fall from his horse nearly at the foot of her house. According to the *Alta California* of July 14, his skull was broken and he was "perfectly senseless." He died the next day, July 13.

Judge Harvey Brown called together a coroner's inquest at the Mansion House Saloon near the old mission. The Vigilance Committee, meanwhile, began conducting its own investigation. The Judge allowed the Vigilantes to take LeBras away after witness Charles Maysfield said he saw the race, named LeBras as in the race with Guerrero and observed Guerrero's fall. Another witness, Peter Van Winkle, testified that he was at the scene just after Guerrero's spill and said blood on the road appeared six yards in front of where the victim landed, indicating that Guerrero fell because he was hit. Dr. Peter Smith then rendered his opinion that Guerrero had sustained several head wounds (five actually) that could have been delivered by a club or a slung shot (a kind of black jack). Another doctor, Charles Hitchcock, agreed with these findings.⁷¹

San Francisco newspapers were divided in their coverage. The July 14 edition of the *Alta California* called the episode a "horrible murder" and "...one of the most terrible and cold-blooded... we have ever been called upon to record..." However, the *San Francisco Herald* felt the testimony and evidence too thin. Moreover most people in San Francisco who knew LeBras felt him to be unbalanced, but without the physical ability or mental capacity to pull off the crime.

The Vigilantes agreed that the case against LeBras was meager and turned him back over to the legal authorities. The trial took place on November 15, with Judge Delos Lake presiding. Some testimonies were restated with more witnesses corroborating the stories, plus one that saw LeBras trying to sell Robert Ridley's horse downtown. For some reason Mrs. Greene was not asked to come to the stand. This was a Friday, and the prosecuting attorney asked the Judge for an adjournment until Monday so that he could produce Doctors Smith and Hitchcock. Judge Lake refused the request, and the prosecution quickly backed off and concluded its case. The jury never left its box for deliberation. They immediately found LeBras "not guilty."⁷²

The real perpetrator(s), whether they used LeBras or not, were never caught. Even for rough and tumble San Francisco, the whole trial seemed more than just suspicious. Someone had gotten away with this terrible crime, and, because of Guerrero's expertise on land grants, speculation rested on someone or some party that may have had much to win with Guerrero's departure.

Contemporary observers, such as William Heath Davis, wrote of one particular case, involving the "Santillan claim," as a possible motive for killing Guerrero. Back in 1848 the last Mexican governor of California, Pio Pico, issued a passel of land grants. At least some proved fraudulent because they were issued after February when the treaty ending the Mexican American War, which awarded California and other territories to the United States, was signed.

The land grant in question was said to have been given by Pico in 1846 to Prudencio Santillan, pastor at the mission church. It awarded him three square leagues of San Francisco, which comprised most of the present day City. Various individuals and firms had material reasons to claim it legal - - others a fraud. It was in constant litigation until finally, in 1860, the claim was proven to be a fake before the United States Supreme Court. The speculation of local historians is that had Guerrero been alive, he would have more quickly aided the law in uncovering the sleazy affair, hence someone who would benefit from the lie did away with him.⁷³

Locals also can't help but wonder what might have happened in San Mateo County. All the land grants down the Peninsula were proven legitimate, but only after costly legal proceedings. Many *rancheros* could not afford the attorneys' fees and had to sell off their property or take out loans against their real estate holdings. Had Guerrero lived, with his respected reputation as an expert in this field, undoubtedly he could have made life much easier for his fellow *Californios*. As the July 15, 1851, *Alta California* put it: "It is well known that Guerrero was most intimately acquainted with land titles in this portion of California and many parties were interested in having him out of the way..." His body lies at the mission cemetery in San Francisco.

In 1853, widow Josefa remarried a veteran of the Mexican-American War, James G. Denniston. Now *Rancho Corral de Tierra*'s northern portion belonged to an American. Denniston continued raising cattle for beef on the property but also planted fields of hay, oats, barley and potatoes. Denniston went to Washington D.C. to have the Guerrero land grant confirmed in 1866. Three years later, he died of kidney disease. Josefa survived her second husband. Denniston also left behind two daughters he had with Josefa.⁷⁴

A decade later, on February 15, 1879, the Half Moon Bay Colony Company was organized in San Francisco with the purpose of purchasing some 2,000 acres of "Denniston Ranch" property north of Half Moon Bay with the intention of selling lots as homesteads. For many years, locals referred to this subdivision as "the Colony."⁷⁵ Northwestern portions of "the Colony" are on today's GGNRA.⁷⁶

Two years after that purchase, in 1881, German immigrant Jurgen Wienke bought a large section of the *rancho* that would become known as Moss Beach. He was born in Schleswig and as a boy worked on the Hamburg Ferry. He came to America at the age of 25 hoping to become engaged in farming and mining. The land on the San Mateo County Coastside he purchased had belonged to Francisco Guerrero's son, Victoriano. The property had been mortgaged in San Francisco at the Clay Street Bank which desired its sale. Local legend has it that when Wienke first saw the beach and the moss growing on the reef, he felt the place could be home to a world class resort. He read of rumors about the creation of a railroad down the Coast and then made the decision to buy up the property.⁷⁷

That same year he married Mets Paulson, a cousin of Claus Spreckels. They spent their honeymoon at Moss Beach. Wienke built a resort establishment and planted thousands of cypress trees, arranged in various designs, that are still present today. The railroad he hoped for did not materialize until 24 years later, but Wienke remained at Moss Beach and became a prominent member of the Coastside's community, serving for 25 years as clerk of the Board of Trustees for the Denniston Grammar School District.⁷⁸

Locals have blamed "the downfall" of the original owners of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* on their own shortcomings alleging that they "mortgaged great sections of the rancho simply for good of drinking and gambling, as was the pattern of a great many of the early Spanish." This ethnocentric comment plus the illusion that "the Guerrero men fell as easy prey for the wiley Americans," can be refuted by the life and times of the knowledgeable Francisco Guerrero himself. Even as late as 1928, his son Victoriano still held parts of the *rancho*. He died at the age of 84 that year. According to the August 31 edition of the *San Francisco Examiner* he "lived the life of a Spanish gentle-

man” and spent most of his last days away from the family house at 16th and Dolores Streets in San Francisco and instead at his ranch “near Half Moon Bay” where:

...he indulged in his lifetime hobby, the raising of race horses. Many of his horses won fame on California tracks and were the toast of the sporting element a score of years ago.

Services for this old-time *Californio* were held at the Mission church in San Francisco.

TIBURCIO VASQUEZ AND FAMILY IN THE NEW ERA (CONTEXTUAL)

The life history of Tiburcio Vasquez, who was awarded the southern portion of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* (not GGNRA land), should not be confused with that of his infamous nephew of the same name. The other Tiburcio Vasquez was a notorious bandit. The Bear Flag Revolt and the Mexican-American War had brought in the new regime. Some *Californios* resented the prejudices that many of the new immigrants from the United States brought with them.

Hard feelings and suspicions were only exacerbated by the Gold Rush that brought multitudes of young men, seeking to make it rich in this new place and then return home with their wealth. It is said that Vasquez’s nephew was irritated with the way these exploiters treated the *Californios* as inferiors and was particularly angered at how they would then make advances toward the *Californio* women.

Thus he became a hero to some (a sort of Mexican Robin Hood) and a scoundrel to others (roaming the countryside stealing horses and robbing stagecoaches). Because of the remote nature of the Half Moon Bay community, outlaw Vasquez showed up at certain special occasions without fear of being arrested. His appearance shocked those more accepting of the new order.⁷⁹ He was caught in 1874, and executed in San José the next year.

His uncle, meanwhile, became benefactor to the small Half Moon Bay community. Recognizing that the mission in San Francisco was far away and in more hostile surroundings, Vasquez gifted land for a cemetery. After 1850, this Pilarcitos Cemetery (still existent on California State Highway 92 just east of Half Moon Bay) became the resting place for many of the original *Californios*. With his help, in 1856, a Catholic church was built in the middle of the cemetery. It represented the second house of worship erected in San Mateo County, the first being another Catholic Church constructed by Dennis Martin over the hill. For some years it was the only Catholic Church on the coast. Visiting priests from Santa Clara conducted services there. A fire destroyed it in 1876, and it was replaced by another establishment in town southwest of the cemetery.⁸⁰

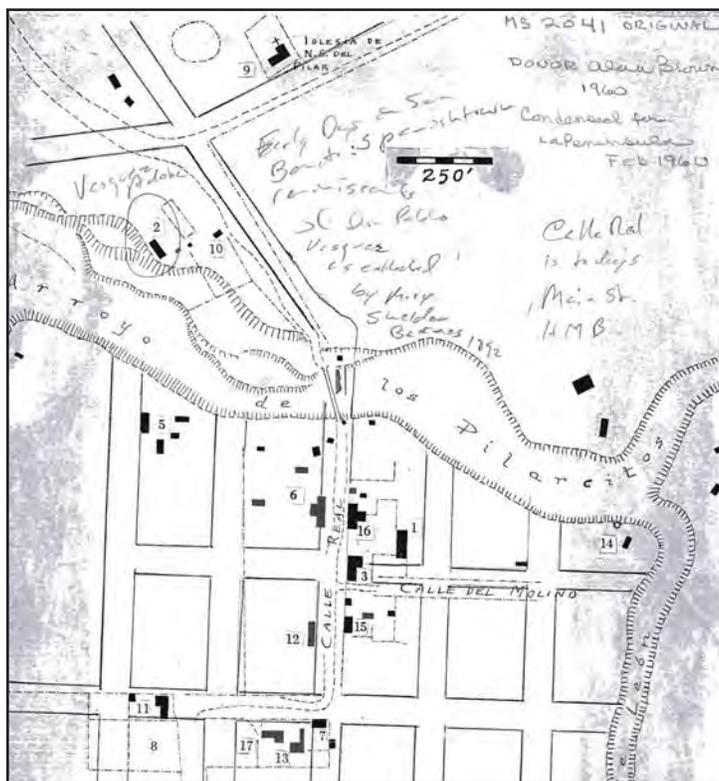


Fig. 3.1: Map of Half Moon Bay with Tiburcio Vasquez's adobe house circled in pencil in the upper left.

During the 1850s, the small economy of Half Moon Bay was based on a few agricultural enterprises. The people lived in isolation and naturally intermarried; families deeply depended upon one another. It was still a place known as a *Californio* community. However, in the 1860s, Americans began setting up businesses. They first opened a harness shop, then a blacksmith shop, a general store and a grist mill. Henry Bidwell established Half Moon Bay's first tavern, and later became postmaster.

On April 12, 1863, as he sat at a window in a Half Moon Bay saloon, an assailant from the street hit Tiburcio Vasquez with a volley of gunfire. He was declared dead at the scene. The unknown murderer got away, and an extensive manhunt failed to find him.⁸¹ Locals speculated about a possible conspiracy. Vasquez's neighbor, Francisco

Guerrero, had been a witness in the Santillan land fraud case, and he had been murdered. Now Vasquez, who had also been a witness in that case, was killed.⁸² Vasquez was buried beneath the floor of the church at Pilarcitos Cemetery.

The Vasquez family continued to be a prominent force in the Half Moon Bay area. For example, they are given credit for planting the first eucalyptus trees on the Coastside in 1868.⁸³ However, like the descendants of Francisco Guerrero, through the years they sold off most of their real estate.

The original adobe house built by Tiburcio stood until 1906. The great San Francisco Earthquake that April destroyed it and killed three people living there, the only loss of life in San Mateo County during that disaster.⁸⁴

Pablo Vasquez, Tiburcio's son, became one of the well-known characters of the Coast. His frame house still stands at Half Moon Bay. He was born in 1842, and was christened at the mission at San Francisco. He spent much of his childhood at the mission. He married Amelia Conner in 1872. He lived a long and happy life at Half Moon Bay.

Locals regarded him with celebrity status. He was an expert horseback rider and also a great billiards player, who gained further notoriety for walking around town with his distinctive collapsible cue stick. He is buried at the cemetery his father donated to the community.

AGRICULTURE

JAMES G. DENNISTON'S RANCHO CORRAL DE TIERRA

With the Gold Rush and the coming of so many hungry immigrants, food production became an important business in California. In 1849, a single head of cattle could bring as much as \$500. While inflated prices fell as the months wore on, in 1851 one animal could still cost \$150,⁸⁵ far exceeding values established anywhere else.

Conditions on the San Mateo County Coastside for cattle grazing were perfect. According to an 1860s edition of the *San Mateo County Gazette*, the Bayside of the County and even the “high lands are in summer parched and dry.” However, over the hill, the Coastside had “no excessive heat. . . owing to the fogs, which immediately upon the opening of spring, take the place of the winter rains. . .” Consequently, “the ground is continually supplied with moisture; . . .the verdure is. . . prolonged during the entire year over the whole western slope, and grazing for cattle is therefore abundant.”

San Mateo County’s Coastside was still a wild place however. The April 7, 1860 edition of the *Gazette* included an account of four adventurers “at Mr. Denniston’s” who participated in “a wild-cat hunt” (probably a bobcat hunt):

The day was somewhat wet, but notwithstanding, the ardent hunters. . . sallied forth, following the baying pack, among which were seven fine foxhounds. Our course lay up a deep canyon, the trail skirting a thicket of willow and undergrowth of several hundred yards. . . , through which meandered a stream whose continuous flow rendered the ground marshy and the vegetation thick. . . On either side rose majestic hills. . . In a short time the deep baying of the hounds indicated their scent of the track. . . They have him! resounded from the foremost hunter. And after a gallop of a short distance, sure enough, there he was, a wild cat in a treetop. . . Hazardous as the undertaking appeared, the party were resolved to secure the cat alive. Accordingly, a. . . noose was placed about his neck and after much struggling. . . he was safely bagged in a gunny-sack. . . and carried in triumph to the ranch.

Half Moon Bay was a very small community, still. In 1852, it is doubtful that 85 people lived there.⁸⁶ The isolation of the place can be determined from the writings of a traveler who described the road over Montara Mountain in 1856. Edward McGowan wrote how he and James Denniston “. . .had to traverse a rugged mountain road, bad enough in the day-time, but at night, except on the surest-footed beasts, almost impassable.”⁸⁷

The Coastside was predominately *Californio* in the 1850s. Those who weren't, like Denniston, usually married into an old family to get property. Candelario Miramontes sold a portion of *Rancho San Benito*, just south of Half Moon Bay, to American James Johnston. His having a Mexican wife, Petra de Hara, certainly helped Johnston, who established one of the first dairy ranches in California on his 1,162 acres.⁸⁸

It was Americans like Johnston and Denniston who thought of food production beyond simply raising cattle for meat.

Two important Coastside Americans arrived in California at the same time. At the end of the Mexican-American War, in October of 1848, Denniston and Josiah P. Ames were mustered out of Company B of the famous Stevenson Regiment of New York Volunteers at Monterey.⁸⁹ They had been recruited with the promise that at the end of the war, they would be discharged somewhere in the new territories acquired as a result of the war. Both tried their hand at gold mining, but ended up on the San Mateo County coast. The reader will recall that Denniston married the beautiful Josefa, the widow of the murdered Francisco Guerrero. Their wedding took place on February 12, 1853, and he and his wife were soon living in the original adobe house at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*.⁹⁰ They would have three children, two daughters and one son. Daughters Amelia and Josefa lived to adulthood. Denniston continued to raise beef cattle there, but recognized the fertile valleys as having excellent potential for growing crops and raising other kinds of animals as well.

Within half a dozen years, the *San Mateo County Gazette* (April 7, 1860 edition) declared Denniston's *rancho* “one of the most productive ranchos of its kind, namely, for grain and stock-raising, in California.” The newspaper explained that: “Cattle of all descriptions in excellent condition are grazing upon the immense pastures.” About crop production, it gushed: “Some accounts of the yield of grain and produce, were we to give them, would cause our eastern farmers to stare with astonishment. . .”

Denniston's biggest problem was transporting his products to market in San Francisco. In 1858, on the southeast side of Pillar Point, he built the first wharf on Half Moon Bay. It became known as Denniston's Landing or sometimes as Potato Wharf because of the quantity of that product loaded onto waiting ships. Denniston built roads from his adobe and grain fields down to the landing. Tenant farmers throughout the Half

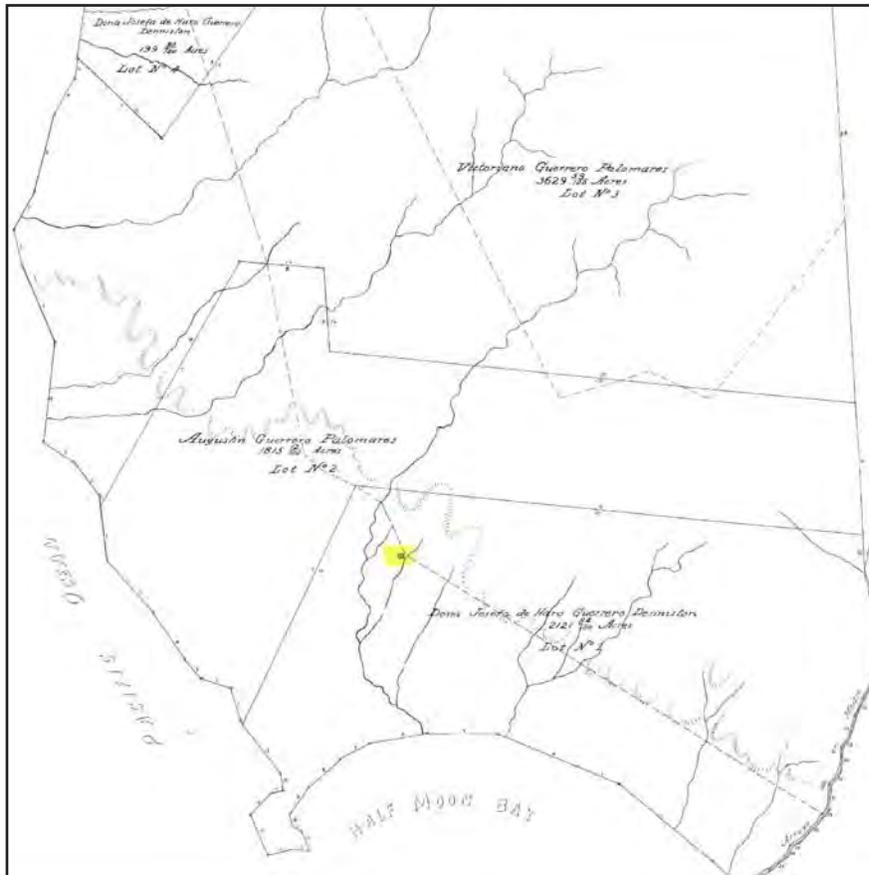
Moon Bay area also came to use the wharf.⁹¹ By the fall of 1859, San Mateo County assessed the value of Denniston’s property holdings at \$37,469, making him the second richest man in the County.⁹²

This wealth allowed Denniston to dabble in other opportunities. He bought stock in the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad. When completed in 1864, it was the first commuter railroad west of the Mississippi. Closer to home he became part-owner of the flour mill in Half Moon Bay, and he invested in other local businesses.

Denniston also became involved in California politics. In 1860 and 1862, he ran successfully for the state legislature and gained a powerful reputation in Sacramento. Those were the days of the American Civil War (1861-1865). He called himself a Union Democrat, and identified strongly with the North against the South. He felt himself *Californio*, at least by marriage, and listed his occupation as *ranchero* on the legislature roster.

Fig. 3.2: Map of Rancho Corral de Tierra showing how the land was divided two years before James Denniston's death.

Denniston died of kidney disease, still a young man, in 1869. However, as a physical reminder of this accomplished pioneer, the pilings of his landing remained visible for decades, in fact clear into the 1940s.



Two years before Denniston’s demise, *Rancho Corral de Tierra* was divided between Josefa and two of her sons by her first marriage. Roughly speaking, except for a smaller piece of property in the far northwest corner given to his mother, Victoriano Guerrero received the northern properties in the vicinity of today’s Montara. Augustine Guerrero obtained title to the central portion. Josefa Guerrero-Denniston took possession of the southern section, around today’s El Granada.⁹³ Over the years, the three sold off the greater part of the old *ranchero*.⁹⁴

DENNISTON'S NEIGHBORS (CONTEXTUAL)

Just south of the Guerrero-Denniston *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, Denniston's old friend Josiah P. Ames built his wharf, which also became a lasting reminder of an old pioneer, at Miramar where Medio Creek flows into the ocean.

Ames was born in England in 1829. His family immigrated to the United States when he was but six months old. They lived in New York City at first and then in other locations. As stated, with Denniston, he came to California after serving in the Army during the Mexican-American War. He was discharged in September of 1848, when hysteria about gold in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada was growing in intensity. He worked the mines at Mokelumne Hill and other places until deciding to commit to a more traditional life on the San Mateo County Coast.⁹⁵

In 1855, he bought 82 acres of land in the Half Moon Bay area. He became a farmer, saloon keeper and even entered into the laundry business. He had success. In 1865, San Francisco newspapers heralded his agricultural accomplishments with stories about a record breaking head of lettuce from his farm, measuring five feet, eight inches around and weighing in at 41 pounds.

In 1868, he built his 1,000 foot wharf. Despite problems with climatic and tidal conditions, it quickly eclipsed Denniston's wharf (which became known as Old Landing) in importance and developed into the most popular point for transporting produce to San Francisco from farms as far south as San Gregorio. A community formed around the embarcadero that came to be known as Amesport (now Miramar). Wagons of potatoes, hay and grain were unloaded onto mule driven rail cars and then put aboard cargo vessels.⁹⁶ Locals claimed as many as three ships could dock at the pier when the weather was right. One account tells of the ship *Santa Cruz* stopping at Amesport for 6,000 sacks of grain on a Saturday night and continuing down the coast to Pigeon Point to take on several hundred barrels of oil from the whaling station there.⁹⁷

At the same time that Ames enjoyed his successes as an entrepreneur, he also engaged in politics. In 1859, he was elected to the County's court system and for forever after was known as "Judge Ames."⁹⁸ As was his neighbor and friend Denniston to the north, Ames was an "Anti-Le Compton Democrat," in other words, he was against the expansion of slavery.⁹⁹ He was elected to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors in 1860, and served steadily in that capacity until 1881, except during a term in the state legislature (1877-1878). As a County Supervisor, he was much appreciated by Coast-side residents for the attention he gave to issues that most affected them, especially the building of roads and bridges. In 1881, he moved from the County when Republican California Governor George C. Perkins appointed him warden of San Quentin Prison. Ames died in 1903.

Besides large land holdings belonging to Denniston, Ames and Johnston, smaller farms were established by such individuals as F.R. Burden, B.F. Webb and Amstead Goadley, who collectively settled south of Johnston at Cañada Verde in 1853.¹⁰⁰ The chief difference between the Coastside's American style farm and a Mexican-era rancho stemmed from the purpose of the former. The American farm produced surplus food for profit, while the *rancho* was more concerned with sustenance. The American farm was not self-sufficient. Instead it depended upon goods and services at places like Half Moon Bay.¹⁰¹

Of course the level lands were used up first -- but the hillsides were fertile too. Blacksmith, newspaper publisher, politician and inventor, R.I. Knapp had the answer. He hailed from New York and came to California by sailing to the Isthmus of Panama, crossing it via covered wagon and boarding a ship to San Francisco, arriving in 1863. He first lived in Sonoma County, but by 1871 found his way to Half Moon Bay. He watched his neighbors struggle, trying to plow the hillsides. The Kilgore Plow they used had a beveled blade that was fine for cutting into the earth, but it was heavy and clumsy. As a blacksmith Knapp repaired dozens of Kilgores and decided he could make a better tool. In 1873, the first "Knapp Sidehill Plow" appeared. This lighter, sturdier instrument included a simple locking device that kept the plow in place while allowing for easier adjustment of the blade. With hillside farming, reversing the blade was necessary after completing each furrow. A farmer could now, for the first time, reverse the blade without having to let go of the plow and thus the animal harnessed to it. The invention was a success. At first, Knapp handmade each plow with sledge and anvil. However, by 1878, he was manufacturing hundreds of these plows from a plant in Half Moon Bay for shipment all over California, Oregon and even the Hawaiian Islands.¹⁰²

Half Moon Bay, itself, had changed by the 1870s. In 1872, a stagecoach traveler stopped there and estimated the population to be about 400, making it, after Redwood City, the largest community in the County. He claimed what he saw most was "whiskey and blacksmiths, with the former in the lead."¹⁰³ He remarked that potatoes seemed to be the main crop of the surrounding farms, with sugar beets and chicory close behind.

Despite the changes, perhaps because of its isolation, the San Mateo County Coastside avoided the trend of most other places in California, of large absentee landlords profiting from the toil of migrant laborers. Instead small-scale farms using a stable local labor force gave the Coastside a unique character.

Also of note was the mixed ethnic heritage of the farmers and their workers. Along with the *Californios* and Americans were increasing numbers of Irish, Chinese and Portuguese.

Since the Gold Rush days, Irish immigrants had joined with Americans to farm on the San Francisco Peninsula. Many became prominent in San Mateo County. For example John Kyne came as a farmer to *Rancho Corral de Tierra* land. He was born in 1847 in County Mayo, Ireland. At age 18, in 1865 he arrived at San Francisco and worked as a contractor for his uncle. He tried dairy ranching on Twin Peaks in the City, but in 1884, decided to go into partnership with Peter Burke to create a farm at Moss Beach. A recognized leader of the community, he served as trustee of the local grammar school for 30 years, until elected to the High School Board in 1918. He lived all the rest of his life at Moss Beach.¹⁰⁴ Kyne died in 1938 and is buried in the Catholic cemetery at Half Moon Bay.¹⁰⁵

Also coming here with the Gold Rush were the Chinese. They provided inexpensive gang labor throughout California, and farmers on the Coastside made use of them. By 1880, at least 600 were present in San Mateo County (whose total population was about 8,200).¹⁰⁶

During those early years, Portuguese immigrants became farm laborers. Many engaged in coastal whaling and worked on farms during the off-season. Our 1872 stagecoach visitor to Half Moon Bay mentions that many Portuguese had, by that time, actually purchased their own farms in the area in parcels of 30 to 40 acres for \$60 to \$100 an acre.¹⁰⁷

The Chinese Exclusion Law of 1882 had a huge effect on the labor market in California and, consequently, the San Mateo County coast. People from a variety of other places filled the void, including immigrants from Japan and Italy.

Japanese farm workers became ubiquitous throughout the Peninsula. As other immigrants did, they worked the lands of others until they had the resources to lease or buy properties of their own.¹⁰⁸

JAPANESE AT RANCHO CORRAL DE TIERRA

As Japanese farmers prospered in California using their traditional techniques for maximizing production on small plots of land, other farmers came to fear the competition. In 1913, California passed the Heney-Webb Alien Land Law. Although carefully worded so as not to bring international offense by specifically mentioning the Japanese, this was the group that was targeted. The law provided that no alien ineligible for naturalization could own land.

Initially, the law was mitigated to an extent, by having land purchased in the name of American born children with the alien parents as guardians. Later laws closed this loophole, however, relegating many Japanese to becoming sharecroppers. Meanwhile,

the U.S. Immigration Act of 1924, in effect, halted Japanese immigration until after 1945.¹⁰⁹

Before World War II, two Japanese families came to cultivate lands now a part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the Takahashis and the Satos. Both their stories have historical importance. The first one is about a pioneer horticulturalist and leader of his community. The second is about the struggles of a farm family faced with internment and ruin.



Fig. 3.3: A 1940 photograph of Y. Takahashi.

San Mateo County Coastside Japanese American families always referred to him as Mr. Takahashi. Various sources list him as I. Takahashi,¹¹⁰ E. Takahashi or Y. Takahashi.¹¹¹ The United States Census of 1920 shows Yunosuke Takahashi living in Township 4, within the Denniston Precinct. While this is certainly our man, one should not trust the spelling of that first name. The 1939 Montara Phone Book shows a Y. Takahashi on Sunshine Valley Road. One source has him arriving about 1900.¹¹² Another says, definitively, it was 1914.¹¹³ The Census says 1900. One source describes his flower growing enterprise just east of Montara as “a tiny nursery”¹¹⁴ that launched the strawflower industry in San

Mateo County. Another proclaims it “a large Japanese garden of flower terraces and fish ponds...that...is credited with starting the strawflower industry in the United States.”¹¹⁵ A photograph taken by the San Francisco Flower Market in 1940 shows Takahashi and his wife in front of a large hedge in front of his land saying “Welcome”.

The 1920 Census reports Takahashi’s wife, Kiku, as being 32 years old, and having immigrated from Japan in 1911. Takahashi is listed as 43. The Census indicates that both could speak English. It tells us that Takahashi owned his house outright - - that is he paid no mortgage. However, we still have not determined under whose name his property was held. His occupation is listed as farmer in the nursery industry. Both husband and wife could speak English according to this record and although no children were reported for them, a Tsnokio Murakomi (spelling uncertain) lived with the couple and was listed as a floral worker. In part his property existed on the eastside of Sunshine Valley Road where horse stables for Renegade Ranch are today, on the Golden Gate National Recreation Area’s portion of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Structures that may have belonged to Takahashi (including his house and a water tower) exist on adjacent properties.¹¹⁶

It is reported that he was a former professor of horticulture from the University of Tokyo, that he introduced the first dehydration chamber at Montara in 1911, and that he began the practice of inserting wire into stems in his work. He started out by selling

flowers on the San Francisco market, using the Ocean Shore Railroad to transport his products.¹¹⁷

At this point the exact importance of Takahashi's business is not completely understood. In fact Yoshi Mizono (of the Sato family) remembers that by the time she was living on the San Mateo coast in the 1930s, Mr. Takahashi was in the cut flower business, no longer growing straw flowers at all. However, Coastside Japanese families remember this Issei and his Issei wife as kind and respected, but childless.¹¹⁸ Coastside old timer, David Hovice, recalls that his grandmother, Jenny Wagner, taught Takahashi how to speak English. For years Takahashi was noted for inviting students from Japan to study his gardens.

One of the professor's initiatives, at least as far back as the 1930s, was to bring orphaned teenage boys from San Francisco and other places to his farm where they worked until they finished school at Half Moon Bay High. One of these boys, Hero Ogo, became a farmer in the area himself, on a parcel of land where Half Moon Bay Airport is today.¹¹⁹

By 1942, when the Japanese of the Coastside were evacuated because of the start of World War II, Takahashi was in his 60s. At the Assembly Center at Tanforan Race Track in San Bruno, Mizono tells how the Japanese people from the *Corral de Tierra* area, from Frenchman's Creek up to his property, kept close to him. When a family problem for her came up, 19 year old Mizono went to the professor for help.

After the War, Takahashi was one of the few to regain his land. He took in other, less fortunate, former internees until they could get back on their feet. Local residents of Montara used to speak of Takahashi "as a short, little man taking his daily walks up and down Sunshine Valley Road."¹²⁰ Mrs. Takahashi died after the War. Mr. Takahashi outlived her and moved to San Francisco.¹²¹ He expired sometime in the 1950s or 1960s.¹²²

Just after World War II, Seiro Sato and his son Hamm came to live up Denniston Creek on land on the eastern portion of Cabrillo Farms of today's National Park's *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Seiro was born in 1872 at Kochi, a ken or prefecture in Japan. He was the oldest son in his family and decided to come to the United States in 1890. At first he settled on lands near Stockton, California and did well as a farmer. More than a dozen years later, he decided to return to Kochi to find a wife. He met Masao Hara, who became impressed with Sato's success in America. They were married as Christians. Masao became pregnant, and Seiro decided to return to California, alone, in 1906. Masao followed later.¹²³ The couple eventually had two sons, Hamm and Sam, and daughters Sue (now Sue Okamura) and Yoshi (now Yoshi Mizono).

After Masao died of cancer, Seiro moved the family to San Mateo in 1928. Here he worked as a gardener but longed to be a farmer again. By 1932, he had his family in motion once more. They leased property over the hill at Frenchman's Creek, north of Half Moon Bay, where Seiro decided to get into the flower growing business.¹²⁴

He grew marguerites¹²⁵ (chrysanthemums) and straw flowers. Close by were other Japanese families. The Katos lived at Miramar, east of the highway, and the Ogos, as mentioned above, lived at the present site of Half Moon Bay Airport.¹²⁶ Further north were the Takahashis.

According to daughter Sue Okamura, the home they lived in was a comfortable two story farmhouse that, by the beginning of World War II, was fully equipped with modern utilities. A photograph, taken in 1940, by the San Francisco Flower Market, shows a happy and proud Seiro, with two sons and two daughters.



Fig. 3.4: A 1940 photograph of Seiro Sato with two sons and two daughters.

In the weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor, negative feelings manifested themselves on the Coastside. Mizono remembered how the son of a prominent Half Moon Bay family planted nails in the driveways of people of Japanese ancestry of the town.¹²⁷ When the evacuation order came, some of the Japanese families on the coast gathered at the Satos' as a sort of staging area.¹²⁸ On eviction day, the Satos joined other Japanese of the County at the Masonic Hall in San Mateo. Mizono recalled how "kind ladies from the Congregational

Church" served the people coffee and cookies.¹²⁹ Buses then took them to the Assembly Center at Tanforan. After some months there, it was on to Camp Topaz in Utah. Mizono remembered upon arriving there "...it was so desolate. I was never so depressed in my whole life."¹³⁰

In 1943, the Sato brothers were presented with a questionnaire from the federal government. Two key questions (numbers 27 and 28) asked if they would be willing to sign up for the armed forces and if they were ready to disclaim loyalty to the Emperor of Japan and instead proclaim allegiance to the United States.¹³¹ Sam had bad knees and a hurt back. As a "4-F," his determination to say "yes" had no real impact.¹³² However, Hamm said "no" to both and told an FBI agent: "I'm putting no-no, because you look up in the dictionary and see what al-

legiance means. Allegiance means...swearing allegiance to a country that's going to protect you.”¹³³

Yoshi Mizono found some relief from the hardships of camp in religion. She attended Bible class once a week. She asked her father and older sister if she had ever been baptized. They could not remember; so on Easter Sunday, 1943, she was baptized with others on a platform, during a sunrise service.¹³⁴ That same year, the 21 year old left Topaz to attend nursing school in Pennsylvania.¹³⁵ Her older sister, Sue, was married that year to a Nisei serving in the Army. For some months she lived away from Topaz, but when he was discharged in 1945, the couple returned to camp.¹³⁶

When the War ended, the family was finally allowed to go back to San Mateo County. Sam Sato remembered coming through Vallejo and seeing the fog: “It sure reminded me of the coastside. Something that I felt really good about inside - - coming back to the coast after four years.”¹³⁷ Of course the Satos had no idea what they were coming home to. Sam recalled that Coastside artist Galen Wolfe kept the family's personal belongings in his barn. Wolfe reportedly had to protect these possessions from his brother, who wanted to burn them. Wolfe threatened his sibling with his shotgun, and that saved the Satos' things. Later, when one of Sam's sisters gave birth, she named the boy Galen after this friend.¹³⁸

In the Spring of 1947, Seiro and Hamm decided to get back into farming and leased acreage from an Italian family.¹³⁹ The property was at Denniston Creek, on the National Park's Corral de Tierra, today. The land they occupied is east of the present Cabrillo Farms buildings, beyond the Denniston Reservoir at the base of the hills.

Their “house” was nothing like the old farmhouse at Frenchman's Creek. The two men built what was really a one or two room shack. They had no money, built no green house or hardly any other improvements. There were no utilities. Fresh water came from the Creek. They cleared the land and grew flowers and some vegetables. Sue Okamura remembered it as “a real something.”¹⁴⁰

Later, they built a second place, further up the canyon from the first. This was a nicer a! air. It had plumbing - - even a toilet. The two lived here as bachelors until about 1960.¹⁴¹

The men were known to the community around then. Being so close to Half Moon Bay Airport, Hamm took flying lessons from Frank Sylvestri.¹⁴² Seiro died in 1968, at the age of 96. Some years ago a fire destroyed what was left of the Satos' place. The ruins remaining in the canyon are said to be theirs.¹⁴³

ITALIANS, ARTICHOKE AND THE COASTSIDE

Recognizing the success of Professor Takahashi, Italian farmers down the road near Half Moon Bay began to realize that growing a variety of flowers could net more cash than food crops. After 1900, using irrigation and immigrant labor (largely their own people), they helped launch one of San Mateo County's most lucrative industries of the early twentieth century.¹⁴⁴

Indeed, by this time, Italians had become the most numerous group on the coast, and they became intensely involved with farming. They came poor and uneducated from the northern part of Italy - - places like Lucca and Genoa. Because of the agricultural experience they brought with them from the old country, to the "Mediterranean" type climate and topography of the San Mateo County Coastside, Italians did well. They understood the changing nature of agribusiness in California. They turned away from the traditional endeavors - - grain, potatoes and dairy products - - and used irrigation techniques and immigrant labor, as they were applying them to the flower business, for new crops such as Brussels sprouts and especially, artichokes.

Although the artichoke had been introduced to the United States at the beginning of the nineteenth century, by the end of the 1800s, it still was not a very well known food product in this country. The first planting of artichokes for commercial purposes in California is said to have been accomplished by Italian farmer Dante Dianda in the 1890s, at today's El Granada, either within or just adjacent to National Park Service land at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*.¹⁴⁵ Further down the coast at Half Moon Bay, John L. Debenedetti earned immortal fame as the "Artichoke King."¹⁴⁶ He was the son of Joseph Debenedetti, the Pescadero merchant who became the County's first Italian member of the Board of Supervisors. John received his title for his work encouraging Italian immigrants to come to the Coastside and engage in artichoke growing. By 1906, 1,500 acres of artichokes had been planted in the Half Moon Bay area. At the same time an advertising campaign was initiated to educate the public about the food's nutritious nature and good taste.

The building of the Ocean Shore Railroad helped as well. Transportation by rail became a huge bonanza for the Coastside's farmers. In 1911, 250 boxcar loads of artichokes were shipped up to San Francisco.¹⁴⁷ By the time the Railroad went out of business in 1920, Coastside Boulevard, serviceable over Montara Mountain for trucking by 1915, allowed for moving the artichokes to market.

While Prohibition (1920-1933) and artichoke growing may not, on the surface, have much to do with one another, on the San Mateo County Coastside, especially upon *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, they did have a direct relationship. According to old time Coastside farmer Ed Lea, who was born on what is now National Park land, Italian im-

migrants, such as his parents, who wanted to lease property for farming, had to agree to grow artichokes and sell them through a “boss” named John Patroni.

Patroni was a well-known bootlegger who operated a large roadhouse/speakeasy at Princeton called the Patroni House. He built a wharf close to his establishment that served smugglers bringing in their illegal “hootch”. In one of the many stories told about Patroni and his pier, a Coast Guard Cutter surprised some of the rumrunners one night as they were unloading a shipment of whiskey. The cutter’s crew employed their one pound gun and blew a gaping hole in the wharf as they captured a few of the bootleggers.¹⁴⁸

Among Patroni’s activities was leasing land held by himself and the Cowell Estate to tenant farmers. Lea remembers that about all of the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* property now held by the Park Service, plus land west of it, across the highway, including today’s Half Moon Bay Airport, was comprised of tenant farms, occupied by Italian immigrants who were growing artichokes.

By this time, artichokes had become a valuable commodity, especially back east where there were few of these vegetables on the market, but many immigrants who desired them. “Boss” Patroni had his farmers pack their artichokes into large crates, the locals called “caskets.”¹⁴⁹ Sometimes booze bottles were hidden in the “caskets” to enhance revenues. Back east, and especially in New York City, when one mentioned “Half Moon Bay artichokes” it meant property of organized crime syndicates.

The San Mateo County Coastside had become a central point for raising artichokes. The fields near Castroville and other parts of California had not as yet assumed the same kind of importance. In fact, it is reported that in 1920, 95% of the artichokes grown in the United States came from the Coastal Strip between Pacifica and Santa Cruz.¹⁵⁰ For a boss like John Patroni, who pulled the strings, this represented a great opportunity. He chose just Italians to lease to, helping him control things. For the tenant farmers, with limited ability to read and write in English, much less speak the language, this situation manifested into a repressive environment. Only “Boss” Patroni had the authority to give a plot of land to a farmer, and he could take away the privilege as well.

Patroni was joined by other mobster types on the Coastside. Down at Kelly Beach, south of Half Moon Bay, Lea says Al Capone’s sister’s husband also ran a notorious roadhouse. Lea showed the interviewer for this study one place on *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, within the National Park Services property, where gangsters left the remains of a person killed in a “hit”.

While artichoke growing dominated the landscape of the mid-San Mateo County

Coast, the Ocean Shore Railroad attempted to break the isolation of the Coastside (and assist farmers) by making it a rail suburb of San Francisco. Thus, the railroad was organized in 1905 for the dual purpose of transportation and, because transportation would enhance land values, real estate sales. The railroad succeeded laying track as far as Moss Beach by 1907, and by 1908, real estate salesmen were greeting trainloads of prospective buys at the station, while busily subdividing farms close to the tracks.

A miniature boom seemed to have started at Moss Beach. Several small businesses began operations. A mill and box factory employed ten men. A newspaper, *The Coastside Comet*, started up in 1910, with George Dunn as publisher. Telephone service came online in 1914. However, the boom went bust as actual construction of suburban homes on the lots that were sold did not materialize. Realtors began suing one another. Wienke's old resort hotel burned to the ground in 1911 and was never replaced. The mill and box factory shutdown in 1914. The Comet lasted until 1920, the year the railroad stopped service (George Dunn went on to become publisher of the still existing *Half Moon Bay Review*).¹⁵¹

And so, agriculture continued to be the major story of the mid-coast, at least until World War II. By 1940, San Mateo County farmers had 2,356 acres devoted to artichoke fields. Other crops were catching up. Brussel sprouts were being grown on 2,071 acres, lettuce on 1,430 and cabbage on 1,038.¹⁵²

Although pumpkins have been grown in the Half Moon Bay area since the era before the Bear Flag Revolt, it has only been in recent years that it has become a significant farm product for the area. In recent times, around Halloween, tourist throng to the San Mateo County coast to buy pumpkins in order to turn them into traditional jack-o'-lanterns. Capitalizing on this, promoter Terry Pinsleur organized the Half Moon Bay Pumpkin Festival in the 1970s. Held every October, it has become the County's largest annual festival.

THE MYSTERIOUS BARN AT EMBER RIDGE¹⁵³

The large barn at the *Ember Ridge Equestrian Center* on GGNRA property has long been a historical mystery. Who built it, when and why? This study's team has visited the structure. Its size (quite large) and 19th century construction (with square head nails, etc.) make it the most interesting historic resource on the National Park's *Rancho Corral de Tierra*.

On June 8, 2010, project author Mitch Postel visited with the current proprietor of *Ember Ridge*, Robin Camozzi, and its manager, Carl Ho! man, at Half Moon Bay to try to get some clues to the barn's past. Postel asked about two carvings on the back of the barn. One says "John Tradharo, 1908" the other, which looks a little newer, spells out "Pesky Aug." Camozzi and Ho! man knew nothing of either of these characters.

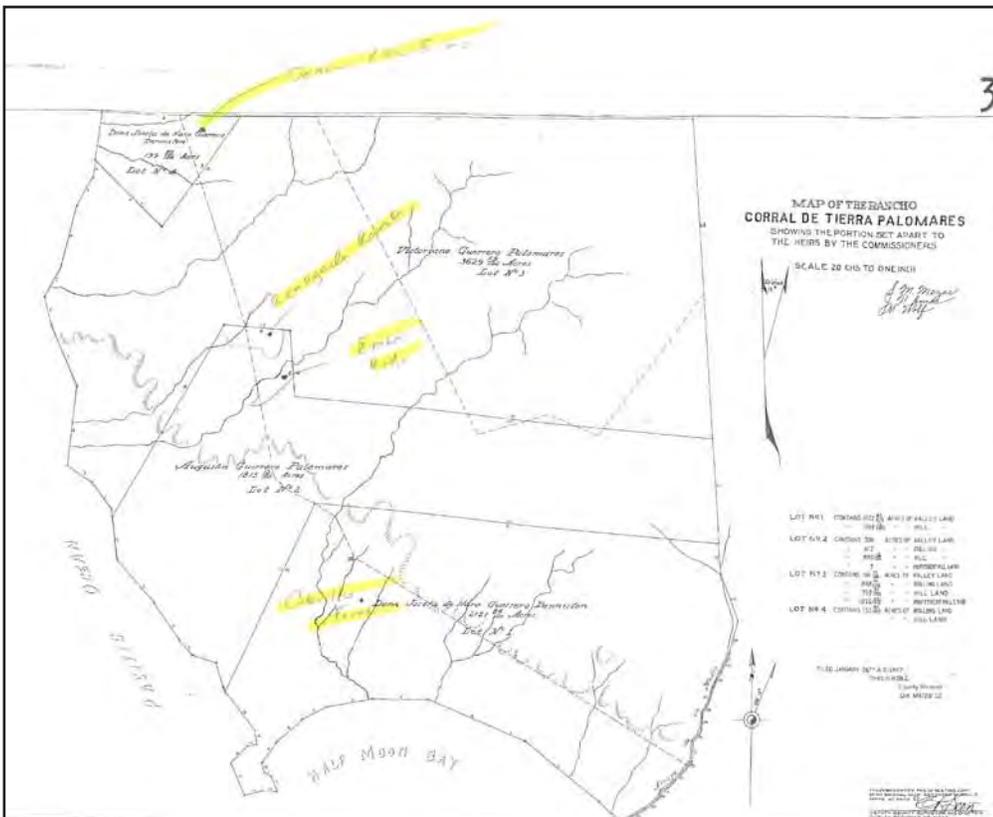
Camozzi said that she had grown-up at Moss Beach. Her father was a mechanic for United Airlines. She had understood that *Ember Ridge* had been a dude ranch back in the 1940s. Ho! man has worked on the property for thirty years or so. He understood that Joe Battles boarded horses on the property in the 1940s, and the use of the land and improvements has not changed since. He said that horses have been housed in the big barn for as long as he could remember. He said that the barn could easily hold 200 to 300 tons of hay.

Subsequent to the visit, project researcher Joan Levy searched for information on John Tradharo, Pesky Aug and John Battles. She went to the following sources:

- Death notices and obituaries of the San Mateo County Geological Society
- Historical files at the San Francisco Public Library
- Google
- The San Mateo County Great Register (various years)
- Indexes of the principle San Mateo County history books
- The card file at the San Mateo County History Museum
- The United States census for 1900 and 1910
- Phone books for Half Moon Bay, 1900-1940
- The Redwood City Tribune's index file

Fig. 3.5: Map of Rancho Corral de Tierra showing how the land was divided. Written in pencil are the four present-day clusters of buildings. San Mateo County.

Nothing was found on any of the three names.



Researchers Joan Levy and Therese Smith then undertook a partial title search using *Ember Ridge's* parcel number (037-320-280). As previously stated, the property originally was Guerrero's and then Denniston's. Two years before Denniston died, the property was divided between his wife Josefa de Haro Guerrero Dennis-

ton and her two sons from her first marriage, Victoriano Guerrero and Augustin Guerrero. The map below shows again how these divisions were made. We have added the present locations of the four principle clusters of buildings now on the National Park’s *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Note Ocean View Farms would have existed on the property of Mrs. Denniston (Lot No. 4). Both Renegade Ranch and the *Ember Ridge Equestrian Center* would have been on Augustin Guerrero’s (Lot No. 2). Cabrillo Farms would have existed on Mrs. Denniston’s second parcel (Lot No. 1). The small box on Lot No. 1 shows the only structure at *Rancho Corral de Tierra* at the time. It is the original Guerrero adobe house and, possibly, support improvements.

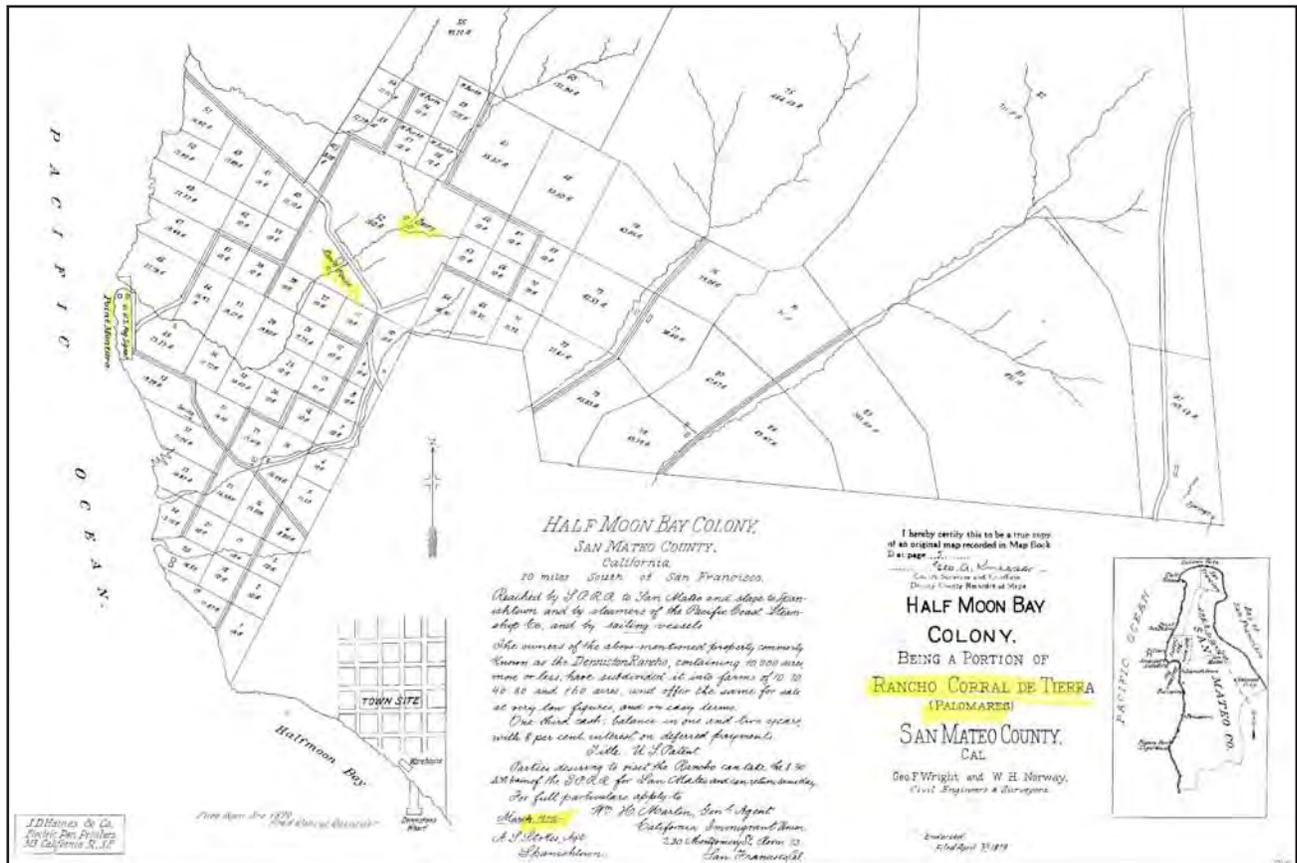


Fig. 3.6: An 1879 map of the Half Moon Bay Colony. San Mateo County.

The next map, from 1879, reveals that lots 3 and 4 have been obtained by the Half Moon Bay Colony (as previously mentioned) whose purpose was to subdivide and sell the property. *Renegade Ranch* and *Ember Ridge* were not part of the Colony. However, the third map indicates that in 1880, most of lot 2 was now in the hands of Henry Cowell. Cowell acquired this property in three new lots. His Lot 1 consisted of 638 acres and would contain today’s *Renegade Ranch* (eventually portions of Takahashi’s place) and *Ember Ridge* (site of the old barn). San Mateo County property tax records for 1880 show that Cowell possessed the mortgage on this land. The next year, the tax record indicates that Cowell owned outright all three lots. Lot 1, of 638 acres, was

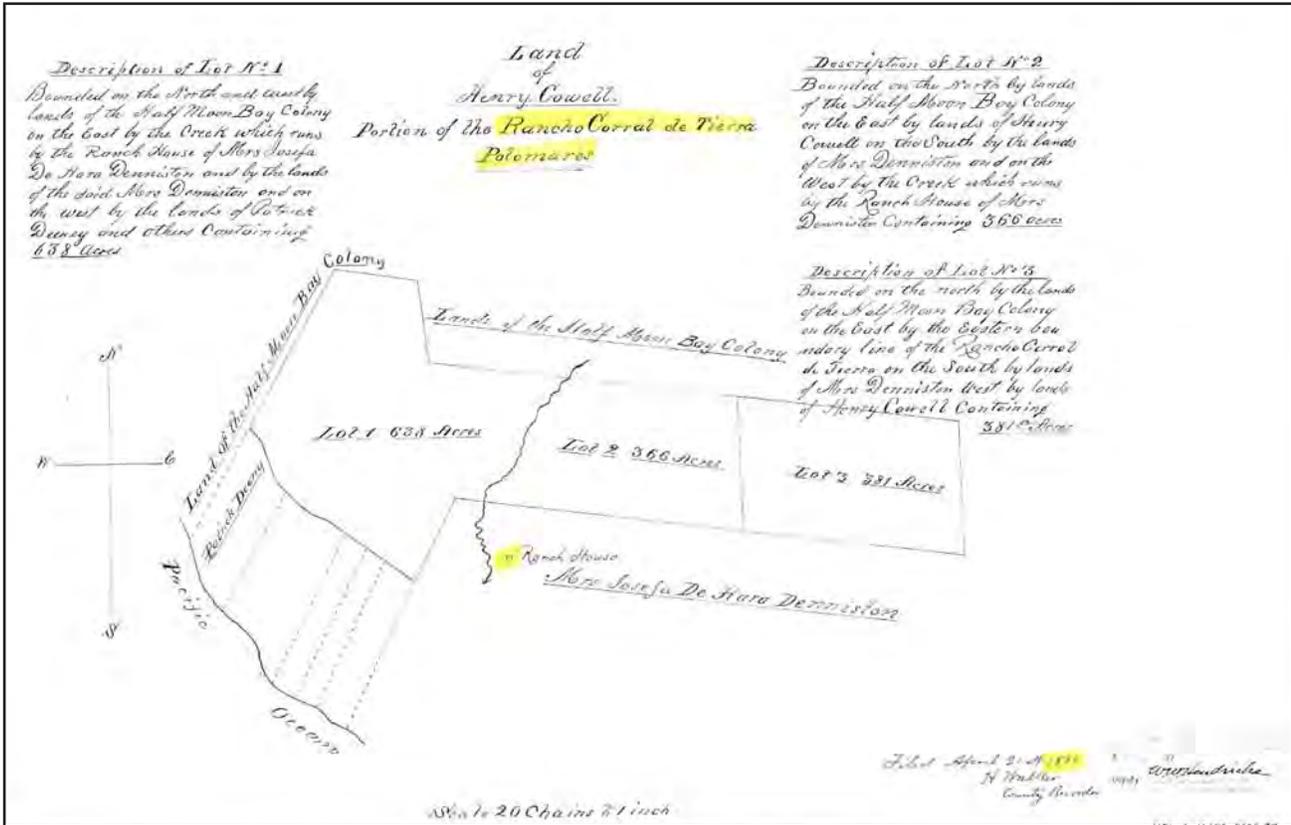


Fig. 3.7: An 1880 map showing the land owned by Henry Cowell.

valued at \$11,485 with \$1,000 of improvements. As a comparison, Lot 2 was valued at \$2,550 with \$50 of improvements and Lot 3 at \$5,050 with just \$50 of improvements as well. Does this indicate that the barn (as an improvement) was already present? The 1882 tax record shows the Lot 1 still valued at \$11,485, but improvements are now listed at only \$200 (did the barn burn down?). In 1883, the land value, again, did not increase, but now the improvements were \$500. Was the present barn built that year by Cowell? In 1884, the value of Lot 1 was still \$11,483, but now the improvements were listed at \$1,000. Also listed for the first time is a variety of livestock: 158 “milk cows,” valued at \$3,950; 22 “steak cattle” at \$330; 5 bulls at \$200; and 65 calves at \$490. It’s the supposition of the study team that Henry Cowell built the barn between 1883 and 1884 for the primary purpose of establishing a dairy ranch. In 1885, the value of this real estate increased to \$12,760, but the value of the improvements stayed at \$1,000. In 1890, the property was now valued at \$15,000. The improvements were still listed at \$1,000.

The historical importance of the barn increases because of the prominence of its builder. Henry Cowell was born in 1819 at Wrentham, Massachusetts (close to Boston). By 1850, he and his older brother John were merchants in San Francisco (according to the San Francisco Directory for that year). In 1854, he returned to Massachusetts and married Harriett Carpenter. They settled at San Francisco and in 12



Fig. 3.8: A 2006 photograph of the mysterious barn. Lee Davis photograph, San Francisco State University.

years had six children. In the middle of the 1860s, Henry Cowell moved his family to Santa Cruz with the purpose of entering the lime business. He purchased a large ranch there, which is today the campus of the University of California at Santa Cruz. While successfully quarrying lime rock, he also entered the lumber business, established a cooperage and continued to maintain business interests in San Francisco and throughout the state. He bought up tremendous tracks of land along the California coast, including property within and

adjacent to today's National Park's *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. At age 84, Henry Cowell became involved in a real estate dispute with D. Leigh Ingalsbe. Ingalsbe shot Cowell in the shoulder. Cowell died from the wound a few months later, in August of 1903, at Santa Cruz. Into the 20th century, the Cowell family continued to own its properties at *Rancho Corral de Tierra* (as discussed in the Italians, Artichokes and the Coastside section of this study). Henry's son S.H. Cowell became the family's leading figure. When he died at age 93 in 1955, he was the last member of his family. Long before he made a number of bequests benefiting cultural and environmental causes. He also endowed the S.H. Cowell Foundation which has distributed numerous grants to a wide range of social service institutions.¹⁵⁴

Any thought that John Tradharo was owner of the barn in 1908 is defeated by the fact that according to San Mateo County tax records, the Cowells still possessed the property. Could he have been its builder? In 1907, Lot 1 was valued at \$30,000 with \$1,600 worth of improvements. In 1908, the property still had a value of \$30,000 with improvements still listed at \$1,600. Thus, no major improvements occurred here through the years 1907-1908. Therefore, John Tradharo was not the barn's builder in 1908.

SHORE WHALING AT PILLAR POINT AND THE PORTUGUESE OF THE MID-COAST (CONTEXTUAL)

Hardly can California shore whaling be mentioned without including the story of the Portuguese, who were the original whalers. A whaling station existed at Pillar Point on the old *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, west of National Park land.

When one speaks of Portuguese immigration and whaling, the people really being referred to are Azoreans. Most Portuguese, when they made the decision to leave Portugal, preferred emigrating to a Portuguese colony in Africa, South America or Asia. Azoreans seemed to have had fewer options. The Azores themselves, about 900 miles west of Portugal, were first occupied by the Portuguese in 1432. The families that settled there engaged in farming, fishing and whaling.

As the years went by, these islanders experienced increasing alienation from the leadership of the mainland. They felt ignored by the government, and resented the policy of mandatory military service for all males once 15 years old.

Meanwhile the Azores were becoming more crowded -- by 1864 something on the order of 398 persons per square mile, with only 40% of the land usable for agriculture or other purposes. Custom held that the oldest son of a family would inherit the family lands. For younger sons on the farm, this meant finding other opportunities on the islands or moving to a new place.

No wonder that when American whalers visited the Azores during supply stops, that young native men took the opportunity to go along with the ships. It was illegal for these Azoreans to do so. American captains had to look the other way when allowing a recruit to stowaway. However, the Azoreans proved hard-working, quiet and not hard to please. And so, the whalers engaged in this "stealing the Portuguese" to augment crews.¹⁵⁵

Strengthening the push on Azoreans toward emigration was a potato rot that affected crops in the 1830s, and then a grape fungus in 1853 that did likewise. Periodic droughts also made life difficult.

The pull to California came after 1848 when the world learned of the gold strike. An 18-page promotional booklet published in Portugal revealed the gold find and other attractions of California. In 1849 alone, three Portuguese ships docked at San Francisco. Moreover numerous Portuguese sailors were serving on board the many vessels coming to California. Like all the other sailors, when a Portuguese young man had the chance, he jumped ship for the Gold Country. Portuguese miners could be found throughout the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, seeking precious metal along with everyone else. By 1860, the Portuguese population in the state was about 1,560.¹⁵⁶ They first came as miners, but after experiencing the mines, because of the competition and resentment exhibited against foreigners, many, especially the Azoreans, ended up on the central coast establishing the first Portuguese settlements as whaling stations.

Like most other gold seekers that grew tired of mining, they desired to go back to a traditional occupation in this non-traditional place. They had practiced shore whal-

ing in the Azores. They had a great seafaring heritage. Many had worked as crewmen onboard New England whalers who hunted the huge animals from Cape Horn to the Arctic.¹⁵⁷ Most importantly, there were large numbers of whales that migrated down the California coast allowing shore whaling to be profitable.¹⁵⁸

One observer of whalers and whales reported in 1873 (after nearly 20 years of shore-whaling activity) counting at least 15 whale spouts at intervals on the San Mateo County coast. This was most likely a pod of gray whales. Instinctively, the grays follow the coast on their annual migratory search for food. Shore whalers could render an average of 30 barrels of oil from such an animal. Also hunted in quantity were humpbacks that could render 50 barrels.¹⁵⁹ From time to time blue, finback, sei, sharp-head finner, right and sperm-whales were taken as well. Even killer whales and large porpoises might be harpooned. When times were slow the *San Mateo County Gazette* reported seals killed for their oil in the 1860s.

Captain Charles M. Scammon estimated that by 1887, after about 30 years of shore whaling, that something on the order of 2,100 California grays and 800 humpbacks and other species had been taken by the stations on the California coast. He added that as many as 600 of the creatures had escaped capture but had been so injured in the hunting process that they later died. Scammon wrote that each station took an average of at least 180 whales every year.¹⁶⁰

This was, of course, only a small part of a larger story. About 1810, New England whalers had begun to ply the Pacific for game. By 1854, as shore whaling in California was only starting, there were 650 American ships engaging 15,000 men in the industry. That year, the Pacific whaling center of Honolulu shipped 1,306,567 gallons of whale oil.

The oil was valued as a fuel and for lubrication purposes. At times it also was used to make soap and candles. Baleen from the whales was employed in the manufacture of springs, whips, fishing poles, skirt hoops and umbrellas. Earnings for the whalers were divided by barrels. Sometimes they were divided by job performed. At one station, one of every 35 barrels went to the boat steerers and coopers, while one of 50 went to the oarsmen and blubber carriers. The rest went to the boat owners. At other stations the company's earnings were divided equally among the crew with the captain and mate receiving bonuses.

Typically a whaling station's crew consisted of the captain and mate, a cooper (barrel maker) two boatsteerers, and 11 men. This number allowed for the operation of two whale or longboats with six men crews. The four men on shore served as lookouts and attended the try pots where the blubber was boiled down to oil.

These stations might serve for a length of time and then be deserted. Some would be reused after awhile. Others would not. They tended to include white-washed cabins for the men and their families (if they had them with them in California). A whaler might have a pig, sheep, goat or even a cow at the station. Some kept a small garden for corn and pumpkins. These barnyard-like amenities must have seemed a luxury to these sailors who had access to no such resources when on a long voyage. Not far away, probably down on the beach, were the great try pots (four or five feet in circumference¹⁶¹) used for rendering the oil from the dead whales.

Most times, these companies situated their stations on prominent points along the coast, some in quite scenic locations.

For example, in San Mateo County, at various times, three existed -- at Año Nuevo, Pigeon Point and, of course, Pillar Point¹⁶² (the Pillar Point station moved to Denniston's wharf from time to time). Altogether, researchers have documented that 17 stations operated between Crescent City and San Diego, all manned by Azorean crews.¹⁶³

There may have been earlier activity on the San Mateo Coast, but no real evidence exists of a whaling station until about 1860 at Pillar Point. Interestingly, its existence follows the building of Denniston's wharf by just two years. What arrangements were made by the whalers to occupy *Rancho Corral de Tierra* property is not known.

The obvious characteristic of California shore whaling is that it involved no ship. Thus on the rugged San Mateo County Coastline, no safe harbor was necessary for operations.

Usually whales were spotted from the bluff and then the boats would be launched. However, often times too, the boats would go in search of prey. Sometimes they would row back and forth, other times they might anchor near a kelp bed and wait.¹⁶⁴ If spouts were seen from the station a look out would dip a flag as indication. If the boat crew was in doubt about what direction to proceed, they would dip the top of their sail, then further signaling from shore would give them a better idea of the location of the whale.

Boats nearly always hunted in pairs; otherwise, the men might refuse to go out, because this could be "dangerous sport."¹⁶⁵ California gray whales were nicknamed "devil fish"¹⁶⁶ by the whalers. Threatened mothers of calves could become particularly troublesome. They might use their tail to smash a boat and then strike individual crew members. Into the cold ocean waters the men would go if overturned. Some of them could swim, some maybe not. Fast work by the second boat was crucial.¹⁶⁷

In the early years of shore whaling the activity was more dangerous. Close work was

required in harpooning. The crew member assigned to the task for throwing the weapon needed the boat to be close by the whale. Once struck, a toggled tip would catch hold within the whale and hold it “fast,” as the harpoon was attached by rope to the boat. The whale would then be forced to tow the boat until tired enough for the second approach. This time the crew would employ a long bladed killing lance to stab the beast to death. In later years, the hand held toggle harpoon was replaced by the Greener’s Gun, a swivel gun mounted at the bow of the boat, that allowed for that first strike to be made more safely, at a greater distance. Bomb lances replaced killing lances. A bomb lance resembled a toggle harpoon except it included an explosive device that would go o! after entering the whale. In its final years, shore whalers used a bomb gun that, again, allowed the crews to do their work further away from the struggling, and unpredictable animals.

Once the kill was made, the whalers would row back to the station with the dead animal in tow. It might be taken directly to the beach or secured to a buoy until wanted. At Pillar Point, the whales were dragged up the rocky slope of the reef, and then the flensing (stripping o! the blubber) could begin.

This process was more difficult in shore whaling than on a ship because at sea the flensing could be achieved while the dead whale lay alongside the ship, and it could be rolled and variously maneuvered more easily. On the beach, the blubber had to be cut o! in smaller pieces. Capstans were used to help move the creature’s remains. Crews employed knives, cutting spades, lades, bailers, skimmers, pikes and ga! s to remove the blubber, which was melted down in the try pots. Captain Scammon described “the shapeless and half-putrid mass of mutilated whale, together with the men shouting and heaving on the capstans, the screaming of gulls and other seafowl, mingled with the noise of the surf about the shores. . . a picture of the general life at a California coast-whaling station.” Another observer, Colonel Albert S. Evans described the scene at Pigeon Point:

*. . .we found a party of men busy extracting the oil from heaps of blubber cut up from the huge humpback whale. . . They were dripping and fairly saturated with oil, and everything around was in the same condition. The stinking fluid had run down the face of the blubber to the water’s edge, and the whole place was redolent of the perfume.*¹⁶⁸

Anyone living on the coast would know when the whalers had success. Besides the “perfume,” thick black smoke from the fires under try pots of boiling oil could be recognized for miles around.

Structures at the stations, besides the living quarters, typically included a building with

wash room, drying room and store room, a cooper's shop, davits for hanging the boats and/or quays for boat storage.

The original station at Pillar Point was short-lived. About two years after operating there, the company moved to Pigeon Point. This station by the 1870s included a dozen white-washed cottages that housed the crews and their families. The 1870 census tells us that 18 whalers lived in the Pescadero neighborhood, six of whom had wives. There were 16 children, from ages six months to seven years old, 15 of which belonged to the married men. One infant had no parents and apparently was being raised by the community. Early records also reveal that by this time some Portuguese men listed farming as their occupation.¹⁶⁹

The whaling station at Pillar Point seems to have had a less stable population, although there was activity here, on and on, for nearly 40 years. After the original company moved to Pigeon Point, evidence suggests that within months another took its place. From 1865, there exist reports of a terrible accident. Whalers Willard Buzzell, Jack Lott and William Devers had their boat swamped by a whale and were all killed. It was said that Buzzell was proprietor of the Purissima House, south of Half Moon Bay, and had come to California in 1838.

The 1870 Federal Census listed no whalers living at Half Moon Bay. However, on February 3, 1872, the *San Mateo County Times Gazette* reported the Pillar Point whaling station consisting of 17 crew members, twelve on the boats, two on shore for the flensing and rendering of oil, two firemen and one cook. It named Captain Frank White as "head manager" and John Francis as his assistant. Three whales had been brought in, the report tells us, each rendering between 30 and 63 barrels of oil. The report also included information about how this company was supplying rock cod to Half Moon Bay customers. It can be surmised that the whalers were fishing from their boats as they waited for whales near kelp beds. "With the exception of a short-lived Chinese firm," Half Moon Bayers had to get their fresh fish from Pescadero previously.

The *San Mateo County Gazette* of December 28 continued its survey of the progress at Pillar Point: "the men who comprise the company are old whalers, men that have been at almost all of the whaling stations of California, and they report that whales are as numerous around Half Moon Bay as at any other station on the coast." Interestingly, the article also spoke about a second whaling camp located about "eight miles from Half Moon Bay" that with three boats had taken 16 whales and averaged 60 barrels of oil per animal. The article noted that in San Francisco the oil bought 45¢ a gallon, allowing these whalers quite a profit. According to Captain Scammon, the Pillar Point Station was still operational in 1874.¹⁷⁰

However, on November 17, 1877, the San Mateo County Times Gazette reported:

The whalers and their families have removed from their former homes at the Point, to the old landing at Half Moon Bay [Denniston's]. They are erecting cabins, etc. and will make this their future business resort.

In 1880, another account told of Captain White returning to the Old Landing from Monterey. He had constructed new buildings and planned for having a crew of 21. According to an extensive survey from 1881: "About one mile along the coast to the north-westward [of Half Moon Bay] is a small boat harbor..." [still Old Landing?], that "...in the autumn months... is used as a whaling station."¹⁷¹

Nevertheless, by 1889, the station seems to be back at Pillar Point. In the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey for that year, George Davidson describes the location as: "... known as Whaleman's Harbor... directly under the highest part of the mesa ridge just northwest of Pillar Point."¹⁷² He tells us that at this site, the whalers have a channel for launching their boats. When they returned with whales in tow, they were shielded, in part, by a kelp breakwater. An opening in the reef conveniently allowed for bringing the animals in for flensing. Davidson wrote that the station was active "in the autumn months."¹⁷³

In August of 1891, the *Times Gazette* indicated the station had been revived again: "The entire outfit belonging to Captain Lampert's whaling station at Monterey such as whale boats, harpoons, trying out kettles, etc. will be removed to Half Moon Bay." Whether the writer was referring to Old Landing or Pillar Point is up for conjecture.

A major reason for the seeming inconsistency of the occupation of Pillar Point by the whalers had much to do with the industry's seasonal nature. The California grays passed by California beginning in April on their way to the Arctic. During the winter months, the Pacific became too rough for shore whaling when the grays returned. Therefore the men at the stations engaged in a variety of off-season enterprises including chopping wood, shearing sheep and farming for grain and potatoes.¹⁷⁴ For some, whaling actually was an extra income job. Earnings might be used to buy land or send for family still in the Azores. Although, in 1860, only 25% of the Portuguese in California worked in agriculture, by 1880, more than 60% were thus engaged. After all, although a seafaring people, these immigrants had also long been farmers back in Azores.¹⁷⁵ As the whaling industry died away, it became quite natural for the Portuguese to work on farms of others, then lease properties to farm on their own and ultimately buy property when they were ready.

Shore whaling never had the economic nor environmental impact that whaling on-board ships generated. The ships harvested far more of the creatures and were more

responsible for nearly hunting the California grays to extinction. The end for both kinds of whaling, however, was anticipated as early as the 1860s. Because petroleum oil increasingly rose in usage, whale oil prices began to fall. In his report of 1865-1867, the California Surveyor General already used the phrase “gradually diminishing”¹⁷⁶ when describing California shore whaling. The August 1, 1874, *Monterey Weekly Herald* declared the industry “. . .likely to become a thing of the past as whales are becoming scarce.”

As oil prices continued to fall in the 1880s, shore whaling certainly was fading from existence. Captain Scammon explained in 1887: “. . .this . . .branch of whaling is rapidly dying out, owing to the scarcity of the animals which visit the coast; and even these have become exceedingly difficult to approach.” Goode’s *Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States* published that same year, found that only 63 whales had been taken by just 101 men working at the California stations.¹⁷⁷ On the San Mateo County coast, the whalers augmented their incomes during the season by fishing for crab, salmon, tuna and sardines.

The 1888 Great Register for San Mateo County listed only three whalers at Half Moon Bay. They were all Portuguese (from the Azores), and all had become United States citizens. Frank White, age 45, was known to be the captain of the operation. The other two were Jose Silva, age 30, and John Terry (no age given).

Most historical accounts agree that California shore whaling ended in the 1890s. However, in 1941, San Mateo Junior College student, Roy Rose, interviewed old “Boss” John Patroni for a research paper. Patroni said that he had come to the Half Moon Bay area about 1900. He remembered the station at Pillar Point still active -- that five men worked there until “. . .one fateful day, when three of the five men drowned. . .,”¹⁷⁸ and the station was then abandoned permanently.

By 1937, the California gray whale was thought to be extinct. Happily, as the hunting ceased, the animals made a comeback. The commercial whaling industry in the United States ended on December 31, 1971. In 1994, the grays were taken off the federal list of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife.

The Portuguese of the San Mateo County Coast prospered without shore whaling. Increasingly they turned to farming. After the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, more Portuguese were drawn to California for opportunities in a variety of low-paying occupations. For those that came to San Mateo County, they usually ended up out on the coast working on farms. The 1890 census revealed San Mateo County as one of six counties with the largest population of Portuguese in California.¹⁷⁹

As with other immigrant groups, young men came first, became established and then

sent for their relatives. Some married into local families, others waited for girls coming with the next group of immigrants. As was also typical of the general immigrant experience, many of those that came to the communities of the coast, came in groups from the same villages back home. Another wave of immigration occurred after 1908, when a treaty between Portugal and the United States encouraged these folks to come here. After 1920, federal laws restricted people from all over the world from emigrating to the United States. However, in the 1950s, Portuguese American families renewed the process by sponsoring relatives who wanted to make the move.

The Azoreans coming to the Coastside were all Roman Catholic and stuck to their religion after settling down. In fact, they had success in keeping much of their culture intact. Husbands were the heads of families. Education was not viewed as having material value for a life of whaling, fishing and farming.

As with virtually all the immigrant groups that came to California in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mutual benefit societies were important to the Portuguese. They functioned to provide aid to the newly arrived and also acted as a safety net within the community when the head of a household might be killed in a whaling accident or hurt on the farm. They also served as social institutions. The Portuguese around Half Moon Bay established the *Irmandado do Espiritu Santo* (I.D.E.S.) which has helped to keep their community and cultural relevant to the descendents of immigrants to this day.¹⁸⁰

Some accounts contend that the Portuguese of California assimilated less quickly than those on the East Coast because of the rural and isolated lives they had here as compared with people in the mills of New England.¹⁸¹ However, on the San Mateo County Coastside the process was easier than in other California locations. For one thing, many were like them -- Catholic. The original *Californios*, the Irish, and, later on, the Italians had that in common with the Portuguese.¹⁸²

It is also said that the Portuguese did not take rapidly to citizenship and political involvement in California. Again, in San Mateo County this does not seem to be correct. By the 1890s, 125 Portuguese men had become citizens and voters. Some 80% of these lived on the coast. Indicating economic progress as well, of those 125, 110 said they were farmers or dairymen while just 15 listed themselves as common laborers.¹⁸³ Inter-marriage, very common on the coast, also assisted in assimilation.

Everywhere they went in America, the Portuguese seemed to fool people about where they were from by changing their names to more Anglo sounding ones. An example is Frank White, the Azorian captain of the whaling station at Half Moon Bay. The Portuguese culture honors family values, but is not particularly tied to last names as rever-

ent. Anglicization occurred readily among the first generation. The process made life easier on the job and was encouraged in the public schools.

In its 1956 *Official Souvenir Book* for San Mateo County's centennial celebration, the County Planning Commission declared the Coastside:

*Humanly speaking. . . one of America's most interesting melting pots. There Spanish, Anglo-American, Irish-American, Portuguese, and Italian, plus sprinklings of other nationalities, have mingled through the years to the point of becoming almost indistinguishable.*¹⁸⁴

Although seemingly contradictory, symbolic to both the preservation of culture and assimilation within the American "melting pot" is the staging of the annual Holy Ghost *Festa* at Half Moon Bay. Throughout California these *festas* have become the most visible cultural evidence of Portuguese life in their communities. In 2008, more than 90 celebrations occurred in the state.¹⁸⁵

The Holy Ghost *Festa's* history can be traced back to Portugal in the Middle Ages as a holiday honoring the poor that included a day of dancing and free food. Some compare it to the American Thanksgiving. While it diminished in importance on the mainland, for people of the Azores, the *Festa* has had enduring significance. It is no surprise that the celebrations began to be seen in California as early as the 1850s as the original Azoreans began settling on the coast.

In 1878, Mrs. Rufus Hatch of Half Moon Bay wrote in her diary about foreigners organizing an observance of some kind. She was referring to the *Festa*. In 1871, it seems that the oldest documented *Divino Espiritu Santo*, or *Festa*, took place at Half Moon Bay. Mrs. Rosa Pedra Joaquina, later known as Rosa Brown, staged the event in her home north of town at Frenchman's Creek, on *Rancho Corral de Tierra* once belonging to the Vasquez family. She was born in 1841 on the island of Corvo and came to the United States in 1865.

That original *Festa* included a parade, featuring a Holy Ghost crown that Rosa had brought with her from the Azores. The procession went from her home to the town's Catholic Church, where a mass took place. After the service, a second parade went back to her home at which point all who attended were treated to a free barbecue.

From that point forward, there was, more or less, an annual event, featuring a free meal for the entire community and visitors. In 1895 the I.D.E.S. was formally organized and celebrated its first *Festa* the next year. Because the day includes an Azorean dance called *Chamarrita*, locals came to refer to it as the *Chamarrita* Festival. Within its first year of existence the I.D.E.S. built its hall on land where their buildings are still

today, on Main Street.¹⁸⁶ The *Festa*, or *Chamarrita*, is the oldest continuing community festival in San Mateo County.

SHIPWRECKS AND THE MONTARA LIGHTHOUSE STATION

The San Mateo County coastline has been treacherous to oceangoing navigators for all its recorded history. Because of the San Francisco Bay's importance to maritime history, this aspect of the Peninsula's experience takes on significance. On *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, land once owned by Francisco Guerrero and now a National Park holding, is the Montara Lighthouse Station whose saga is intermeshed with the Coastside's part in this larger story.

Ships have been sailing past the San Mateo County coast since the time of Cabrillo (in 1542). Explorers, the annual Manila treasure ship and others had passed on by until 1775, when the sailors aboard the *San Carlos* proved the Golden Gate was navigable and thus the Bay accessible as the greatest port on the western slope of North America. The settlement at San Francisco was initiated the next year and was visited thereafter by naval and supply ships of Spain and an occasional visitor like Englishman George Vancouver in the 1790s. When Mexico achieved its independence, California was allowed to trade freely with merchant ships from around the world.

However it was not until the discovery of gold, in 1848, that very many ships came to call at San Francisco. The Gold Rush brought hundreds of ships, and between 1848 and 1869, more than 500,000 people were carried to the City by just the steamers from Panama.¹⁸⁷ Many more came from the east "around the horn" aboard sailing ships. Almost immediately, because of the need for timber to help build burgeoning San Francisco, wooden schooners began plying the waters between the Bay and the lumber mills of the north coast. As time went on steel replaced wood and steam power replaced the wind, but the trade remained strong for decades. In the 1850s, commerce of all kinds was initiated throughout the Pacific. Thousands of Chinese and immigrants from other far-off places arrived in San Francisco via ocean going vessels. Smaller craft from Chinese junks to Italian feluccas fished the Pacific and brought catches back to San Francisco. Later "Monterey" type fishing boats and trawlers became frequent sights in the Bay and on the coast. Technology allowed for new kinds of metal, screw-driven fleets to carry oil, gasoline and kerosene by the 1920s. Today the Bay is still visited by supertankers, container ships, luxury liners, warships and an infinite variety of smaller craft.

With all this traffic, there is little wonder that the dangerous waters off the coast of San Mateo County became littered with the graves of sunken ships. Experiencing the horror of the loss of a ship is difficult to write about. Author Mike Quinn put it this way in 1940:

*A ship sinks with the agony of a dying thing. Her great hulk heaves and groans, her stern lifts, . . . then with a loud bubbling like a horrible death rattle, she lunges slowly into those dark abysmal depths . . . you don't sink a ship -- you kill it. You murder a living and beautiful thing.*¹⁸⁸

Despite the terror, despite the terrible loss of life and property, the ships kept coming.

At the beginning, there was little help for navigators as they came up the coast. Richard Henry Dana, who served aboard a sailing ship to California in 1835, commented how the charts used “were made up from old and disconnected surveys by British, Russian, and Mexican voyagers. . .” Still worse “. . .on the whole coast of California there was not a lighthouse, a beacon or a buoy. . .”¹⁸⁹

For the residents of the San Mateo County Coastside, the rough and perilous seas added to their frustrations, because of the lack of ground transportation. While the Peninsula was still part of San Francisco County, a road was built between Half Moon Bay and San Mateo (1855). However, it was poorly constructed and not until 1866 was a privately owned toll road over the hill thought to be adequate.¹⁹⁰ As late as the 1870s, the road connecting the coast to San Francisco over Montara Mountain was still merely a trail. Petitions from Coastsiders spurred the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to act by abandoning the old trail in favor of constructing a road in 1879. Unfortunately, the new Half Moon Bay - Colma Road proved almost unusable. Parts of it were extremely steep, with an average grade of 18%. At the most difficult portion there existed a 24% grade (for 100 feet of road there occurred a 24 foot increase in elevation!). The Coastsiders fumed again in 1897:

*The San Pedro Road connecting Half Moon Bay to Colma is in a most deplorable and dangerous condition. . . The road as built and maintained to present day is an abomination and merely an apology for a road. . .*¹⁹¹

The answer to breaking the isolation of the Coast through land transportation did not manifest itself until the advent of the Ocean Shore Railroad in 1905. In the meantime, a variety of piers, crane systems and shoots operated on the coast with the primary purpose of getting farm products to market in San Francisco via seagoing vessels. For these ships, and all the rest that made passage between Point Año Nuevo and the Golden Gate, a difficult excursion might be the case under less than ideal conditions. Rocky shores, hidden reefs, fog and unpredictable storms have all played parts in disaster.

How many ships have met their end on San Mateo County? The answer may never really be known. During Spanish times, because trade was illegal for ships from other countries, wrecks of foreign vessels were never recorded. Local lore has it that por-

tions of Francisco Sanchez's adobe house in the San Pedro Valley were constructed with timbers taken from nearby wreckage of an unidentified ship.

The first documented shipwreck of San Mateo County occurred with the grounding of the bark, *J. Sarkie* in 1851.¹⁹² Through the years another 59 have been recorded. They included four ships bringing passengers during the Gold Rush, six servicing the coastal trade between 1848 and 1939, four coastal passenger vessels, the last of which was the *San Juan* in 1929, 16 engaged in general commerce, four tankers between 1932 and 1985, two pilot or aid craft, four naval ships, two pleasure vessels, and 18 others, of various type.

These are the recorded ones. Locals declare that the real number is far higher. Pillar Point Harbormaster Dan Tenko told researchers for this project that just between 1981 and 2005, two to three vessels were lost each year, most of which were small craft whose loss cannot be found in any readily available database. The same researchers found a clipping in the files of the San Mateo County History Museum about the wreck of the *Lake Sunapee*; information on it could not be found on any of the authoritative lists.

The first recorded ship to breakup at Half Moon Bay was the 350 ton *Isabelita Hyne*, on January 8, 1856. This clipper bark was built in Philadelphia in 1846. It was washed up on the beach belonging to James Denniston at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Reports indicate that the disaster was most likely the result of a mutiny.¹⁹³ The *Daily California Chronicle* of January 14, 1856, received a tip from an "intelligent seafaring man who had communication with persons from the wreck" that the ship had been grounded onto the reef intentionally to cover up the mutiny. Accounts about how Captain Rueben Calhoun's body was found lashed to some rigging with head cut off, seemed to confirm this. One other body was found. Meanwhile the rest of the crew, their gear, the ship's papers, charts and compasses all disappeared, along with a good portion of the cargo of Chinese sugar, tea and rice. Denniston offered the help of his workers to assist the wrecked vessel, but it was considered a total loss.¹⁹⁴ Two weeks after its grounding, the ocean swallowed Isabelita Hyne up, never to return.

In January of 1862, the Peruvian Schooner *Elfina Kniper* hit rocks while in fog at Pillar Point. It had 337,000 pounds of sugar on board. There was no loss of life.

On November 9, 1868, the side-wheeler *Colorado* grounded on a reef at Point Montara with United States mail and hundreds of passengers on board. The passengers and mail were rescued and wreckers salvaged the ship. In recognition of the event, the reef was renamed from "Uncle Sam Reef" to "Colorado Reef."

While the mid-coast was certainly getting its share of activity, the south San Mateo

County coast received attention from the federal government first. In 1866, Congress appropriated \$70,000 to construct a lighthouse at Pigeon Point.¹⁹⁵ The Point had been named after the 1853 wreck of clipper ship *Carrier Pigeon*.¹⁹⁶ Another clipper ship hit the rocks at the Point during a storm in January of 1865. Thirteen drowned.¹⁹⁷

Construction of the lighthouse began in 1871, and it was completed a year later. The 115-foot high structure is one of the tallest ever built in America. It featured a five wick lard oil lamp and a first-order 8,000 pound Fresnel lens, manufactured in France. The lens contains 1,008 prisms and is itself 16 feet tall and six feet wide. The Lighthouse Service fabricated the lantern room at its depot in New York. It was then shipped around the Horn. Later on, in 1890, in order to augment the assistance rendered at Pigeon Point, a fog horn and light were installed south of the Point, on Año Nuevo Island.¹⁹⁸

In the meantime, maritime traffic was increasing on the mid-coast. In fact a variety of steam ships frequently passed by. The August 21, 1875, *San Mateo County Gazette* reported vessels operated by Goodall, Nelson and Perkins were stopping at Amesport three times a week.¹⁹⁹ They carried passengers, cargo and the mail. This company expanded its services the next year and renamed itself “Pacific Coast Steamship Company.”²⁰⁰ About the same time, mariners had estimated that something on the order of 90 ships had struck rocks just in the vicinity of Pillar and Montara Points.

One of them was the British sailing ship *Aculeo*. On October 17, 1872, while groping its way through dense fog over a period of three days, it crashed into rocks at Colorado Reef at Montara Point, cracked open and filled with water. It was bound for San Francisco from Liverpool with a load of steel wire and coal.²⁰¹ All 21 onboard escaped on lifeboats. Salvaging dragged on for two years, but a large work force eventually retrieved tons of iron.

Finally in March of 1873, Congress authorized \$15,000 for installation of a fog whistle at Montara Point. The first assignment was made to surveyor E.J. Molera²⁰² to map Point Montara that year (see map as Appendix XIV). The station was then sited at today’s 16th Street and Highway 1 in Montara. Five other lighthouses in the Bay Area were started as fog signal stations.²⁰³ On March 1, 1875, the 12-inch steam whistle became operational. Its five second blast could be heard 15 miles away, hopefully to warn away any ship approaching the coast. Depending upon how many foggy days there were in a particular year, the whistle required between 150,000 and 200,000 pounds of coal each year. Water for operations came from Montara Creek just north of the station. A hydraulic ram was installed to force the water to a 2,000 gallon reservoir.

Unfortunately, the whistle was not enough. Only a year and a half after its installa-

tion, on October 17, 1876, the *Rydal Hall*, on a foggy evening, smashed onto Frenchmen's Reef at Pillar Point. This three masted Welsh sailing ship had been on her way to San Francisco with a cargo of coal. On impact, the crew panicked. Four sailors took possession of the captain's gig and lowered themselves into the rough waters. They were swallowed up by the ocean and never seen again. Another eight sailors got on to the life boat, but they were swamped as well. Three of them swam to shore and lived. Nine, in total were lost. Perhaps if these nine had stayed with their captain they may have lived, because help was on its way. The Portuguese whalers at Pillar Point station rallied to the emergency and rowed out to the *Rydal Hall* saving the captain and the remaining 17 members of the crew. While most of the cargo of coal seemed lost, as a sort of reward for their brave rescue, the whalers were able to salvage colored thread from the ship, which they dried on bushes up on the bluff. In August of the following summer some salvage work was attempted on the *Rydal Hall*, but all that was recovered was some chain and an anchor.²⁰⁴

The *Rydal Hall* was left undisturbed in its underwater grave for nearly 100 years when in 1972, commercial abalone diver John Köepf discovered the wreck. He recovered a bell which he kept, an anchor that ended up in front of a local restaurant and a small cannon or Lyle gun which is now in the collection of the San Mateo County History Museum. Köepf later recalled that the cargo of coal had coalesced into one large mass. The anchor had been sticking out of it. In the process of removing the anchor with an inflatable air sack, a piece of the coal broke away. He then saw something twinkling at him, which turned out to be the bell. The cannon was resting nearby.

In 1880, the fog signal building was enlarged and a double horn system was installed. Nevertheless, almost exactly four years after the *Rydal Hall* disaster, on October 27, 1880, the two masted schooner *Ada May*, with a load of lumber from Bowen's Landing destined for San Francisco, hit the rocks at Montara Point. Its Captain Johnson thought he had heard the fog signal at Point Bonita far to the north. He turned as if entering the San Francisco Bay; however he had actually heard the fog signal at Montara Point and steered right into the rocks. The ship was a total loss;²⁰⁵ happily, there was no loss of life.

Another ten years elapsed before the next recorded wreck in the area. In November of 1890, the schooner *Argonaut* was caught in the breakers between Pillar and Montara points and wound up on the rocks. The vessel was loaded with lumber and had a crew of two mates and five seamen. According to the *Coast Advocate*, locals found the sailors on the bluff above the beach drying their clothes. Captain George C. Loudel sent dispatches up to San Francisco requesting the assistance of a tug to pull *Argonaut* off the rocks. In the meantime, he spent time enjoying the hospitality of the local community. The *Coast Advocate* reported: "...while feasting on yellow-legged chicken at the Methodist ladies election supper, [Captain Loudel] facetiously remarked that he

had been shipwrecked six times, but never before had he been cast up among so many kind people, such pretty women, and so much good grub.”²⁰⁶ After a few days the tug arrived, but was unsuccessful in pulling the *Argonaut* b the rocks. On November 22, the *Coast Advocate* reported that more than 100,000 feet of lumber had been saved along with five large spars. Wreckers intended to bring the wood to Amesport.²⁰⁷ Further salvage work was to commence at the beginning of 1891, according to the *San Francisco Examiner* of January 1.

About a year later, on October 8, 1891, a near calamity aboard the dependable little steamship *Gipsy* received much attention. At noon that day, *Gipsy* had just left the wharf at Amesport with a cargo of grain. Also in her hold were 900 barrels of lime from Santa Cruz County. The small vessel encountered rough seas just outside the reef and began rolling and pitching. The *Coast Advocate* described what happened next:

*Water that came through one of the lee ports reached the lime which slacked and caught fire. The flames were soon communicated to the wood work. Captain Jepson immediately put the steamer about and ran for the lee of the reef up near the Old Landing and then played two streams of water on the fire from the pumps. The main hatch was opened, and where possible the barrels of lime were got out and thrown overboard. After . . . 100 barrels had been jettisoned the fire was got under control and put out.*²⁰⁸

The Pacific Coast Steamship Company su! ered the loss that came to about \$250. The firm recognized the commendable way in which the crew handled the situation, but proved unhappy about the incident and threatened to stop landing at Amesport, while continuing to serve Pigeon Point. The *Coast Advocate* editorialized that “. . . time has come. . . when it is absolutely necessary to have safe, regular and economic transportation to San Francisco. . .” After all, the “. . . future prosperity of our people depends on it.” The *Advocate* called for the building of an improved wharf or having the people of the Half Moon Bay area charter their own ship in order to continue service to the mid-coast. In another editorial, the newspaper commented that a railroad would be “a blessing,”²⁰⁹ a remark made as hope for the future. Although the Pacific Coast Steamship Company had made this threat, it actually continued service at Amesport until 1917,²¹⁰ long after the construction of the Ocean Shore Railroad.

In the meantime the accidents continued. In November of 1896, the lumber schooner *Oceania* sank b Pillar Point in 250 feet of water, with no loss of life reported.

On March 13, 1898, it was time for the *New York*. Originally christened the *T.F. Oakes*, crewmen had judged this three masted iron sided sailing ship, to be unreliable. Hoping a name change might help shake the jinx, the now *New York* was back at sea and

had endured a series of storms while crossing the Pacific before finally making the California coast. One of Half Moon Bay, one witness -- the captain's stepdaughter -- described a "shiver and shake," as she lay in her bunk and then "pounding and grating."²¹¹ She ran up the companion way with her mother and opened a door. Now, "...the surf seemed to be right upon us" when "a gigantic wave rolled over the ship, and she lurched wildly..."²¹² Her father, Captain Peabody, ordered the women below. Later, he explained to them that they were "...aground on the sands of Half Moon Bay." All on board were safely rowed to the beach under early morning moon light. By sunup, the ship had settled 23 feet.

The wreck generated tremendous excitement on shore. The *New York* carried a rich cargo of opium, silks, wine, tea and jute from Asia. Four customs inspectors set up an office and worked around the clock supervising the unloading of the vessel. The *San Francisco Chronicle* of March 26, 1898, reported this necessary because the beach had become "infested with thieves, who prowl in the night as well as day." Much of the merchandise was sold right on the beach.²¹³ Half Moon Bay residents participated in gathering souvenirs including firecrackers and ginger candy. The ship's bell ended up in the possession of a Coastside family who used it to signal mealtime for workers on their ranch. Meanwhile the Peabodys were made comfortable at Half Moon Bay in the home of newspaper editor George Schaefer. Years later Schaefer remembered how he and the Captain had salvaged a keg of rum from the *New York*, and enjoyed making sure the ocean water had not spoiled it.²¹⁴ The *New York*, itself, eventually disappeared beneath the surf.

By 1900, there existed no doubt that the fog whistle at Montara Point was not enough. Meanwhile in the vicinity of the Point that year, the schooner *Bonita* struck a whale and sank off of today's Pacifica. The British *City of Florence* sailed into reefs at Half Moon Bay. The captain thought he was near the Farallones and was fooled by a haze on the water. The two masted schooner *Neptune* was wrecked on the beach just south of the San Francisco County line. While these wrecks may or may not have been avoided by the presence of a lighthouse, anyone could see that the coastal shores around Montara were littered with the debris of broken ships and the coal, lumber and railroad iron that had been their cargos.

And so, that very same year (1900), a kerosene lantern was placed on a post near the fog whistle. Its red beam could be seen 12 miles out to sea. Remembering the wreck of the *Ada May*, it was red so as not to be confused with the white light at Point Bonita, some 15 miles north. This was a step forward, but locals, and especially the *San Mateo County Gazette*, continued advocating for the building of a proper lighthouse. On October 31, 1901, the newspaper reported that work had begun on a new fog signal at Montara. This work was completed the next year. The new one and one half story rectangular woodframe building with flanking one story wings is the structure still

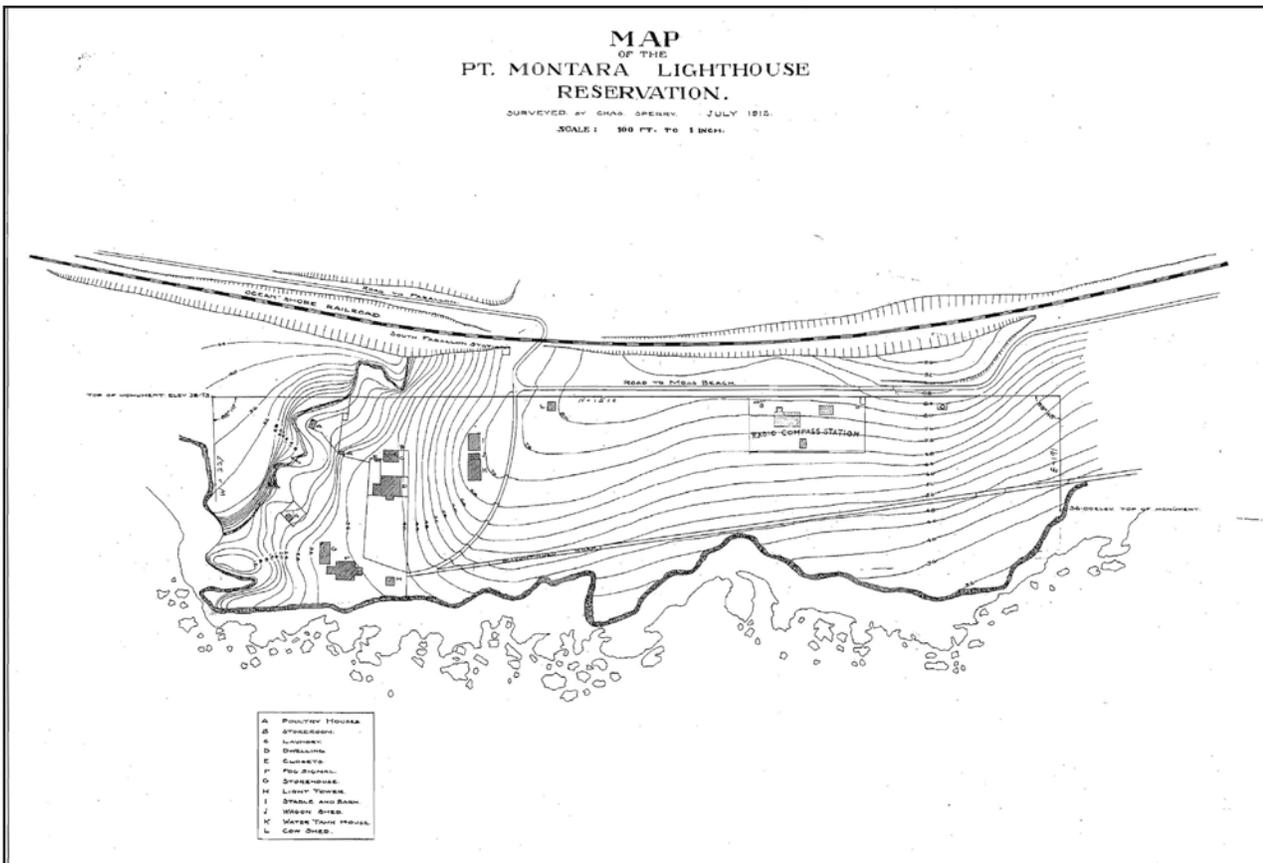
standing today. It appeared similar to other fog signal buildings in California. It featured two horns with their mechanical equipment housed between them. One of the wings served as the water room and the other as the tack room.²¹⁵ A diagram of how this building appeared in 1945 is included in this study as Appendix XV. The coal shed building that stands just north of the fog signal building was also constructed at this time. This one-story rectangular building with a gable roof served to provide a ready supply of coal for fueling the operation of the fog signals.²¹⁶ During the year 1904 alone, the duplicate 12” whistles required 13 tons of coal and 101 cords of wood.

Sadly, even with the improvements, the toll continued to climb. In 1908, the *Roma* wrecked near Montara Point.

In 1912, the federal government upgraded the Montara station by building a wooden tower, equipped with a fourth-order, French-made, Fresnel lens, to act as a lighthouse.²¹⁷ The accompanied map tells us that by this time the station included not only the light tower, fog signal building and coal storage room, but ten dwelling quarters, a stable and barn, wagon shed, water tank house, laundry, and indicative of the desire to make the lighthouse self-sufficient, three chicken coops and a cow shed.

In 1919, the light was substantially increased from 1,700 to 25,000 candlepower. Still the wrecks continued. During 1921, in nearby waters -- two more accidents are

Fig. 3.9: A 1912 map of the Montara Point lighthouse station. United State Coast Guard.



recorded. On December 1, the USS destroyer *DeLong* beached a mile south of Half Moon Bay. It had been thrown off course by heavy swells and was later declared a total loss. Just eleven days later the Paprococo ran aground at Brighton Beach. Closer by, in 1922, the 659 ton *Gray's Harbor* was wrecked near Montara Point.

Finally, in 1928, the present Point Montara lighthouse was constructed. The metal portion of the structure was sent from Massachusetts in pieces to Yerba Buena Island and then bolted together on site. See the next section of this study, "Historic Importance of the Montara Lighthouse Station" for more details about this construction. This lighthouse only reaches up to a height of 30 feet in order that its beam can be seen beneath the fog.

During World War II further improvements included the installation of a radio direction finder station near the lighthouse.²¹⁸ Also buoys had been placed to mark nearby dangerous reefs.

Despite all of the efforts, into the modern era, the San Mateo County Coast, especially in locations near National Park property, remains, at times, a dangerous place. On October 12, 1966, the obsolete World War II era destroyer escort *U.S.S. George Johnson* was under tow from the mothball fleet in the Suisun Bay for scrapping at San Pedro. In rough waters the tow line parted and the ship ended up landing a bit north of Mori Point. The Navy attempted to pull *Johnson* off the beach but failed and was forced to scrap it, on site. The spectacle became popular with school children and tourists.²¹⁹

As recently as 2004 there were two recorded episodes. Out of Pillar Point Harbor the 72-foot, steel fishing vessel, *Relentless* disappeared at sea. A Coast Guard helicopter found only debris on an empty life raft. The *Vaya Con Dios*, a purse seine vessel, was fishing for anchovies near Pedro Point, when surfers reported seeing it capsize a quarter mile from shore. She was later found in waters 25 feet deep with an eight foot gash in her hull. The four fishermen onboard died.

Because of the development of the Pillar Point Harbor over the last 50 years, accidents involving small craft have increased, making safety issues still relevant topics when considering the San Mateo County Coast.

In its final upgrade in 1970, the Pt. Montara Lighthouse was equipped with an automated beacon, replacing the Fresnel lens, and the fog horns were supplanted by an offshore buoy.

HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF THE MONTARA LIGHTHOUSE STATION

The purpose of the light station at Point Montara has been to make safer a portion of the Pacific Coast for oceangoing ships by warning them of the dangerous shoreline and to further assist them by indicating their proximity to San Francisco Bay. The station is symbolic of the United States government's dedication to aiding shipping on its coastlines, the reef-strewn Montara Point being amongst its most dangerous stretches. For the state of California, federal lighthouses have helped its maritime transportation network develop. As they are located at key coastal and estuary sites, they are visual reminders of the importance of navigation to the history of the state. Of the 42 lighthouses that California once had, 16 are no longer present, giving motivation to somehow preserve the remainder.²²⁰ Jack Bookwalter, writing to nominate the Point Montara Light Station to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989, explained that "...it stands as an excellent example of a late 19th century/early 20th century lighthouse and fog signal station." Helping to convey a sense of history is that all the most culturally valuable buildings are "grouped together at the edge of the point."²²¹

Certainly the most prominent structure on the 4.53 acre site is the 1928 light tower. It is of conical shape and built primarily of steel. At its top is a cupola shaped lantern room that once contained its Fresnel lens.

The tower has an interesting history of its own. It was constructed in 1881 for the light station at Mayo Beach on Cape Cod at Wellfleet, Massachusetts. It served there until 1922 when it was disassembled and sent to Yerba Buena Island in the San Francisco Bay. It was finally moved and rebuilt at the Point Montara Light Station in 1928. Its unique construction allowed for it to be mobile. Its sides are made of steel panels and are bolted together to form the shaft. Only three lighthouse towers in California were constructed in this way, Cape Mendocino (1868) and Point Reyes (1870) are the other two, but they were fabricated from iron plates, while only Point Montara, in California, used steel plates.²²²

The Fresnel lens (first mentioned as part of the wooden tower of 1912) has yet another interesting story. The first Fresnel lens was invented by Frenchman Augustine Fresnel in 1822. Thereafter most Fresnel lens were created in France. They were made from highly polished crystal, with each light having its own unique signal and color.²²³ Sizes varied from the largest first order lens, down to the smallest sixth order variety. The Fresnel lens at Point Montara was of the 4th order. The light revolved once every 10 seconds and flashed every 20 seconds. It was described as an oil vapor lamp, and its central drum measured 19 . . .²²⁴ Today, the San Mateo County History Museum maintains it within its collection.

The lighthouse keeper's quarters is still present on the site, largely unchanged from its

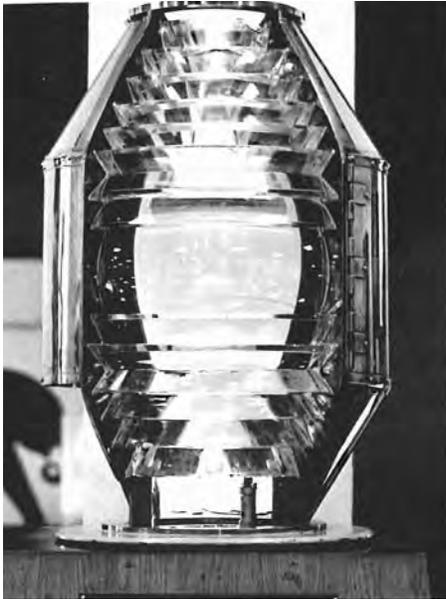


Fig. 3.10: The lens from the Montara Lighthouse Station is now at the San Mateo County Historical Association.

appearance when built as a duplex in 1875. The residence is of a two story Victorian Gothic design, constructed of wood, primarily, with a brick foundation. Twelve of California's Light Stations had Victorian Gothic or similar Stick/Eastlake dwellings.²²⁵ Only two remain today - - the one at Yerba Buena Island and Point Montara's.

Also present on site is the fog signal building and the coal shed which are close to original in appearance.

Structures that appear on the map of July 1912, that no longer exist, include the three chicken coops, the laundry, the stable and barn, the wagon shed, the water tank house and the cow shed.

More modern eras are represented by some World War II concrete bunkers and two living quarters buildings, constructed in 1961.

The National Registers nomination list these buildings as "non contributing"²²⁶ to the historic values of the station.

In 1970, the Fresnel lens was replaced by an automatic system and an offshore horn buoy supplemented the fog horn at the station. The Coast Guard's stationing requirements therefore became minimal. In 1975, a plan to transform five California lighthouses into youth hostels was introduced, and in 1978, the California legislature approved \$1.9 million for some work toward that end. The Coast Guard became anxious to dispose of the Point Montara property and entered into an agreement with the GGNRA to transfer the old station. American Youth Hostels Inc. first occupied the site in 1980. Some of the old buildings were then converted into living quarters.²²⁷

In 1991, Point Montara Lighthouse Station was added to the National Register of Historic Places (No. 91001094).

EL GRANADA (CONTEXTUAL)

Adjacent to National Park Property at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, to the west and southwest, is the unincorporated town of El Granada. A visitor to this place has to wonder why the wide spacious avenues are present for such a small community. Indeed the streets are divided by islands with great stands of eucalyptus trees dividing traffic. They might also wonder about the unique layout of these thoroughfares, sort of arranged as a half of a wagon wheel, in a manner reminiscent of Paris, France.

The unique design comes out of its past. El Granada was part of the real estate scheme of the Ocean Shore Railroad. In fact the company reserved its greatest plans for this

stretch of the coastside. They saw its future as the “Coney Island of the West” and saved space for resort hotels. The original owners of the Railroad subdivided the lots at El Granada themselves in anticipation of the creation of a “beautiful city,” but it never materialized, and the railroad failed. The appearance of the place lasts as a legacy to the robust ambitions of the time.

In 1905, the Ocean Shore Land Company (the subsidiary of the railroad) purchased 1,271 acres for the future showplace (at first called Balboa, then Granada, and now El Granada), and hired internationally renowned architect Daniel H. Burnham to design the projected city. Known as the “Father of the City Beautiful Movement,” Burnham visualized a huge opportunity. He wrote: “Nowhere on earth is the ocean availed of by men as it should be. Perhaps we can set the pace and inoculate the men of the Pacific Coast with the right ideas.”²²⁸ Burnham allowed for 640 acres of open space within the development. This included a 14-acre scenic ocean view corridor that has come to be known as “the Burnham Strip.” He employed his unique concept of “park chains” as can be seen in those great tree-planted mediums within the avenues that radiate outward from the strip. Interestingly, El Granada exists as Burnham’s only completed plan in the United States.

As El Granada was to become the great resort, it had to have the best railroad station. Its design was Mediterranean, including tile roof, stucco walls and arched openings. It was the largest and certainly the most elaborate of the Ocean Shore stations. On June 23, 1908, the rails reached the station with great fanfare. By mid-October, track had been laid all the way to Tunitas Creek.²²⁹ Although vastly altered through the years, the El Granada station still stands today at Alhambra and Granada. Most recently it served as a restaurant.

With the railroad came an extensive advertising campaign supported by scores of real estate salesmen who went into action to sell suburban lots at Montara, Moss Beach and El Granada. The largest effort went into promotion of El Granada. One advertisement declared:

Within 50 minutes ride from the center of San Francisco on the line of the Ocean Shore Railway is located the beautiful city of Granada. It is situated in a delightful ocean cove on the site of a quaint old Spanish settlement established in this place long before the gold excitement of '49'. Surrounded by high mountains on one side and the great Pacific Ocean on the other, it has long been a district well-nigh impregnable for railroad enterprise. Here slumbering peacefully on has nestled this little village happy and contented within itself. Resting at its feet and practically unknown has existed for ages a marvel of nature. One of the most sheltered and picturesque beaches in the world. . . its shore is carpeted with

*a compact mass of the cleanest and whitest of sea sand and washed by surf so gentle and safe that the most timid of bathers need not fear to venture into it.*²³⁰

Amazingly, 1727 lots were sold at El Granada.²³¹ However, as was the case with other properties sold by the Land Company, actual construction on the lots was rare. The real estate bubble burst, and many of the properties went back to the original Ocean Shore investors.

Only the farmers realized substantial benefit from the railroad. For them, the isolation of the coast had finally been broken. In 1911, 250 carloads of artichokes were hauled out of the Half Moon Bay area to San Francisco for market. The next year the volume of product transported this way doubled. Sadly for everyone involved, by 1920 the Land Company was bankrupt and the trains stopped running. The advent of gasoline powered trucks and improved roads saved the farmers, however.

Most the land reverted to growing crops or grazing cattle. Part of it became a quarry. The quarry supplied rock for the building of Highway 1 and the Half Moon Bay Airport, across the road.

In recent years a community has coalesced at El Granada. In 1977, the people there participated in creating a master plan with the County. A guiding principle for future land use paid homage to the original Burnham vision, setting aside the “strip” as an open space requirement. Later, in 1995, Coastsiders convinced the County government to purchase the 40-acre quarry for purposes of creating a community park. Today, non-profit Midcoast Park Lands leases and manages the property.

PILLAR POINT HARBOR AND PRINCETON (CONTEXTUAL)

West of El Granada and the properties of the National Park Service are Pillar Point Harbor and the community of Princeton. Visitors to *Rancho Corral de Tierra* will doubtlessly also experience these quaint places that are relics of the past. The history of the colorful characters that worked and lived in them are entwined in the history of National Park lands at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Both locations have their origins in maritime history but represent a significant shift in purpose. At first they were intended to serve as a hub for ocean going vessels who would break the isolation of the coast by moving farm products to San Francisco. Instead, they developed around the creation of commercial and recreational fishing enterprises.

In 1902, north of Amesport and east of the Old Landing, Santa Cruz cement manufacturer Henry Cowell (who owned a large portion of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* now possessed by the National Park Service) joined with local farmers and built a 1,000 foot wharf and warehouse for \$10,000. This wharf, like Amesport, serviced ships moving

produce to San Francisco. However, it experienced an important change. The Ocean Shore Railroad took this business away beginning about 1908. Afterwards Cowell's wharf, and Amesport too, functioned as commercial and recreational fishing spots. By 1940, Cowell's wharf had fallen into disrepair with only 500 feet still left standing.²³² Amesport remained a popular fishing location,²³³ at least in memory. Into the 1960s, pilings from the old structure were still visible.

Not ocean going ships but the Ocean Shore Railroad had broken the isolation of the coast, perhaps not as profitably as its owners had wished, but the Railroad changed the history of the Coastsiders forever. Although the original investors of the Railroad's subsidiary, the Ocean Shore Land Company, never saw their dreams of a resort community come about at El Granada, just west of the mouth of Denniston Creek, there occurred some activity. Here Frank Brophy initiated Princeton-at-the-Beach (later known as simply Princeton). In 1908, in the same year that the Railroad reached the area, he opened the Princeton Hotel as a house catering to tourists.

For the Princeton Hotel and any enterprises hoping for the success of the railroad, the Ocean Shore's stoppage of service in 1920 came as a blow. Locals looked to other opportunities. Prohibition became the law of the land for the United States in 1919, and by 1920, its effects were settling in on Coastsiders who were giving up on legitimate tourism business and becoming involved in operating "clubs," or speakeasies, where illegal booze could be sold. They also worked to assist rumrunners: gangsters smuggling alcoholic beverages in from Canada. South of Princeton, at Miramar, the Beach Inn Café became a speakeasy with an upstairs bordello. North of Princeton, at Moss Beach and Montara, rumrunners found locals eager to cooperate with the new business, albeit an illegal one. The smugglers might dump crates of hooch overboard and allow onshore colleagues to collect them. At Seal Cove, Coastsiders occasionally launched boats to meet the whiskey-laden ships. The lucrative "industry" continued all the way through to the repeal of Prohibition in 1932.

Locals remember that it was Thomas Murphy who first approached restaurant owner "Boss" John Patroni in 1921, about using his wharf at Princeton for use by the rumrunners. In the meantime the Princeton Hotel became a well-known bordello. In 1922, San Mateo County District Attorney Frank Swart engaged in a Peninsula-wide campaign against prostitution and closed the Hotel for violation of the Red Light Abatement Act.²³⁴ The closure proved temporary, and the Hotel continued to serve its guests. It was John Patroni, however, whose name is indelibly associated with the "roaring 20s" at Princeton.

Born Giovanni Patroni in 1878, at Genoa, Italy, he was the son of a farmer. He came to San Francisco with the large surge of Italian immigrants attracted to California at the beginning of the last century. Up in the City, he learned the hotel business and moved



Fig. 3.11: Photograph of a man, thought to be "Bass Patroni", in front of Patroni House.

over rent, but must have been resolved, as Patroni became manager of the Cowell estate's farm lands in later years. By April of 1913, the *Daly City Record* was reporting that Patroni had a wharf at Princeton under construction. By the 25th of the month, some 375 feet had been completed with another 125 feet to go. It was to be utilized by the infant commercial fishing industry beginning to grow there.²³⁵

Patroni had to learn the bootlegging game. Only months after allowing booze to be landed at his wharf, a tip led prohibition officers to his Patroni House. A \$60,000 delivery of whiskey from Vancouver had just arrived. Much of it was confiscated at the restaurant. Patroni was arrested and later confessed to helping smuggle this high-grade alcohol into Princeton. He received immunity but fingered Thomas Murphy. Murphy also confessed, was indicted, but never served time. He took on a new partner, Paul Pane, and worked as a bootlegger down in the Año Nuevo neighborhood.

Patroni learned that in order to receive warning of future interference, regular gifts ought to be made. Henceforth calls from the county courthouse in Redwood City alerted Patroni of rumblings of a raid. Sometimes he offered certain people, that could help him, great discounts at his restaurant and/or overnight accommodations. Between these special guests and regular customers, there for all the full-price entertainment, as many as 500 people might be on the short streets of Princeton on a single night.

A plate of mussels at the Patroni House became a famous dish. Other activities gained wide notoriety as well. Of course Patroni lorded over the prized artichoke fields which were the site of occasional gun battles,²³⁶ as competing racketeers attempted to steal the vegetables away from farmers under the protection of "Boss" Patroni.

After 1932 and the end of Prohibition, the activities of the bootleggers went away. It was a time of economic depression, and locals looked for new opportunities yet again.

to the coast just after 1900. Among the friends he made was Dante Diande, who introduced artichoke growing to California. Together they came to own about 400 acres of farm property west of and within today's National Park lands at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. He opened a restaurant at Princeton, the Patroni House, which became well-known for its good food. While it was his in that he constructed the building, it sat on Henry Cowell's land. A feud ignited

Some found work in the emerging fishing industry. Previous to this time, most of the fish-food products that originated from San Mateo County came from the oyster beds and Chinese shrimp camps on the Bayside.²³⁷

The 1870 census listed just one fisherman living at Half Moon Bay. Honesto Espinosa, a 48-year-old immigrant from Manila, claimed the occupation. The August 26, 1871, edition of the *San Mateo Times Gazette* took note of A.Y. Yeek, who was starting “a new fishing enterprise” at Half Moon Bay.

In 1880, David Starr Jordan conducted the first survey of fishing activities on the Pacific Coast for the United States Fish Commission. He found the San Mateo County Coast had “very inconsiderable” production. He remarked that the market was small in that the Coastside communities had little population, while ports for fishing vessels didn’t exist. Moreover, fishermen from Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Francisco offered competition. In those days, fishermen used a variety of sailboats. Because of their small size, these boats only ventured out during the best conditions. Their gear included peranzella-style nets, seines, gillnets and setlines.

On the San Mateo County Coastside, Jordan could find just 10 men who claimed to fish commercially, but only when they could “find nothing else to do”²³⁸ did they fish from shore (without boats). However, he also commented that “tourists from San Francisco” and Half Moon Bay residents fished for salmon in the creeks for recreation.

In 1889, the *Times Gazette* (of February 2) reported: “Seven Chinese fishermen have located a fishing station on the bluff back near Amesport Landing. . . They will fish, abalone, etc. to the San Francisco markets.” How long this operation lasted is not clear.

However when interviewed in 1941, John Patroni said that he did remember a “Chinese fishing camp” at Denniston’s wharf when he came to the area.²³⁹ Patroni may have seen Japanese abalone fishermen instead. In October of 1900, the *Times Gazette* began reporting on the activities of a group of Japanese gathering the shellfish. Indeed the Japanese dominated the abalone business through the 1930s, and even as late as 1941, half the dive crews in California were of Japanese heritage.²⁴⁰

It was also noted about this time (1901) that vacationers at Moss Beach and other places near Half Moon Bay began to gather the delectable mollusk.²⁴¹ For example on July 11, 1913, the *Daly City Record* described a Moss Beach outing:

Enrico Biggio and family of Daly City are occupying the Foley cottage. Mr. Biggio is an expert abalone diver and he never goes after them without returning with the limit of 15.

In 1914, during the season, it was estimated that 2,000 mostly vacationers between Princeton and Montara took home 15 abalones each. Dungeness crabs also came to the attention of visitors. A 1916 account glorified the Coastside for enormous quantities of “great big crabs that are not surpassed in flavor by any crab in the world.” This became a commercial business of Pillar Point of such success that by the late 1940s, the waters here had become one of the state’s main crab fishing areas.²⁴²

New technologies, meanwhile, made fishing on the San Mateo County Coast easier. Better curing methods and the advent of gasoline powered craft assisted the fishermen of Pillar Point to fish for salmon as early as 1914.²⁴³ They utilized small vessels that required them to leave in the early morning and come back the same afternoon or evening. All the work was performed by hand aboard these troll boats. By the 1920s, the vessels were 28 to 30 feet long. The fishermen employed as many as nine lines each, with four or more hooks, using land weights of up to 30 pounds.²⁴⁴ One of these boats, the *Irene*, was built in San Francisco for the Coastside’s Bettencourt family and is now being restored by a volunteer group at Pillar Point Harbor.

The 1910-1911 storm season resulted in significant damage of property, including destruction of some boats and even loss of life among the fishermen at Princeton. Locals organized a meeting at Patroni’s restaurant to talk about what could be done.²⁴⁵ For the first time at a public meeting, the idea of creating a breakwater was proposed. The plan called for building it out from the rocks at Pillar Point and extending it southward, in order to give the Coastside a truly safe harbor. Sadly for its proponents, this initial effort did not succeed. However, the idea never died. Into the 1930s “promotional dinners”²⁴⁶ took place to advance the cause, but World War II interrupted progress. Nevertheless the need to protect boats at Princeton continued to grow.

During the years leading up to World War II, gasoline powered trucks, that had replaced the Ocean Shore Railroad in helping the farmers of the Coastside, were also employed to run the catch of the commercial fishermen up to San Francisco. From Patroni’s and Cowell’s wharves, the trucks would load the fresh fish in an efficient enough way that by the beginning of the War, there was no longer any water-borne traffic from Pillar Point. All shipments were made by truck.²⁴⁷

The War had direct ramifications on the commercial and recreational fishing business at Princeton. On the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, December 8, 1941, San Mateo County Sheriff John J. McGrath shut down coastal fishing.²⁴⁸ Boats were held at the piers until cleared of any suspicions. There existed a fear that some fisherman might aid enemy submarines. Japanese and Italian fishermen were important ethnic groups represented at Princeton. Japan and Italy were now at war with the United States. Immediately all Japanese residents, whether citizens or not, could no longer

take a boat out and fish. Many Italians, who had not become naturalized, were also prohibited from participating.

As the War rolled on, the labor supply among the fishermen was further reduced by young men volunteering to serve in the armed forces or being drafted. In the meantime, there developed increased demand for fish. New fishermen came onto the scene -- a few without any previous experience. In some cases they had tired of the defense industry and bought boats to try their hands at a new career. In many cases, older, retired fishermen came back, for what some said was a sense of patriotic duty. Others were the sons of fishermen, stepping in to keep the family business alive.

Many of the difficulties that affected commercial fishermen also impacted the operators of pleasure boats. Some of these vessels were sold off to the new commercial fishermen.

Some markets decreased during the war; crab for example had little demand.²⁴⁹ Shark, however, became a favorite as a tasty food and for its reputation in providing "vitamin oil" from the livers of the creatures. At one point the Army paid \$9 a pound to Pillar Point fishermen for these livers. One could observe the beaches at Princeton littered with dead, liverless sharks while the contract lasted.²⁵⁰

By the end of the war, the commercial fishing industry at Princeton had made substantial progress. According to state of California *Fish Bulletins*, in 1941, the entire catch at Princeton was valued at \$28,700. In 1945 it was recorded to be \$98,000. An advantage possessed by Princeton was the availability of fuel and other services at the piers. These features attracted the landings of transient fishermen that helped augment the overall numbers. A big improvement over the prewar years was the size of the boats. They increased from an average of 25 feet to boats 32 to 45 feet long. This allowed for the crews to stay out of harbor overnight, as they had capacity for carrying ice to preserve the catches.²⁵¹

By war's end Princeton looked like a fishing village. This bustling place now had three working piers (Patroni's, Cowell's and one built by a cannery), two canneries and a refrigeration plant.²⁵² Many of the salmon boats had begun conversion to use of gurdies, instead of hand-pulling nets.

By the end of the 1940s, about 125 fishing boats were using Princeton's wharfs, the largest of which were 70 foot purse seine vessels. The fishermen landed shark, sardines, crab, salmon, rockfish, halibut, sole, albacore tuna and abalone. The last mentioned shellfish, so rare now, was harvested in great numbers. Local legend tells of individual fishermen gathering as many as 1,200 in just hours, weighing down boats so badly they could hardly float. Somehow the record keeping on abalone was disre-

garded. The value of the 1949 catch for Princeton was \$143,436 not counting abalone. During the village's banner year of 1950, 300,000 pounds of fish were landed with sardines in the most abundance, but, again, not counting abalone.

Meanwhile, the lucrative sports fishing industry rivaled its commercial counterpart in revenues. Charter boats like the *Miss Princeton* operated by John Teixeira allowed sportsmen the opportunity to experience deep-sea fishing. By the mid-1950s, local entrepreneurs employed four war surplus amphibious vehicles called DUKWs (Ducks) to haul out the increasing number of tourists on fishing excursions. Altogether 17 boats were used in this work. Locals complained that business was so brisk that there was nowhere in the village to park.²⁵³

By the beginning of the 1950s, two canneries also had become part of the economic vitality at Princeton. In 1940, Joe Romeo built a third pier here. His father, father-in-law and uncles had all been in the fishing business. In 1945, he augmented his dealings by establishing a cannery, Romeo Packing Company.

Just previous to Romeo's, Princeton Packers went into operation a little north of Patroni's pier close to the Princeton Hotel.²⁵⁴ Many local boys found their first jobs working in the plant and remembered how their clothes and hair smelled at the end of a shift. A significant decline in the sardine fishery forced Princeton to lay off 100 cannery workers after the war. It converted its packing operation to Brussel sprouts, a less lucrative trade.

Joe Romeo's cannery made history with its distinctive label. It featured a fish with glasses named "Charlie," after Joe's son. This branding image was eventually sold to Star-Kist, for its "Charlie the Tuna" advertising campaigns. By 1954, Romeo had survived the sardine crisis by converting its operations to the manufacture of liquid fertilizer.²⁵⁵ Romeo's pier still stands and acts as a fish-buying facility. It is known today as "Green's Pier." In the 1970s, Joe Romeo developed an automated process for making paper sleeves for packaging. Today (2010) the family continues to operate this business.

The activity at Princeton did not go unnoticed in Sacramento. When in 1946, local leaders lobbied for creating a safe harbor for Princeton, Governor Earl Warren allowed for the creation of a Half Moon Bay Harbor Association. He appointed Percy Shaw (chair), Richard D. Armstrong, Thomas Callen, Henry Clark and Nate Johnson as its first board. In the spring of that year, at the moment when surveyors from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began studies for the breakwater project, a huge earthquake (7.8 magnitude in the Aleutian Islands) generated a tsunami that rippled its way to Half Moon Bay. Two waves rolled through and caused the engineers to flee from their worksite at Romeo's Pier. The *Half Moon Bay Review* of April 4, reported quite

a bit of damage. At Princeton, boats were thrown 1,000 feet toward land. Fences had been uprooted. Automobiles, washed from parking spaces, sometimes were found 60 feet away, but there was no one hurt. One local remembered old “Boss” John Patroni coming out of his restaurant screaming, “Run for the hills, it’s a tidal wave.”

Nevertheless the effort to create a Half Moon Bay harbor persisted. Local newspapers exclaimed in 1949 that the project had finally made it past the dream stage, but progress was stalled again, this time because of the Korean War. The army engineers were not back to work at Half Moon Bay until 1956.²⁵⁶

Through the 1950s, without a proper harbor, the bulk of the boats at Princeton anchored on the lee side of Pillar Point where there was some slight protection from storms. The fishermen used dinghies in order to reach their vessels, keeping the small row boats tied up at Romeo’s Pier. Many fished for the commercial market during the winter months and took sportsmen out during the summer.²⁵⁷ The entire commercial catch of 1955 was valued at only \$81,973, a substantial decrease from the banner year of 1950.

At the end of 1956, the Army Corps of Engineers was back, reviewing preliminary plans for the building of a protected harbor at Pillar Point. The Corps authorized the creation of two breakwater projects. Construction began in 1959. By this time only two piers were usable at Princeton, Cowell’s wharf being considered “unsafe.”²⁵⁸

Progress was interrupted at 5:30 a.m. on May 22, 1960, when Princeton was hit by yet another tsunami. This time an 8.6 magnitude earthquake off Chile sent huge waves up the California coast. At Princeton two commercial salmon fishing boats were thrown onto the beach, one fifty feet from the water’s normal edge.²⁵⁹ About ten other vessels were damaged. While many people were scared, once again, there was no loss of life.

The harbor project called for first creating the two breakwaters. Then a new wharf of 267 feet with facilities for fueling boats and handling commercial catch would be installed along with a causeway of 579 feet. First step was to transport some 800,000 tons of rock to the site from the Granite Construction Company, 44 miles away. Additional rock and debris would later be employed as well. The Healy-Tibbs Construction Company was contracted to place the rock out in the Bay to create the breakwater. On June 29, 1961, the *San Francisco News-Call Bulletin* quipped “1/2 Half Moon Bay is now . . .” in celebration of its new \$5 million breakwater.

By 1962, the L-shaped pier, with capability of providing water, gasoline, diesel oil and electricity for the boat owners was completed, and the Cowell and Patroni wharves were slated for removal.²⁶⁰

On April 1, 1963, yet another earthquake, this one at Prince William Sound in Alaska, caused a huge tsunami effect in the Pacific. In the Half Moon Bay area, 2,000 people were evacuated.²⁶¹ This particular tsunami was judged to be the worst yet, but the effects at the new Pillar Point Harbor were slight, with one boat sunk but easily repaired. Another was swept out to sea but was recovered. Two small crafts were forced onto the breakwater, but were pulled off with minimal damage. There were no injuries recorded.

By 1967, new improvements featured a harbormaster's building with a restaurant, a boat launch and parking area.²⁶² In 1969, the San Mateo County Harbor District began planning the next stage of development for Pillar Point. This included a 1,500-slip marina, but it was opposed by local environmental organizations. The project was scaled down, and in 1976, the California Coastal Commission approved the building of a marina of 440 slips.

During the 1970s, new boat launch ramps and other improvements, including the extension of the pier, enhanced operations for the commercial fishermen as they brought in salmon, crab and some 80 species of rockfish²⁶³ (with salmon and crab bringing in the most dollars).

However, difficulties were on the horizon. By the middle part of the decade, competition off the California coast became tense with the presence of as many as 60 factory fishing trawlers from the Soviet Union and Japan. These vessels of over 300 feet in size forced the Federal government to enact the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act to push these ships 200 miles off the Coast. The U.S. Pacific trawl fleet was expanded, with federal support, and trawl landings at Princeton peaked in 1990 with a four million pound catch.²⁶⁴

The California fishing industry was also affected in the mid-1970s by the influx of refugees from Southeast Asia. The end of the Vietnam War caused some 760,000 Vietnamese to come to the United States of which 40% took up residence in California. Many of these immigrants had been fishermen back home and wanted to resume their occupation in their new land. By the late 1980s, some 20 to 40 Vietnamese fishing boats were operating out of Pillar Point Harbor. Cultural differences between the old and new groups created tensions which were exasperated by the new types of fishing gear and style of operation of the Vietnamese as they were applied in competition with the old-timers. Local buyers at first refused to accept the fish of the newcomers. Violence did occur. Eventually environmentalists throughout the state objected to the immigrants' use of gill nets. The immigrants countered by forming the Vietnamese Gill-Netters Association, but in 1990, the California Legislature passed regulations ending the practice. Many of the Vietnamese were forced out of the industry.

Fishermen foresaw another threat in the 1980s, when the Port of Oakland announced plans to barge mud from their dredging projects and dump it just six miles from Pillar Point, on Montara. The Half Moon Bay fishing community protested loudly about how this might affect the local fisheries, which prompted San Mateo County to sue the Port.²⁶⁵ The County and fishermen won the fight.

Environmental law was not always on the side of the Pillar Point Harbor fishermen. In 1982, the federal government began limiting access to rockfish, a traditionally important catch for locals. Restrictions were also imposed on abalone gathering.

By the end of the 1950s, abalone diving included southern California touches such as use of wetsuits and masks. Further facilitating the divers' efforts during the 1970s were the introduction of faster boats, improved diving technology and expansion of traditional fishing grounds. Divers from Pillar Point Harbor worked as far south as Año Nuevo, west to the Farallon Islands and north to the San Francisco County line. It was recorded that a single diver could garner an average of 10 to 15 dozen of the mollusks a day. In 1977, the State of California imposed restrictions in the form of a limit program. By the 1990s, the decline in abalone forced the state to act again, this time imposing a moratorium on all commercial harvesting of the sea creature.²⁶⁶

Negative factors reducing the activities of commercial fishermen over the last 50 years have been mitigated to an extent by the rise in revenue from charter boat fishing. By 1981, these types of landings accounted for over 70% of the recreational catch at Pillar Point Harbor.²⁶⁷ In recent years, charter boat owners have upgraded the types of boats they use to more powerful and faster vessels. They have thus expanded their range, north 28 miles, to Duxbury Reef near Point Bolinas.

For the commercial business, significant decline has occurred in recent years. As late as 1989, there were still 300 permanently based fishing vessels at Pillar Point Harbor. Another 200 or so transient boats also used the harbor on a seasonal basis. This made the harbor home to a significant fleet. Through the early 1990s, an average of 8.4 million pounds of fish with revenues of about \$8 million a year represented the peak time for this local industry.

However, in 1995, the State of California enacted a limit program for crab harvesting. Meanwhile, competition was becoming increasingly stiff. By 2000, something like 1,200 commercial vessels were fishing along the San Mateo County Coast annually. They were seasonal boats from other ports for the most part. Thus, Pillar Point Harbor experienced a significant drop in the number of commercial fishing vessels, in fact 40% between 1980 and 2000.²⁶⁸

In 2002, bottom fishing was banned in California water to protect threatened spe-

cies. In 2003, feeling the pressure of competition from “farm-grown” fish, fishermen at Pillar Point Harbor gave away 200 wild salmon in protest, asking that consumers demand the “wild” variety at their grocery stores. The next year, the federal government initiated a buyout program with the aim of retiring 50% of the West Coast trawl vessels. That same year, the last of the boatyards closed at Princeton. By 2004, only 94 active commercial fishing vessels still called Pillar Point Harbor home. Merely a quarter of these actually engaged in fishing all year round. Just 90 families in the Princeton community claimed to be dependent on the fishing industry for their main source of revenue.

Today (2010), Pillar Point Harbor possesses 369 berths within its marina that can accommodate vessels of up to 65 feet in length. Fuel is available as is crushed ice from the old refrigeration plant. When not broken down, it can produce 50,000 pounds of ice in a day. On a busy day up to 400 boats can be launched at the six-lane ramp. Three wholesale fish buyers are present; some fishermen sell their catch directly to the public. Retail fish stores market fresh fish to growing numbers of curious visitors.²⁶⁹

A recent interview with Joanna Franklin, operator of a restaurant at the Harbor since the 1960s, revealed that when her place of business first opened, most of her customers were fishermen and locals. Now, the great majority of people she serves are tourists. This daughter of a fisherman laments: “there are fewer than 10 old-time commercial fishermen on the Coastside.”²⁷⁰

Indeed for National Park Service visitors to GGNRA lands within San Mateo County, a side excursion to Pillar Point Harbor would be well worth the trip. It exists now as a legacy of an industry soon to disappear, at least in the form it has been known in the past. Before it is lost, going there could be an experience with historical interest as absorbing as a hike up Sweeney Ridge or a visit to old lumber mills sites on the Phleger Estate.

WORLD WAR II AND RANCHO CORRAL DE TIERRA (CONTEXTUAL)

During World War II, *Rancho Corral de Tierra* lands experienced more human activity than at any time in its history. Patrols on the beaches, construction of an airport, anti-aircraft target practice, installation of radar stations and the furious sounds of soldiers training for war were all a part of the scene. The saddest change was the evacuation and then internment of Japanese American farmers in the area.

The attack at Pearl Harbor, on December 7, 1941, immediately activated military installations in the Bay Area. While the idea of an invasion was not seriously envisioned, an air attack or submarine raid was. On December 11, the Bay Area was designated

a theater of military operations. This sprung provision of resources for improving coastal emplacements and the overall defense system in the region.²⁷¹

For those who doubted the necessity for vigilance on the coast, in March 1942, a surface gun battle between a Japanese submarine and a Standard Oil tanker just south and east of the Farallone Islands near Half Moon Bay, was sobering.

At Half Moon Bay, the “Horse Marines”²⁷² began patrolling the beaches 24 hours a day. Guardsmen with dogs became part of the operation as well.

Building projects got underway all up and down the mid-San Mateo County coast. Certainly the most permanent was the construction of the Half Moon Bay Airport.

Official records tell us that the California State Highway Department bought the 217.68 acres by sale or by condemnation from 11 landowners just after the war began.²⁷³ *Rancho Corral de Tierra* resident Ed Lea remembers it a little differently. According to him the Army simply told the farmers west of the Highway to “get out.” Certainly the state of emergency motivated quick action, and the construction of an airfield, which was closer to Hawaii and the Pacific Theater of War than any other in the continental United States, made this project a priority.

The actual construction was accomplished by the Highway Department for \$3 million. The project resulted in the creation of a single 5,200 foot, asphalt paved runway.²⁷⁴ After the Army acquired the airfield it added an operations building, shops and barracks. Altogether, 19 buildings were put up, all of them standard military types of the era. Roads and utilities were installed as well.

The airfield’s first mission was to act as a forward operating location for Hamilton Field. Taking off from Half Moon Bay, fighter planes, such as P-38s and P-40s, would intercept enemy aircraft, before they could reach inland targets.

As the months wore on, and it became apparent that attack was not imminent, the airfield was used for patrol aircraft and as a base for planes towing targets for anti-aircraft drills. Trainer planes, flown by women air corps personnel, pulled radio-controlled target sleeves over guns deployed at the Twelfth Naval District’s Anti Aircraft Training Center at Montara. Personnel could then blast away. When practices were scheduled, a red flag was flown from a concrete tower at Moss Beach to warn away other aircraft and commercial fishermen.

The Anti-aircraft Training Center was actually quite an establishment. It extended southward from the Montara Lighthouse along the coast through today’s Montara Sanitary District for nearly 6,000 feet, and it ran eastward from the ocean, across the

highway deep into a current residential area. From the map provided (see Appendix XIII) the reader can see that the center included about forty structures with more (in white) planned.

Those present by April 30, 1944 included an administration building, a range control tower, a fire control building, classrooms, a night lookout trainer building, three barracks buildings, officers quarters, three Polaroid training buildings, a theater, a carpenter shop, a pump house, a paint locker, latrines, a target director building, eight magazines, a visual education building, a powerhouse, a garage, a “subsistence building,” an incinerator and a water tower. By 1945, a library, three more barracks buildings and a hangar had been added.²⁷⁵

Weapons present on concrete gun platforms facing the ocean included 20mm mounts, 40mm guns in twin and quad mounts, plus large 3-inch and 5-inch naval guns.

Remaining on today’s Montara Lighthouse Station National Park land is (possibly) the old carpenter shop and pump house plus the foundations for one of the Polaroid training buildings, a classroom building and theater, all located at the northwest tip of the Center, which consisted of the southern portion of the Coast Guard property.²⁷⁶ Some structures still exist on the Sanitary District property. Across the highway, many of the old foundations can still be seen and are used by local youths as an unofficial skateboard park.

At Moss Beach, the Center’s concrete tower remains standing as a relic. Just before the War ended, the Army leased the aircraft field to the Navy (June 1, 1945). There seems to have been little that the Navy did with the property after the War. On August 1, 1946, the War Department advised local authorities that the airfield was surplus. San Mateo County indicated interest in converting it into a civil airport and leased the property on February 1, 1947.

Most of the original wooden buildings were utilized by the County until a fire destroyed them in 1954. Today, all that can be seen from the military days are the airstrip and some aircraft hardstands.

During the 50s, United Airlines operated a small terminal at Half Moon Bay Airport. Currently, the facility is an emergency runway site for San Francisco International Airport. Its main function is to serve general aviation. It also has community emergency duties. The airport is still run by the County.

The military presence on the bluff at Pillar Point is an enduring legacy of World War II. The Army purchased 13.7 acres and leased another 36 at the Point in October of 1940 to create fire control stations with radar capabilities and to install seacoast searchlights.

The purpose of the fire control stations was to direct defensive artillery fire in case of a naval attack on San Francisco. The radar system was of the SCR-296 surface search type that was also employed at Wildcat Ridge at Point Reyes, Hill 640 east of Stinson Beach, Bonita Ridge at the Marin Headlands and Devil's Slide in San Mateo County (see Milagra Ridge section of this study for more on the Devil's Slide fire control stations). The typical equipment of such stations included a tower, a concrete transmitter house and two power plants. There were also barracks, concrete bunkers, cyclone fences and an overhead and underground electrical system. The station was known as "Pillar Point Military Reservation," part of the "Harbor Defense of San Francisco." A recent study of the site revealed little left from the World War II period, except some concrete and steel pedestals, a concrete bunker and a cable vault.²⁷⁷

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, on November 30, 1949, the Army's lease on 34 of the acres ended. On June 30, another lease of one acre expired, and on September 4, 1959, the lease for the last one acre expired. In 1959, the Navy leased these 36 acres again for use as a radar station. During the early 1960s, the 13.7 acres that had been purchased by the Army were turned over to the U.S. Air Force to build a missile tracking installation. Today, Vanderberg Air Force Base still operates the radar units at Pillar Point. They are modern AN/FPQ-6 and AN/MPS-36 units that can track aircraft, missiles, space boosters and other orbiting objects.²⁷⁸

Other World War II activities of the military on or near *Rancho Corral de Tierra* included a plan for the establishment of a large Army post at El Granada, that never came about. The Army did build some improvements for a similar project at Miramar, but nothing remains of them now. At McNee Ranch, which is now California State Park property adjacent to National Park land, the Army acquired acreage for staging mock battles, allowing troops the use of live ammunition. Locals listened to the sounds of machine gun fire rattling away until the end of the war.

The only attack on any of the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* military sites occurred on February 3, 1975, when the radical New World Liberation Front bombed the Air Force's Pillar Point station. During a stormy night, members of the group entered the base through an opening in a fence and planted two, two-inch diameter pipe bombs under a diesel-fuel tank. The bombs were intended to ignite the tank but failed to do so. Instead, 400 gallons of diesel-fuel drained into the ground. Afterwards, the Air Force upgraded security of the installation.²⁷⁹

For more about World War II and defense preparations in San Mateo County, see the Milagra Ridge section of this study.

MAVERICK'S AT PILLAR POINT (CONTEXTUAL)

Today, Pillar Point has achieved international fame for the presence of the big wave phenomenon about a mile offshore called Maverick's. Giant swells, that originate as far away as the Aleutian Islands and even Japan, move down the California coast. Pillar Point exists a long underwater valley facing northwest, that, especially in the winter, set up big waves on the surface.²⁸⁰

In fact the waves are enormous. Under the right conditions they can average twenty feet from back to front with a 40-foot "face". Incredibly, human beings ride these waves on surf boards. When riding at the top of the "face", they are four stories above the churning, deadly waters below. Maverick's has become known as one of the most consistently challenging big wave surf spots in the world. Thus, it attracts surfers from around the world during its annual competition.

Obviously big wave surfing is differentiated from more conventional surfing by the size of waves, once thought to be "unrideable". Surfing historians record December 22, 1943, as the birth of big wave surfing. At North Shore, Hawaii, surfers Woody Brown and Dickie Cross found themselves stranded out to sea near Waimea Bay. Encountering 30-foot waves they attempted to body surf in. Cross was never found. Brown survived, but years passed before anyone tried the North Shore swell again.

However, improved equipment advanced the sport. In 1950, George Downing and Joe Quigg shaped the first balsacore fiberglass board and launched the modern-era surfboard industry.

In 1953, big wave surfing generated international attention when photographer "Scoop" Tsuzuki captured Woody Brown and two other surfers on a 15-foot wave at Makaha. The Associated Press purchased the photo which received attention everywhere, including California where surfing was becoming popular.

At Pillar Point in 1961, surfer Alex Matienzo and friends were attempting to surf some waves, but found conditions unsafe for Matienzo's German Shepherd, Maverick. He took his dog to shore and tied him up to a car bumper. Although not successful in riding the waves, the surfers called the spot Maverick's, after the dog, and the name stuck.²⁸¹

While big wave surfing had not yet arrived at Pillar Point, it was advancing in Hawaii. In 1974, the first big-wave contest took place on Thanksgiving Day at Waimea.

The next year, in 1975, San Mateo County native and Half Moon Bay resident Jeff Clark decided to give Maverick's a try. He had learned of the wave from his Boy Scout

troop leader and spent years studying the big swells before feeling mentally and physically prepared.

For 15 years, Clark had Maverick's to himself. Finally, on January 12, 1990, he talked Santa Cruz friends Dave Schmidt and Tom Powers into surfing Maverick's. For three years a few select northern Californians knew about the wave, but in 1993 Hawaiian Ken Bradshaw discovered Maverick's, and now other Hawaiians had to attempt it as well. In December of 1994, *Surfing Magazine* caught an image of Peter Mel riding what appeared to be a perfect wave. He was "inside the tube," that is he was riding within the curl of the wave, as the photo was shot. The photograph made the cover of the magazine, and Maverick's gained international fame.

In December of that same year, the danger of this place was brought home when surfing sensation Mark Foo attempted to ride Maverick's. The popular Hawaiian big wave enthusiast drowned and further placed Maverick's in the spotlight.²⁸² Local surfers responded by establishing a "Water Patrol" to watch over Maverick's surfers during the winter season, when the waves are biggest, and most of the activity is occurring.

In February of 1999, Maverick's passed another milestone when Sarah Gerhardt became the first woman to take on the big wave. It was the same month that the first Maverick's surf contest took place.

Quicksilver, a sports apparel company,²⁸³ sponsored the competition, dubbing it "Men Who Ride Mountains." Santa Cruz's Darryl "Flea" Virostko won the \$15,000 first prize. That October, Maverick's watchers were amazed to see a wave build to a heart stopping 53-foot face. In 2000, the second contest was again won by Virostko.

In order to have big wave surfing contests, the waves have to be just right. Je! Clark, in most years, made that call, and surfers from around the world would come. In some years, the contest has not taken place because conditions weren't good enough. However, most seasons see a competition.

In November of 2001, a wave with a 75-foot face, the largest recorded, broke at Maverick's and it was assumed the year would be a good one for the contest. However Quicksilver sponsored the Eddie Aikau contest in Hawaii in January, and six days later, when conditions at Maverick's were deemed ideal, Quicksilver was unable to organize the separate competition. Moreover, some of its sponsored surfers had gone on a surf expedition to Cortes Bank, a remote spot some 100 miles off the coast of California. The waiting period passed in 2001 without a contest being held, and by autumn, Quicksilver was out. It no longer made business sense to sponsor two events in the same season. No other corporation picked up the slack, and the winters of 2001-02 and 2002-03 passed without a Maverick's contest.

In autumn 2003, Jeff Clark decided to revive the Maverick's contest on a "shoestring budget,"²⁸⁴ and 24 of the world's best surfers competed without prize money. "Flea" received the first place prize for the third consecutive time.

In 2004, Clark teamed up with Keir Beadling, a Bay Area entrepreneur, to form Mavericks Surf Ventures, which sponsored the contest through the winter of 2009-10'.

In 2005, Anthony "Tazzy" Tashnick of Santa Cruz won the \$25,000 prize. In 2006 an estimated crowd of 50,000 spectators crowded the bluff at Pillar Point to watch South African Grant "Twiggy" Baker win the \$30,000 prize. Baker was the first non-Californian to win, bringing further international notoriety to Maverick's.

There was no contest in 2007, but in January of 2008, Greg Long won and split the award money with all his competitors in a show of sportsmanship and unity uncommon in professional sporting activities.²⁸⁵

For the historically minded, Pillar Point's metamorphosis from the western natural wall for *Rancho Corral de Tierra* during Spanish times, to a whaling station, to a military installation, to a place where 50,000 people witness a spectacular water sport is unique -- indeed. For visitors to National Park properties in San Mateo County, a side trip to Pillar Point, especially during the winter, may lead to seeing some incredible waves and some equally incredible surfers who ride them.

ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION EFFORTS ON THE SAN MATEO COUNTY COASTSIDE AND RANCHO CORRAL DE TIERRA

Scientific wonder about the rich environment encompassing *Rancho Corral de Tierra* can be said to have begun with Dr. Sol Light of the University of California at Berkeley, who initially investigated the reef at Moss Beach in 1916. He started bringing his biology students here in 1919. The college kids would drive all day to get to Moss Beach and spend the night sleeping on the floor at Nye's Restaurant. The next morning they would study the marine animal life at low tide. A number of previously unknown species were documented by the doctor and his students.

Light and company were not the only ones attracted to the Coastside. Although the Ocean Shore Railroad ceased to function in 1920, during the decade that followed, traffic to the Moss Beach Area actually increased, as people made more and more use of automobiles. Many came for the healthy outdoors and appreciated the natural marvels of Moss Beach and other coastal areas, once part of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*.

Of course others came to visit the speakeasies of the San Mateo County Coast, of which there were plenty. At Moss Beach, Frank Torres opened the Marina View Hotel

in 1927. It became known as a sort of top-end joint in that it attracted movie stars and politicians. The secluded cove down below it, served as a perfect drop for rumrunners. Cases of booze were hoisted to the bluff by rope. Today the old road house still serves as a restaurant -- the Moss Beach Distillery.

The Coastside had its tourists over the next 30 to 40 years, but ideas about major development for the coast did not materialize until the 1960s. Henry Doelger, builder of major portions of the Sunset District in San Francisco and Westlake in Daly City, announced his intention to create a new 8,000 acre subdivision for 30,000 people north of Half Moon Bay. His plans included 4,000 acres of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* owned by Westinghouse (or Half Moon Bay Properties).²⁸⁶ This vision for the coast included an improved highway over Montara Mountain, bypassing Devil's Slide and installation of a dump in the Green Valley of Montara Mountain. Locals rallied against the grandiose ideas. Only the Clipper Ridge neighborhood, north of El Granada, was ever actually built by Doelger.²⁸⁷

In the meantime, Alfred J. Wiebe bought a section of Devil's Slide as war surplus property. His idea was to create housing, a spa, a restaurant and radio station, but this scheme collapsed as well.²⁸⁸

Nothing stopped a sportsmen's club from leveling off a hill top on Montara Mountain. The club planted pampas grass and Monterey pines there to assist with erosion control. At the expense of native plants, the pampas grass spread all over the Mountain.²⁸⁹

South of El Granada builders managed to have projects completed during the 1970s. The developments allowed the more than doubling of the population around Half Moon Bay. Water, sewer and other infrastructural needs were stretched to their maximums and construction stopped.

About this time an environmental movement grew strong enough to begin challenging development plans. County residents were joined by people statewide concerned over the rapid nature of growth in California during the post-war years. California voters passed a coastal conservation initiative in 1972, which allowed for the creation of a Coastal Commission for four years. With the Coastal Act of 1976, they extended the Commission's authority indefinitely. San Mateo County organized a Local Coastal Program, the same year.

Perhaps the greatest boost for the local environmental community of the 1970s was the purchase of the 625-acre McNee Ranch from Westinghouse for \$1 million by the State of California for the purpose of creating a park. This parcel includes the acreage from Montara Mountain south to Martini Creek, just north of today's National Park property at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. The park officially opened in 1984.²⁹⁰

The biggest challenge for environmentalists anxious about the San Mateo County Coast was the highway bypass first promoted by Doelger in the 1960s. Despite the pampas grass, Montara Mountain possessed plants and soils unique from any other place on the planet. In fact seven of its plants are on the California Native Plant Society's inventory of "particular concern". Five are federally listed.

The four to seven mile long (depending on which plan one looks at) four lane bypass, from Pacifica over the mountain, was attacked by environmentalists because of what it might do to the ecology of the Mountain and how it would help open the door to future Doelger type developments down the coast.

In 1971, as State Highway plans for the bypass surfaced, the Committee for Green Foothills, Sierra Club, other groups and individuals sued the State of California under the newly enacted National Environmental Protection Act.²⁹¹ They won. The project became delayed for years. Storms washed out Highway 1 at Devil's Slide from time to time, and pressure mounted on public officials to do something about permanently fixing Highway 1 in the Montara Mountain area.

In 1993, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors appointed a panel of geologists and engineers to render advice on what might be done. The experts suggested replacing the bypass proposal with a tunnel through Montara Mountain and McNee State Park. After some debate, the issue was placed before the voters of San Mateo County in 1996, who favored the tunnel project by a 74% majority. The environmental studies and engineering plans for the tunnel were approved in 2002. Funding assistance came from the federal government through the persuasive promotion of Congressman Tom Lantos. As of the writing of this study (2010), the tunnel is nearing completion.

Another victory for environmentalists involved the tide pools that drew Dr. Light to Moss Beach back in 1916. By the 1960s, the increasing numbers of people visiting this coastal tract threatened the habitat. The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, led by its President, James V. Fitzgerald, passed a resolution to designate the Moss Beach tidal pool area as a reserve. Opposition from sports fishermen, scuba diving associations and others was overcome in Sacramento, when in 1969, the State of California declared it a "marine life refuge," and designated this tidal space as the James V. Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, due to the tireless efforts of the local leader who worked to preserve the property. As a reserve, not only did protections come in place for the tidal pool wildlife, but also for the birds, fish, plants, seals, sea lions, whales, seaweed and otters who are present or visit the site.

The Reserve is much valued for its uniqueness. It differs from most of the California coastline which tends to consist of cliffs that plummet to the ocean. This extensive reef is drained twice a day, revealing teeming tide pools.

San Mateo County Parks and Recreation and the California Department of Fish and Game are the joint custodians of the Reserve. It extends three miles from Point Montara to Pillar Point and 1,000 feet out into the ocean. In total it is 402 acres in size, that includes the intertidal marine habits and coastal blue. In the tide pools a visitor can find crabs, sponges, sea stars, mollusks, starfish and fish. There are 52 different species of shell-less sea snails alone. This intertidal zone is one of the most bio-diverse in California. Currently as many as 135,000 school children and other visitors explore Fitzgerald each year.

Researchers of geology, ecology, zoology, entomology, archeology, botany and geography study here. In fact 25 different species of plants and animals, brand new to science, have been discovered at Fitzgerald.²⁹² In 1970, an amateur geologist found a 4 million year old walrus bone, and, in 1996, an ancient whale fossil, maybe 5 million years old, was discovered.

The richness of the place draws people, hence there are problems. Researchers have recognized the large crowds have had a negative effect on the environment and consequently the wildlife. Before gaining reserve status, people could pick through the reefs and rocks and take what they wanted. A local restaurant owner bragged how he could go down to the reef at Moss Beach and gather that night's abalone dinners.²⁹³ Now there is protection. However, even with its reserve status in place, the mere numbers of people stepping on the rocks and reefs have significant impact.

In 1992, San Mateo County began studying the detrimental effects of public visitation at Fitzgerald. Limiting the numbers of people allowed onto the Reserve was recommended. Certain areas of it were put out of bounds for casual visitors. The County has also taken steps to have Fitzgerald declared an Ecological Preserve in Sacramento, which would place further limitations on usage, but opposition from fishing and other interests have thus far defeated these attempts.

On the positive side, in 1985, local residents formed Friends of the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve whose mission is to protect and preserve the place, through education and planning. Additionally in 1992, the waters of Moss Beach, in fact of the entire San Mateo County coastline, became part of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The federal government created the 276-mile sanctuary to protect, research, educate and provide public access to the coast.

The continued sophistication exhibited by the people of San Mateo County about such matters has been a plus to the environmental movement. In 1972, local voters created the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District whose mission it is to buy open space for recreation and preservation purposes. In 1977, the private, non-profit

land trust, Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) came into existence and has had a great influence in San Mateo County.

Significantly for this study, POST purchased the 1,232 acre Phleger Estate in 1994 after raising \$21 million from private and federal sources. In 2001, POST began purchasing 4,700 acres of mid and north Coastside properties for just under \$30 million. This included 4,262 acres of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. In fact, between 2001 and 2005, POST expended \$200 million to preserve 20,000 acres of the San Mateo County Coastside. In 2003, POST completed its *Rancho Corral de Tierra* purchase.

Tenant farmers of POST's section of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* were happy with the philosophy of their new land lords. Previously these farmers had to operate with leases of only six months or a year, since the owners had development plans. Now long-term leases and the prospect of family ownership became possible. The Lea family of Cabrillo Farms, tenant farmers on the land for three generations (since the days of "Boss" Patroni), supported the POST purchase and the consequential transfer to the National Park Service. Four parcels of farmland are involved, three along Highway 1, and one tucked into the middle of current Golden Gate National Recreation Area property in Denniston Valley.

In 2004, POST turned its attention to Pillar Point. In April, it purchased a 119-acre parcel, just north of the Point itself, west of Half Moon Bay Airport and south of Seal Cove. The intertidal zone and area just offshore are adjacent to Fitzgerald Reserve, further protecting that valuable place. POST paid \$2.7 million for the acreage, well below the appraised value of \$3.8 million. The property's blue top views lookout on tide pools and beaches to the west and farms and mountains to the east. A foundation from an old barn is on the site along with some dirt roads, legacies of the parcel's agricultural past. These properties may one day become a part of the GGNRA.

In 2003, Congress introduced the Rancho Corral de Tierra Golden Gate National Recreation Area Boundary Adjustment Act, calling for the appropriation of \$15 million to purchase the 4,262 acres from POST, and in 2005, Congress approved expansion of the GGNRA to include this section of the San Mateo County Coastside.

The move was made after the National Park Service became convinced of a variety of factors:

- From a historical perspective, Rancho Corral de Tierra existed as the largest privately held remnant of a Mexican-era land grant on the San Francisco Peninsula.
- Evident is this land's scenic value as an eastern backdrop for Highway 1—from Devil's Slide to Half Moon Bay—featuring mountains and farmlands.

- The property has exceptional biodiversity, including plants not found anywhere else and endangered wildlife such as the peregrine falcon, San Bruno elfin butterfly, San Francisco garter snake and California red-legged frog.
- This portion of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* contains two complete watersheds (San Vincente and Denniston creeks) plus part of a third (Martini Creek).
- Miles of potential trail systems will render great views *from Rancho Corral de Tierra*, a recreational asset in close proximity to major population centers.
- Without preservation, this land would certainly be threatened by development.
- *Rancho Corral de Tierra* is adjacent to other parklands, providing opportunity for expanding preservation efforts and linking trail systems. The San Francisco Watershed exists to the east and borders the Golden Gate National Recreation Area's Sweeney Ridge. California's McNee Ranch State Park and San Mateo County's San Pedro Valley Park lie to the north. There exists enormous potential for joint initiatives to improve the environmental health of the region while allowing accessibility to these wondrous places for the public.

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Fig. 4.1: Park map of Mori Point.

MORI POINT

A visit to Mori Point, with its dramatic vistas, including views of the Pedro Point Headlands to the south and the Marin Headlands and Point Reyes to the north, leaves no doubt why the GGNRA wanted the 110 acre parcel as a public asset. It protrudes several hundred feet out into the Pacific and is plainly visible from any high point in the City of Pacifica.

On the north it is bordered by Laguna Salada Marsh and Sharp Park Municipal Golf Course, both owned by the City of San Francisco. Laguna Salada once existed as a large coastal lagoon that drained lands to the north. This water body shows up on Francisco Sanchez's original hand-drawn *diseño* for his land grant petition of 1839 as "Laguna Salada". The San Mateo County Surveyor's office of 1868 called it "Salt Lake Valley". County Surveyor J. Cloud called it "Salt Lake" in 1877. By 1894, the County was calling it by its original name "Laguna Salada".¹ Much of the lagoon was still intact until the completion of the West Fairway Subdivision in 1958.² Its vestiges can still be seen within Sharp Park, and it continues to drain parklands to the north.

Mori Point is bounded on the east by Highway 1. To the south is the Calera Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant and 20 acres of restored wetlands, owned by Pacifica.³

This new portion of the GGNRA has an interesting history. Its old quarry figured into the experiences of the Aramai people who lived here, the Spanish with their San Pedro Valley outpost and Francisco Sanchez at his adobe house. In fact industrial activity continued on and on until recent times. The story of coastal agriculture on the San Francisco Peninsula is again represented here. The history of the Ocean Shore Railroad, that cut the hill at Mori Point in two, will be explored at this point in our study. The Mori family and Prohibition's effect on the Coastsides will be a focus. The little known story of the World War II internment camp at Sharp Park will be introduced. Finally, local efforts at preserving Mori Point as open space will be highlighted.

EARLY MORI POINT HISTORY AND ITS QUARRY

The Aramai village of Timigtac, thought to have been in the Rockaway Beach area, may have existed at Mori Point.⁴ Whether these Indian people called the place Timigtac or not, an archeological survey in 1969 recorded a shell midden present, leaving no doubt that prehistoric people occupied the site.⁵ During the Spanish period, Mori Point was within the jurisdiction of the Franciscan padres at *Mission San Francisco de Asis*. After secularization, Francisco Sanchez obtained Mori Point as part of his *Rancho San Pedro*.

The limestone at Mori Point has been utilized by all the cultures associated with the site. Archeological evidence suggests the Indians of the villages of Pruristac and Timigtac quarried limestone for use in construction, decoration and trade.

The resource was duly noted by the Spanish. Beginning in 1776, they used Indian labor to quarry the limestone at Mori Point for their projects at San Francisco. They employed limestone for construction of the *Presidio* and used a variety of stone, gravel and shell from Mori Point to build both the *Presidio* and the mission buildings. Lime pits from the site were utilized to produce whitewash as a sort of paint for the structures.⁶ The Spanish also used Mori Point limestone to create the whitewash for the *San Pedro y San Pablo* outpost in the San Pedro Valley.

On his *diseño* of 1839, Francisco Sanchez made note of the calera (lime pit or quarry) at Mori Point. Undoubtedly, he used lime from the quarry for whitewashing his adobe home, completed in 1846.

During the early American period, the quarry was not much used, but with the construction of the Ocean Shore Railroad and the need to rebuild the City of San Francisco after the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, the firm, Rockaway Beach Quarry, went to work at Mori Point in 1907. Some of the Quarry's materials were used as ballast for the trackbed of the railroad, while its limestone was used as a building material in the damaged City.

Quarry operators, brothers E.B. and A.L. Stone, leased their property from the elite Tobin family of San Francisco and are said to have made a fortune in the business. They even possessed their own railroad engine and rolling stock that they eventually sold to the Ocean Shore.⁷

Other quarries on the Coastside were initiated about this time. The Vasquez Quarry produced limestone about 1920. It was located about a mile and a half southeast of Miramar. A gravel business worked from a location on Montara Mountain.

The closing of the Ocean Shore Railroad in 1920 certainly did not help the quarry business on the coast. The Stone brothers ended their lease and their quarry reverted to the Tobins. When the Tobins faced financial problems, it went to Hibernia Bank. Finally, in 1942, Horace Hill purchased the quarry from the Bank and established Rockaway Quarry, Incorporated. It produced concrete aggregate and ballast and high-grade limestone. New opportunities brought about by World War II made their business profitable. Another concern, Ken Royce Construction Equipment Company of San Francisco, began work in 1944 on limestone deposits on 190 acres across the highway just east of the Point. The dense, hard, bluish gray material was sold by Ken

Royce as crushed rock for concrete aggregate. Yet another company, California Aggregates, started production of limestone near Rockaway Beach in 1947.

As a result of all this activity, Mori Point's appearance changed. Aerial photographs from 1943 show it without very many roads or improvements, other than some fences. By 1949 roads were apparent as the quarry activities were extended to the north and to the west.⁸ In 1956 evidence exists of more roads, and extensive pits appear on the north and west facings of the Point.

Horace Hill began losing his eyesight and sold Rockaway Quarry in 1953 to Ideal Cement. He continued to operate the sand dredging business there for a few years until committing suicide. In the meantime, Ideal leased the quarry to Howard Marks, the owner of a similar operation on the other side of the County at Belmont. He operated the quarry from 1953 until 1968. Under Marks, modernization of equipment occurred. Then in 1968, the firm of Rhodes and Jamieson took over the lease and operated the quarry for seven years. In December of 1975, Quarry Products Incorporated, owners of quarries in Richmond and Brisbane, became the last commercial operators. In 1976, Quarry Products claimed to be producing 360 tons of processed rock per hour.⁹

However, aerial photos of the late 1960s show quarry operations appear in recession. The main works on the north side have disappeared, while the western side still seems operational. Thus, the majority of quarrying returned to the south on the Calera Creek side. Most operations ceased in the 1980s, as the volume of the quarry's production dropped while the value of the land itself rose.¹⁰ (See the last sub-section of this portion of the study, "Mori Point Preservation Efforts.")

ETHNICITY AND COASTSIDE FARMING

THE MORI FAMILY COMES TO THE COASTSIDE

Mori Point is named for the Stefano Mori family who came from Italy and settled in the Pacifica area in the 1870s. They were among the early Italian immigrants to reach California. The initial rush of people from Italy began about this time as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was being debated, passed and enacted.¹¹ Like most the Coastside's immigrants, it's probable that Stefano worked the land of others, then leased property, before he purchased 19 acres of farmland at Mori Point in 1888.

The original use of Mori Point was cattle-raising during the Spanish era and then as part of Francisco Sanchez's *Rancho San Pedro*. The Mori Family raised cattle and horses as well. However, they also cultivated large sections of their land. The family raised artichokes, brussel sprouts and cabbage. These crops that they helped to

introduce had major ramifications for the agricultural industry not just in San Mateo County, but California on the whole.

FARMERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD (CONTEXTUAL)

After the Gold Rush began, food products brought big profits in San Francisco. Before large numbers of Italian immigrants arrived in California, farming was largely conducted by Americans from “the states,” the Irish and the Chinese.

Despite its remoteness, the Coastside’s rich agricultural landscape enticed squatters, renters and landowners with their workers to settle and start their farms. Whatever resources they had coupled with years of hard work and allowed families to feed themselves while they tried to produce enough surplus crops to bring to market for profit.¹² In doing so they transformed the “open range” of the Coastside.

As they did throughout California, the new farmers fenced in pastures for livestock and fields for grain and vegetables. Carved out from the casually drawn boundaries of the old *ranchos*, more exact surveys delineated property holdings into smaller and smaller parcels.¹³ The newcomers increasingly focused on “cash” crops. At first potatoes and cabbage, later on dairy products and grains, were meant to help the farmers earn money in the market place.¹⁴

By 1860, the farmers of San Mateo County were making a significant contribution to the development of the West by sustaining San Francisco’s food supply. That year they produced 165,163 bushels of wheat, 100,000 bushels of oats and an equal number of bushels of barley. Dairies on the Peninsula provided 200,000 pounds of butter and 23,000 pounds of cheese for hungry people up in the City.¹⁵

The Gold Rush brought many new people. Of course many were Americans from the states “back east”. Of the foreign-born the Irish were among the most numerous. They had many differences from their American counterparts. However, they shared similar views of California’s future, and while back east the Irish faced grave discrimination centered on their Catholic religion, in California, which had been a Catholic place before, there was far less of this. Besides, most everyone believed that out in California, a person ought to have opportunity for a new life no matter what their past experience.¹⁶

Also aiding the Irish in California was the fact that most of them had had an immigrant past already. Whether from Australia or the big cities of the East Coast, when they arrived in California they possessed the know-how to succeed in a new land. On the whole, they tended to have a little bit more money, a little bit more education, and perhaps they were a little bit more capable to begin with, than those stuck in the East.¹⁷

Unlike almost everyone else in California, American or otherwise, the Irish intended to stay here. In general, all other newcomers came as single young men looking to make a fortune in this new place and then return home. There was a certain indifference to California that was noticeable in others, but not in the Irish. For them, the potato famine and political oppression in the homeland made going back nearly an impossible choice. Motivated to stay in California from the beginning, they tended to be more concerned with its economy, society and politics. The lack of interest of others rendered little competition in these areas. Thus their own initiative allowed the Irish to achieve advances in arenas of human endeavor far in front of their countrymen in the East. They also were more apt to bring their families with them to California, or send for them earlier than others. Again, this acted to encourage care for the new place.

In San Mateo County, many Irish became farmers. American and Irish farmers (with the Portuguese, the Germans and the Chinese, as well) made incredible gains according to the County Assessor's Office of 1864.¹⁸ From 1860, wheat production had increased nearly 45% to 238,250 bushels. While barley stayed about the same, the oat harvest had grown to 240,000 bushels more than doubling the 1860 number. The 35,000 acres of cultivated areas in the County were also yielding 200,000 bushels of potatoes and 8,500 tons of hay.

Only eight years later, the County was boasting about 85,000 acres of cultivated lands. Wheat production had nearly doubled to 450,000 bushels. Barley increased five-fold to 500,000 bushels. Potato production grew threefold to 600,000 bushels. The hay crop nearly tripled to 24,000 tons. Meanwhile the dairy industry had made great gains too. From 200,000 pounds of butter in 1860, ranches in the County, in 1872, rendered 225,000 pounds; from 23,000 pounds of cheese, there was a better than tenfold increase to 250,000 pounds.¹⁹

By 1880, with a total San Mateo County population of 8,700 people, more than a third were European-born, and of these, 900, more than 10%, had been born in Ireland.²⁰ The Irish were ubiquitous throughout the County as demonstrated by geographical features like Irish Ridge or places named for individuals like Daly City, Thronton Beach, Sweeney Ridge and McNee Ranch.²¹ Beyond being farmers they were important political and business leaders of the Peninsula. Some Peninsula Irish had gained regional fame as elite suburbanites, of the ruling class of the West, who did their business from behind their desks in San Francisco. In the Menlo Park area, "Silver King" and estate owner James Flood, was joined by Joseph A. Donohue, at his 40-acre *Holm Grove*, and John T. Doyle, at his 400-acre *Ringwood*.²²

The second largest immigrant group in the County in those early years were the Chinese. Many single young men were pushed out of China because of political upheaval,

war and intense poverty. They generally came to California to make a fortune and then hoped to return home (like everyone else except the Irish). Since 1790, federal law had held that only white people could become naturalized. This legalized discrimination and allowed the California state legislature to target the Chinese as deserving lesser rights. In all walks of life, the Chinese suffered severely from unfair practices made legitimate by law.

San Mateo County historians claim that the Chinese were more “accepted”²³ on the San Francisco Peninsula. To be sure they were deprived of political liberty and forced to endure inferior status, but because they were willing to take jobs building dams for the Spring Valley Water Company, working in lumber camps, serving as domestics, laboring for the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad and toiling on the farms of others, they were deemed indispensable (since few others were willing to do this hard, low paying work). For the Chinese themselves, escape from the mines of the Sierra Nevada and railroad camps of the Central Pacific to San Mateo County represented a step-up. At first they worked for others, but many moved on to become fishermen, shop owners and tenant farmers.²⁴

In the 1860s, the tenant farms of the Chinese within San Mateo County tended to be small, usually but 10 acres in size.²⁵ By 1870, of a County population of 6,600, 500 were Chinese, many of whom were on the Coastside. According to the census, of these 500, 200 were seasonal farm laborers.²⁶

Perhaps San Mateo County was a sort of a haven, but elsewhere in the state, anti-Asian fever was building in the 1870s and 1880s. The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 released thousands of Chinese workers from their construction jobs. They ended up back in California, for the most part, competing with white workers for employment. Unfortunately, this flood on the labor market occurred while California and the rest of the country were entering into a deep and prolonged economic depression. In California, many of the white workers blamed the Chinese for their woes. Led by the (largely Irish) Workingmen’s Party of California, agitation against Chinese emigration developed as a powerful political force. By 1882, this movement manifested itself into federal action when Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act. Signed by Republican President Chester A. Arthur, this law stopped immigration from China, with few exceptions, for 10 years. In 1892, the exclusion was renewed for another 10 years, and in 1902, the Act was made permanent (until it was repealed in late 1943, during World War II).²⁷

In San Mateo County the absence of industrial working conditions and urban congestion plus the lack of competition on the farms and estates still mitigated some of the agitation, but even on the Peninsula anti-Chinese sentiment was building throughout the late nineteenth century. On March 13, 1878, Redwood City claimed to have cre-

ated the second branch of the “Workingman’s Club” (certainly the first being in San Francisco). Fifteen pillars of the community were listed as signing “the pledge”; the password for the organization was: “the Chinese must go.”²⁸ On the Coastside, feelings seemed to have run just as high. One Half Moon Bay candidate for County Supervisor promised to run as part of any “anti-Chinese ticket.”²⁹ In February of 1886, leaders of Redwood City’s anti-Chinese association visited Half Moon Bay to help Coastsiders form their own club. The County’s District Attorney was among these representatives. They met with some of the Coastside’s most established families -- the Pitchers, Debenedettis and Johnstons, for example. Even the Catholic priest, Fr. A.M. Santandreaudreau attended. They eagerly engaged themselves in forming the Coastside’s first anti-Chinese organization.

Ramifications of the Chinese Exclusion Act were many and far reaching. For the Chinese immigrants themselves, almost entirely men, the prospects of finding a wife and creating a family in California were snuffed out.³⁰ Throughout the state and in San Mateo County, their numbers shrank as compared to other ethnic groups.

For the California economy, as the state recovered from the depression, the greatest effect of the Act was the creation of a labor vacuum in the factories of the cities and especially on the farms. Filling this need were a variety of immigrants from countries as far removed from one another as Italy, the Philippines and Japan.³¹

For San Mateo County, it was the Italians that would have the greatest impact, in pure numbers, in cultural activity and in changes they brought to agriculture. Most Italians that came here were poor young men. Back in Italy where people were attached to the land, only the oldest son in the family could expect to inherit property and have his own farm. The others had to somehow make their own way. Some chose adventure in America where a fortune could be made. Afterwards, a return to Italy with money enough to buy land could make dreams come true. Like the Irish, the Italians who made it to California advanced more quickly than their counterparts on the East Coast. They tended to be from the northern sections of Italy where people had a little more education and money to begin with. Plus, making it to California put Italians in position to work on the land, as they hoped, as opposed to factory work in the cities of the East. The Chinese Exclusion Act meant their labor on the farms was needed. Italians worked on the lands of others, saved money, rented their own acres when they could and then, those most successful, like Stefano Mori, bought their own farms. They readily adapted to the new land. Its climate and fertile rolling hillsides were much like back home. They also had ideas about new “cash” crops that would soon change the face of agriculture in places like the Coastside of San Mateo County. Some did return to Italy. Others sent for families to join them and became permanent residents in the new land.

By the 1890s, Italian and Portuguese newcomers outnumbered all other European-born immigrants except the Irish in San Mateo County. The 1900 census revealed that foreign-born adults outnumbered native born adults here. The Italians continued to make population gains until by 1920, nearly one out of ten of the 36,000 residents in San Mateo County had been born in Italy.³² By that time, Italian immigrants and their children had (as the Mori family had) branched out into a variety of businesses on the Peninsula, including running hotels, restaurants and mercantile establishments. However, on the Coastside, their major activities continued to be in agriculture. In fact, just before World War II, Italian Americans dominated the agricultural business of San Mateo County.

In smaller numbers, but also having an important impact, were Japanese immigrants. The original Japanese to come to San Mateo County had much in common with the Italians. They came from a place where people were tied to the land, but tradition allowed only the oldest in the family to inherit the farm. As Japan's population increased in the nineteenth century, many young men felt pushed to go to another place, hopefully make a fortune and then return. Because of the Chinese Exclusion Act and the need for labor on the West Coast, many came to California to seek opportunity. Some worked on the estates of the elite as servants and gardeners. Others toiled in the saltworks of the Bayside, at 90¢ per 12 hour day.³³ Many ended up on the farms, working for others and then saving money for places of their own. Whether one had their own land or not, life was hard. One Japanese immigrant woman at Pescadero lamented:

*During a peak harvest season, I cooked for thirty farm hands and got little more than two hours of sleep at night. The demands made upon me were great and required tremendous physical stamina.*³⁴

By the turn of the century, Italian and Japanese growers had begun transforming agriculture on the San Francisco Peninsula. They specialized in certain crops like Brussel sprouts, artichokes and cut flowers, with the Italians being particularly associated with the first two and the Japanese the last one, although at times the crops were shared between them and other growers as well.

Of course, the know-how and the hard work of the Italians and Japanese had much to do with their success, but the advent of gasoline-powered trucks and refrigerated railroad cars also encouraged specialization.

During the 1890s, potatoes were still the leading crop of the County, but a plant disease and competition from the new agricultural products put it into decline.³⁵ By the 1900s, specialty crops had become the leading harvests, especially cut flowers, brussel sprouts and, of course, artichokes. A description from 1916 said of the Coastside:

*The soil in this district has always been known for its splendid fertility. All the lowlands and many of the side hills along the coast. . . having been given over entirely to the raising of vegetables. Here, that dainty aristocrat among vegetables, the artichoke, planted in great fields develops a flavor that it attains nowhere else. . . The winters are so mild that the plant is at its best during the Christmas holidays and early spring, just when it is needed and appreciated the most, on account of the lack of other fresh vegetables.*³⁶

The Ocean Shore Railroad and gasoline-powered trucks transported the artichokes, sprouts and flowers to San Francisco. Refrigerated railroad cars could then get these products to all parts of the United States. When Sadakusu Enomoto sent his chrysanthemums via refrigerated railroad cars to New Orleans for the All Saints Day celebration in 1915, he created a sensation there, and the floral business here boomed.³⁷ Italian Coastside growers began sending artichokes to the East in 1904 and found markets in New York, Connecticut and New Jersey. In 1912, they started using refrigerated railroad cars and established a million dollar business, when trains commenced running daily to the East Coast.³⁸

Because the value of these types of crops exceeded that of the grains and potatoes of the previous generation of growers, there was less need for huge parcels of property. Therefore, the size of farms in the County decreased to typically 20 to 50 acres, a tenth of what farms had encompassed just 10 years before. By 1920, the transformation had taken place. New cash crops, grown by a new wave of immigrants (and their children) had taken the agricultural lands of the Coastside and created a more productive and profitable industry.

By 1940, Italian vegetable farmers and Japanese flower growers had ensconced themselves as the absolute leaders of agribusiness on the Peninsula, but what happened on December 7, 1941, and the advent of World War II, changed things.

For the Italians, those that had never become naturalized, could no longer live or work west of Highway 1. Other regulations precluded these immigrants from owning flashlights and radios. However, these laws were mostly lifted after a few months, in fact on Columbus Day, October 12, 1942.³⁹

For the Japanese, actions against their civil liberties manifested themselves much more severely. Anti-Asian feelings for the Japanese had been a part of their experience from the beginning here in California. The War now allowed hatred and fear to surface to the point where rational thinking and constitutional rights were totally ignored. President Franklin Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 allowed local military commanders to intern people whose family roots were of countries at war with the United States. Of course, the law was used almost exclusively against the Japanese on the West Coast

whether they were original *Issei* immigrants or children of immigrants, *Nisei*, who were by birth citizens of the United States. By May 9, 1942, all of the Japanese Americans of San Mateo County had been taken to Tanforan Racetrack, which acted as an “Assembly Center,” for people awaiting transportation to permanent camps in the distant deserts and mountains to the east.⁴⁰ Among the injustices inflicted against these people was the requirement that all their possessions had to be sold off within a 30-day period. For the Japanese American growers of the County, this was a disaster. Many would lose everything gained by the work of two generations.⁴¹

Removal of the Japanese Americans, the draft and the general conditions of the War created a severe labor shortage for California and San Mateo County agricultural industries. During the summer of 1942, San Mateo County farm leaders assisted lobbyists from across the West, trying to encourage the United States State Department to allow for the importation of Mexican labor. On August 24, 1942, the United States and Mexico signed an agreement authorizing Mexican citizens to come to the United States on a seasonal basis to work the fields as the War roared on. San Mateo County had 100 workers in place within the first year.⁴² Locals noted that they were largely illiterate and shoeless, but worked the farms of the Coastside and North County when they were needed the most.

This effort to supply the West with farm workers came to be known as the *Bracero* Program. By 1944, more than 118,000 Mexicans were providing labor to keep agriculture productive in the West. After the War, the program kept going. In March of 1946, farm lobbyists cited the economic post-war boom and increasing demand for food in the United States, and all over the world, as reasons to keep *Braceros* in the fields. Not until 1963 did Congress refuse to allow any more extensions for the *Bracero* Program.⁴³

Since World War II, agriculture in San Mateo County has declined. By 1974, artichokes were being cultivated on only 440 acres, and brussel sprouts on 1,100 acres.⁴⁴ In the meantime, the floral industry surpassed vegetables and dairy products in importance. In fact by 1999, flower growing accounted for nearly 80% of revenues earned on crop production.⁴⁵

As late as 1995, San Mateo County was still the second largest producer of flowers in California. However, most of the floriculture was actually achieved in indoor greenhouses, by that time, and while artichokes and brussel sprouts were still grown, tourism and even commercial fishing eclipsed those crops as more important industries of the coast.

BREAKING THE ISOLATION OF THE COAST AND THE OCEAN SHORE RAILROAD

THE PROBLEM (CONTEXTUAL)

Today's visitor to Mori Point can hike to the cut in the hill and see busy Highway 1 below. This excavation was originally scooped out by the Ocean Shore Railroad while laying track through here in 1907. (See photos below.) Although the railroad was never completed all the way to Santa Cruz, and ended up busted and ridiculed, it successfully broke the isolation of the San Mateo County Coastside which had been a vexing issue for the farmers of the coast for 50 years.

Any prospective settler of the San Mateo County Coastside just after the Gold Rush began could see the great promise. Fertile valleys, adequate rainfall, nearby creeks,

mild winters, tall forests: all invited exploitation. However, while the natural resources were present, the topography of the coast played against the pioneers. With San Pedro and Montara Mountains to the north, the coastal mountains to the east, the chalklike cliffs of Santa Cruz County to the south and the Pacific Ocean, without an adequate natural harbor to the west, the people of the coast were sealed into their section of the County.



Fig. 4.2: Photo of the railroad cut south of Sharp Park (looking north).



Fig. 4.3: Photo of the railroad cut south of Sharp Park (looking south).

Early on, residents began dreaming of a railroad that could break this isolation. On the Bayside, the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad was successfully completed in 1864. For the Coastside, the depressed economic conditions of the 1870s dampened hopes that were revived again in the 1880s.⁴⁶ Still Coastsiders would have to wait for the organization of the Ocean Shore Railroad in 1905 before a railroad could relieve their transportation woes.

For the farmers and ranchers of the 1850s, conditions seemed almost impossible. At first there were no real

roads, just old Indian and Spanish trails passable by foot or on horseback. Even after the first roads were built during the decade, while they allowed stagecoach service, the turnpikes crossed steep hills, that made transporting farm products slow and expensive.⁴⁷

And so, farmers looked to the sea for daring ship's captains to attempt to carry their crops to San Francisco markets. However, without an adequate harbor, this was a challenging prospect. Professor A.D. Bache, reporting for the Coast Survey in 1858, described the coastline from the Golden Gate to Año Nuevo as "exceedingly rocky and forbidding." As for a possible location for a port: "The shoreline and the country generally present a very broken and ragged appearance, occasioned by the deep gulches that cut through to the ocean."⁴⁸ Another federal observer, George Davidson, commented around the same time about the San Mateo County coast that its cliffs were "quite vertical faces" and the shoreline was (and he repeated Bache) "broken and ragged in appearance."⁴⁹

Nevertheless, as early as 1853, small sailing schooners⁵⁰ took the risk and anchored on appointed places like Pillar Point⁵¹ to receive the goods of farmers. Captains had the produce lightered to the ship, requiring the crew to wade to shore and shoulder the cargo to waiting boats.⁵² Such attempts to gain a shipload could only be accomplished when the sea was calm.

Even after the first wharves were established, ships' crews hated this risky work. Albert S. Evans, who visited in the 1870s, reported that the sailors referred to the San Mateo County coast by "a terrible name". They complained of shores lined with "black reefs of rocks" appearing as if they were "ugly fangs like wild beasts watching for their prey."⁵³

Certainly the experiences of American pioneer James Johnston of Half Moon Bay is illustrative of the situation. About 1853, he decided to build a New England style "salt-box" house requiring lumber. Hauling wood over the hill was impossible, so he had a ship come near enough to the coast to drop redwood timbers into the ocean, with the logical expectation they would float to shore like driftwood, and then be collected on the beach.⁵⁴ Around the same time, Johnston's brothers arrived on the Peninsula with 800 head of dairy cattle and wagons from the East; Johnston was initiating one of California's first dairies. The brothers had to improvise with tackle and ropes to manage bringing the animals and vehicles over the hill from the Bayside.⁵⁵

Life must have seemed so much easier on the Bayside. El Camino, although dusty in the summer and muddy in the winter, was the main road from San Francisco to California's first state capital, San Jose. San Mateo County was positioned in between and thus enjoyed stagecoach service running through it as early as 1849.

Roads became a priority on the Peninsula, even before San Mateo County was born.⁵⁶ As the Coastside and most of the Peninsula was originally part of San Francisco County, that government became the first to attempt to break the isolation of the coast with a road it built from San Mateo to Half Moon Bay in 1855. However, one year after San Mateo County was formed, Coastsiders, in 1857, petitioned the new county for an improved turnpike.⁵⁷ A private toll road became the answer, but it took some time. By 1860, contractors Bowman and Loveland had only completed the stretch from San Mateo to Crystal Springs.⁵⁸ The road to Half Moon Bay remained steep and dangerous until 1866, when finally work was completed. Gangs of Chinese laborers blasted cuts into the hillsides and then hauled away the debris.⁵⁹ Some of these cuts are still visible as one travels Highway 92, which traces much of the 1866 road over the hill.

With a decent road to the coast now a reality, extensions were built from Half Moon Bay, south to San Gregorio and Pescadero.

While progress on road building from east to west might have seemed slow, the creation of proper roads to the north on the Coastside never occurred during the nineteenth century. In the 1850s, the road from Martini's Creek over Montara Mountain was a difficult trail to navigate even on horseback. Few improvements were made by the 1870s, and Coastside residents repeatedly petitioned the County Board of Supervisors to improve it. Instead the Board of Supervisors abandoned the trail and opened a new road in 1879. This new Half Moon Bay-Colma Road, with its steep grades and winding ascents, was deemed unusable by the Coastsiders as well. (See the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* portion of this study for more on the Half Moon Bay-Colma Road.)

To the south, the people in the Pescadero area, at that time within Santa Cruz County, fumed about the lack of transportation to Santa Cruz. The absence of adequate roads motivated them to petition Sacramento to allow this south coastal area to become annexed to San Mateo County, which was showing at least some progress in crossing the hill. In 1868, the legislature agreed and acted, thus increasing the land area of San Mateo County by nearly one fourth.⁶⁰

While stage service from east to west was not deplorable, farm products were seldom hauled on the toll roads. This had been business the turnpike companies had counted on. Eventually they lost money, and the roads had to be taken over by the County.⁶¹

On the other hand, the stagecoach lines had less overhead and continued passenger and mail service businesses. While the completion of the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad stopped stagecoach travel on the Bayside from north to south, it actually enhanced this type of transportation from east to west. The railroad used stages as their connection for allowing tourists from San Francisco, and other places, access to hunting, fishing, camping and other outdoor recreational pursuits gaining in popular-

ity on the Coastside. Moreover, local commuting increased as the population of the County grew.

Daily stage service from San Mateo to the Coastside began in 1865, even before the toll road to Half Moon Bay was completely finished. The 78-mile route actually terminated at Santa Cruz. The building of the La Honda Toll Road in 1873 allowed service between Redwood City and the coast. By 1878, Pescadero enjoyed daily stage service from two companies, one from Redwood City and the other from San Mateo.

Nevertheless, stage service was limited to passengers and the mail. The day-long, bumpy ride was fine for the business traveler or tourist, but for the farmer and his copious crop production, west to east land transportation was practically non-existent.

That left the ocean and seagoing ships. From the beginning larger ships would not attempt a landing on the San Mateo County coast. The work was accomplished by small sailing vessels. By the 1870s, little steamships took on the work.⁶² In 1881, these types of vessels were so daring as to stop at the dangerous Gordon's Chute at Tunitas Creek twice a week. In fact there was a variety of landing places on the coast for ships' captains to choose from.

As discussed previously in this study focusing in on *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, James G. Denniston built the first wharf on the Coastside at Pillar Point in 1859. He not only had his own products loaded onto ships from there, but allowed surrounding farmers to use it as well. Potatoes, grains and dairy products left here for San Francisco.

In April of 1860, the *San Mateo Gazette* announced that James Van Carnap had installed a hawser system at Miramontes Point, south of the town of Half Moon Bay. At this "landing," vessels were to approach the shore where a post supporting a loading device could sling cargo aboard with a dragrope. The article claimed that great quantities of grain were being loaded onto the schooners *Black Prince* and *Wild Pigeon* from Van Carnap's and Denniston's. After this report little else was heard about Van Carnap's.

However, J.P. Ames established the third and the most successful of the early landings at Half Moon Bay. His Amesport (also accounted for in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section of this study) was built at today's Miramar between Half Moon Bay and Denniston's. The August 1, 1868, edition of the *San Mateo Gazette* tells us that 500 feet of the pier had been completed. It was extended another 1,000 feet the next year to better facilitate the new coastal steamers. Also present by this time were warehouses for storage of potatoes, grain and hay. By the 1870s, Amesport was handling 1,000 sacks of grain a day during harvest time⁶³ and had become the best shipping point on the Coastside.⁶⁴

However, Denniston's, Van Carnaps' and Amesport seemed far away for people on the south coast. As early as 1864, lumberman William Waddell had built a 700-foot wharf at Año Nuevo. He had a shingle mill about five miles away and connected the wharf and the mill with a wooden rail system. The wharf developed into a community as other lumber mills came to use it. By 1867, the landing had warehouses, two residences, a store, a post office and a saloon. During its peak, two million feet of lumber a year was shipped from it. Sadly, Waddell was killed in a grizzly bear attack in 1875.⁶⁵ The wharf itself was destroyed in a storm about five years later.

North of Waddell's, at Pigeon Point, on May 23, 1861, the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* reported that lumber was not being shipped from here "owing, no doubt, to the difficulty of loading vessels." However, during the 1860s, farmers of the south coast devised a boom and cable system to swing crops and lumber out to patiently waiting ships. In the 1880s, lumberman George Chandler replaced this operation with an "adjustable chute."⁶⁶ Recurrent storms menaced loading operations at Pigeon Point throughout its history.

According to federal observer George Davidson, wealthy Coastside landholder Loren Coburn also had a chute near Pigeon Point about this time,⁶⁷ but much more about it is obscured by the passage of time.

Farmer and San Mateo County Supervisor Alexander Gordon constructed perhaps the most spectacular attempt at breaking the isolation of the coast. In 1872, he built a large chute from the bluffs on the north side of Tunitas Creek that connected with the ocean below. His hope was to slide produce from his 1,000-acre farm to waiting ships below, along with that of other local farmers. This 100-foot chute was built at a perilous 45 degree angle. The downward moving sacks of potatoes and grain put fear into the hearts of sailors as the cargo built up speed toward awaiting vessels. Sometimes sacks would generate enough friction on their way down that holes would burn in them, and if the sacks did not burst on impact they might be on fire by the time they reached the ship. The huge Pacific swells and rocks just beneath the cliff created yet more anxiety for ships' captains. They often refused to anchor under the chute unless conditions were nearly perfect. The depression of the 1870s caused Gordon to go bankrupt. In 1885, a storm destroyed the chute. However, its eyebolts can still be seen.⁶⁸

The last try to aid farmers with a pier was Henry Cowell's. He built his 1,000-foot wharf and nearby warehouse at Half Moon Bay in 1902 (Cowell's history is described in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section of this study).

With the twentieth century coming, many on the Coastside were benefiting by having electricity (1893) and even telephone service (1897), but for the farmers, the isolation of the coast had still not been broken after 50 years of human endeavor. There existed

a few rough roads that crossed the hills to the east, but they were hardly adequate for hauling bulk cargo. Moreover, still no usable thoroughfare existed to the north. As late as 1911, the Coastside's mail was still handled by obsolete stagecoach service.⁶⁹ Meanwhile the wharves, chutes and hawsers, conceived to link the Coastside with ships at sea, were at the mercy of the unpredictable Pacific Ocean.

Change, however, was on its way.

STORY AND LEGACY OF THE OCEAN SHORE RAILROAD (CONTEXTUAL)

Dreams for a railroad for the Coastside can be traced at least as far back as 1873, when the *Oakland Daily Transcript* reported of plans for rails "to Half Moon Bay and possibly to Santa Cruz."⁷⁰ During the economically depressed 1870s, such talk went away, but in the 1880s, more thought went into the concept. In succession, there were a host of "paper railroads" that drew up ideas on maps, but never did much more. They included the San Francisco and Ocean Railroad (1881), Pacific Railway Company (1889), Colma-Half Moon Bay Road (its electric line proposal, 1892), San Francisco and West Shore Railroad (also known as West Shore Railroad, 1895) and the San Francisco and Southern Railroad Company (1903).⁷¹

All this activity was part of a new interest in railroad construction, sort of a second wave of it. Across the United States, mainline routes had been established by the turn of the century, but smaller feeder lines, featuring electric interurban railroads, were being proposed to fill transportation gaps. These new projects were especially popular in the West, which did not have as much rail, but was gaining population. Real estate speculation usually became part of the plan, as better transportation opened new residential areas, allowed access to resources, encouraged industrial development and increased land values.

That a railroad for the coast seemed certain can be determined by big-name San Franciscans such as the Tobin family buying up coastal property in the Pacifica area in the 1890s. In San Francisco the most substantial group of businessmen yet began planning for building a railroad about the turn of the century. They pooled \$3 million together, making this a serious venture. These original investors saw that the needs of the farmers could finally be answered. Other natural resources on the coast such as timber, cement and mineral products could be properly exploited. They envisioned the entire strip from San Francisco to Santa Cruz becoming a vacation play land, with all the accompanied business possibilities. However, of all the opportunities they could see, real estate sales seemed the most lucrative. A railroad would increase the value of farmlands because produce could be better brought to market. Lands containing other natural resources could likewise become more important. Mostly, the railroad would open the way for suburban development. It would enable people to purchase summer houses on the beach, or even allow them to become commuters,

as fast, reliable train service would facilitate people working in the city, but living in the country. Imaginative names such as Vallemar, Granada and Salada Beach would evoke an alluring sense of Old Spanish California, combined with the newest concepts of living in the twentieth century. As discussed previously in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section of this study, the greatest plans were reserved for Granada, which would become the main recreational center and the area of greatest real estate activity.

The initial plan called for an 80-mile long, double track railroad from San Francisco to Santa Cruz. This would be an electric railway, the most advanced form of transportation coming to California. Already the new Key Route was serving the East Bay. The North Shore and the Petaluma & Santa Rosa were starting up across the Golden Gate.⁷² Electric lines were radiating out from Los Angeles. A San Francisco streetcar company had reached as far south as San Mateo by 1903.

Building this Coastside rail line was to commence simultaneously at San Francisco and Santa Cruz. The immediate goal for construction on the south end was to reach the cement works at Davenport. Revenue produced from this linkage would assist with financing the rest of the work. On the map, the project looked simple enough, a straight shot down the coast, but the original survey parties began to render a more challenging description of the construction that lie ahead. Gullies would require numerous bridges. At many points just beyond San Francisco, building would have to proceed 200 to 300 feet above the surf. The worst stage of construction would occur at San Pedro Mountain. A 400-foot tunnel would need to be dug out of solid rock. Crews would then have to work on a ledge 700 feet above the ocean at Devil's Slide, already notorious for its unstable nature.⁷³

For the purposes of this study, it is interesting to note that this initial planning called for rail spurs on Calera Creek to reach the quarry at Mori Point.⁷⁴

The incorporation of the Ocean Shore Railroad was announced to the public on May 18, 1905. J. Downey Harvey became the corporation's president. The popular clubman had interests in a variety of real estate and banking concerns. The first Vice President was "Coffee King"⁷⁵ J.A. Folger. Second Vice President was Horace D. Pillsbury, of the prestigious law firm, Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro. The other directors included Peter D. Martin, of the pioneer family, Charles C. Moore, president of a large engineering company, and Burke Corbet, another attorney, who was corporate counsel and secretary.

The slogan for the company was: "It reaches the beaches,"⁷⁶ as the railroad immediately began its plans for real estate sales. Not even the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake a year later dampened real estate ambitions. The Railroad's subsidiary company, the Ocean Shore Land Company, laid out Edgemar, Salada Beach, Brighton Beach, Val-

lemar and San Pedro Terrace (all together the future City of Pacifica) in anticipation that the disaster in the City would inspire people to exit San Francisco and live in the safer suburbs.

On September 9, 1905, the Ocean Shore's board of directors awarded the construction contract to C.E. Loss.⁷⁷ Grading started on September 17. Over 1,000 laborers began their work at both ends of the line.

Problems arose immediately. At Santa Cruz, the Southern Pacific Railroad built a spur track across the Ocean Shore's projected rail line. Legal action was unsuccessful which resulted in having to change plans, forcing the creation of a smaller than desired station. At the same time, the Cowell Lime & Cement Co., owners of property where the railroad intended to build a wharf at Santa Cruz, decided to hold out for a higher price than what had been discussed at first. Again court action, this time seeking aid in condemning the Cowell property in favor of the Railroad, failed.

Nevertheless, work went on. By November 1, six miles of track had been laid out from Santa Cruz, and by May, 1906, rails had been extended all the way to Swanton. On the 18th, a steam engine actually pulled the first train with passengers, 105 engineering students from the University of California on their way to their annual summer school. Less than a month after that, regular service started up with two trains everyday, each way. By the fall, plans were on the charts for connecting Swanton to the crucial cement works at Davenport, but the Southern Pacific ruined the day again by buying up rights for the Davenport connection. The Southern Pacific completed its track by the spring of 1907, and the Ocean Shore found itself sealed off from this important tra+ c.

Sadly, problems in the south paled to the disaster in the north. On April 18, 1906, an 8.1 magnitude earthquake hit the San Francisco Bay Area causing immense damage. Fires in the City generated even more destruction. Near Mussel Rock, which sits just off the coast at the border between today's Daly City and Pacifica, the railroad was in the midst of activity. About 4,000 feet of track, along with rolling stock and construction equipment were knocked into the ocean. The losses were devastating enough, but the concept of refinancing was made more problematic because the railroad's original investors were out so much more. Many had their holdings in the City wiped out. Moreover, attempts to find new lenders were difficult because nearly everyone that had money invested into rebuilding San Francisco. Betting on a star-crossed railroad adventure would have to wait. In order to immediately mitigate the damage and continue progress, the Ocean Shore leadership decided to downgrade plans. The double track line became a single track project, and the electric rail idea gave way to old fashion steam engines.⁷⁸

From the vantage point of today, it seems incredible, but the Railroad continued to

make progress. By September, 1907, rails had reached Rockaway Beach. In fact, at Laguna Salada, which was slated to become a resort area, “an ambitious hotel”⁷⁹ was built, joined by a dance pavilion and bathhouses.

On October 2, the Ocean Shore actually opened train service to Tobin (formerly San Pedro Terrace) at the south end of today’s Pacifica.⁸⁰ The railroad promoted Tobin as a sportsman’s paradise, perfect for surf fishing. Lots were sold in the little north coast sub-divisions. Sunday excursions brought small investors who were promised that communities like Edgemar, Salada, Brighton, Vallemar, Rockaway and Tobin would soon become reality. The same promises, of course, were being made over Montara Mountain to the south at Montara, Moss Beach, Princeton, Granada, Miramar and Arleta Park (near Half Moon Bay).⁸¹

The most incredible part of the Ocean Shore Railroad story was its success in building through San Pedro Mountain and over Devil’s Slide. During 1907, the 400-foot tunnel and the ledges necessary to do this work were accomplished. At what engineers called Saddle Cut, 3,500 tons of solid rock was blown in the Pacific Ocean in order to continue the roadbed work. To do this, crews drilled a 70-foot bore into the mountain. Workers took three days to stuff nine tons of black powder into it in order to produce the necessary explosion.⁸² Laying track on Devil’s Slide occurred where Highway 1 traverses the bluff today.⁸³ A landslide had been known to have taken place here during the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake. Evidence suggested Devil’s Slide’s unstable nature had actually been present for thousands of years.

A 1913 promotional piece for the Railroad, explained what it was like for the adventurous to travel this part of the trip down the coast:

Wonders on this Ocean Shore excursion never cease! Leaving Tobin [the stone railroad station that still exists], the railroad is built on great cliffs for several miles around Pedro Mountain, feats of engineering that amaze one. Far below, the tireless breakers dash with tremendous force against the cliffs, throwing great volumes of water skyward.

Here we pass one of the most interesting objects of the trip, Point Rogers, a great rock of many colored strata, rivaling in beauty the world-renowned Rock of Gibraltar. Then comes the only tunnel on the line, which is broad and has a double track, bored through four hundred feet of solid rock.

The eerie sensation experienced while riding around these few miles of bluff-built railway leaves us when we swing in from the shore line for a short distance to enter a succession of deep rock cuts, after which come the rolling foothills of the Coast Range mountains and the resort cities. . .

On May 28, 1908, the first passenger train reached Montara,⁸⁴ and on June 23, the rails reached Granada. By October, the railroad was operational to Tunitas Creek. Only 26 miles separated the northern tracks from the southern construction head at Swanton. In the meantime income was being produced. Freight service for the farmers became a reality as did passenger traffic. In fact the railroad was running four trains a day between San Francisco and Tunitas and as many as six on weekends. It is reported that 3,000 passengers were served on some Sundays.

As stated, land sale was to be the big money maker, and by 1908, an impressive advertising campaign had been launched aiding scores of salesmen, setting forth to convince lot buyers of the great advantages of owning real estate along the tracks and beaches. In fact individuals put down payments on 20,000 of these lots between San Francisco and Tunitas, in what was the greatest spree of property transaction thus far in San Mateo County history. Undoubtedly, new people made the move, relocating to the Coastside, promoted as free of congestion and earthquakes.⁸⁵ Artist colonies were even established at Montara and Tunitas.

However, San Francisco remained where the action was. Within three years of the earthquake, the City was nearly completely rebuilt, in fact, as a bigger, better metropolis. And so, most of the construction and investment activity focused on the City. While many lots were sold on the San Mateo County Coastside, there was not much actual building going on.

Another disturbing factor was the 26-mile gap. Passengers wishing to reach Santa Cruz had to disembark from the train at Tunitas and get aboard Stanley Steamer touring cars, which then hooked up with the railroad at Swanton. In the early months of 1908, the company sought to sell bonds to create enough capital to finish the work. On March 28, two thousand came out to hear former Lieutenant Governor W.T. Jeter, the President of the Bank of Santa Cruz, endorse the project in the south. At San Francisco, there was a similar rally.⁸⁶ Unfortunately for the Railroad, not enough bonds were sold. Meanwhile the income of the company was not adequate to offset construction cost debt. By the fall of 1909, the Ocean Shore was bankrupt, and in June of 1910, J. Downey Harvey was replaced as general manager. On January 17, 1911, the railroad was sold for \$1,135,000 to a committee of its bondholders. Thus began a series of ownership transactions involving the company, as the Railroad, sadly, remained unprofitable.

The biggest setback for the Ocean Shore leadership was that the real estate scheme never worked out. Many who had made down payments on lots, recognized this real estate bubble for what it was and stopped making payments. The land reverted back to the Land Company. One observer passing through the Half Moon Bay area in 1911, wrote of the empty "new-born 'cities'" (Granada, Moss Beach, etc.): that the only real

evidence of their “existence was to be known mainly by pitiful little cement sidewalks, already bulging and broken.”⁸⁷ Half Moon Bay itself, which had a population of about 1,000 at the start of the excitement in 1905, still had the same number of people afterwards. In fact as late as 1940, its population was about 1,000.

Still the Ocean Shore Railroad functioned and served the Coastside in ways that no entity had before. Despite all the financial problems, passenger and freight trains continued to operate, although not often on schedule.⁸⁸ In 1910, the Ocean Shore won the contract for delivering mail along its route. That year, it broke its own record. During a one-week period, it hauled 7,200 tons of hay grown by local farmers. In 1911, 250 carloads of artichokes were hauled from Half Moon Bay to San Francisco. The next year, this volume doubled.

By early 1912, it appeared that the Railroad might recover. New general manager Lee Landis seemed to instill confidence, and for the first time, trains were actually running on time.⁸⁹

By 1914, Coastside residents were moving close to all their agricultural products by railroad instead of by ocean steamer. In total, the Ocean Shore carried 300,000 tons of freight and 200,000 passengers that year.⁹⁰ As for the effect the railroad had on general Coastside growth, although the permanent population of the Coastside was not expanding (The *Coastside Comet* estimated that the number of people on the Coast at 1,500 to 2,000 in 1914), the number of people here doubled during the summer months, as vacationers used the Ocean Shore to visit the beaches. As late as 1916, the railroad was still operating 10 engines, 27 passenger coaches, two observation cars and 139 freight cars.

However, there still were troubles. Recurrent landslides affected service. One, which hit the tracks at Devil’s Slide on January 15, 1916, knocked out the Railroad until March 4. Nearly a mile of roadbed had to be repaired at a cost of \$300,000.⁹¹

Yet more difficult to overcome was competition from automobiles and gasoline-powered trucks. At first, perhaps no one could have even imagined it. One of the first motorized excursions using the old Half Moon Bay-Colma Road over Montara Mountain occurred in 1912 and was so adventurous that it made headlines. The automobile, a Studebaker-Flanders Pathfinder, had to climb 1,000 feet on grades as steep as 20%. The route was mostly characterized by hairpin turns. The narrow road was pocked with ruts as deep as 13 inches. Two years later, *Motoring Magazine* indicated road conditions had not improved. It admitted: “There is no road running along the ocean that is more interesting, more grand and sublime than this road.” However, the article lamented: “It is . . . almost impossible, except for the expert, to drive on.” It gave details regarding the worst of the hairpin turns near the top of Devil’s Slide: “The grade and

turns are of such a nature, having been laid out for the use of horses, that it is dangerous for the ordinary car driver.”⁹²

However, the unreliability of the Railroad tested the patience of the Coastsiders, as well. As mentioned, washouts during the winters disrupted service for weeks and even months. Even without winter storms, the trains seemed to have reverted to the previous constant problem of not staying on schedule.

As automobiles became more reliable and less expensive, San Mateo County residents began to clamor for paved roads. They were even happy to pay for them and voted in favor of creating a new one over Montara Mountain. County engineers selected a route above the railroad as a new crossing.⁹³ By 1912, the initial sections of road were already completed -- the first bit of paved highway laid down in the County.⁹⁴ The new 28-mile Coastside Boulevard was voted as one of the most beautiful drives in the country. Locals nicknamed it Pedro Grade Corkscrew, because of its winding nature. Most eventually called it Old Pedro Mountain Road. It opened for automobile traffic on October 31, 1915, and several thousand people from San Francisco made the trip over the mountain to the Coastside.⁹⁵ This highway would come to have quite a reputation for difficult night driving, awful foggy conditions and rock and mud slides caused by winter rains. However crude it was, automobiles now had access to the coast from San Francisco. Gasoline powered trucks were right behind them. Soon farmers were shipping their artichokes, cabbage, sprouts and other crops via the Coastside Boulevard at the expense of the Ocean Shore Railroad. Some farmers pooled their money to purchase trucks.⁹⁶ Another industry, the commercial fishing business, benefitted greatly by truck transportation to San Francisco as well. The Half Moon Bay-Colma Road, now made obsolete by Coastside Boulevard, was abandoned in 1917.⁹⁷

Other bits of highway construction in the County with ramifications for the Coastside included the completion of a new road from San Mateo to Half Moon Bay in 1916.⁹⁸ The “Road of Enchantment” was also opened that year. It went from Woodside to La Honda.

By 1920, the leadership and financiers of the Ocean Shore Railroad had to have taken notice that railroads across the country were losing tourist and commuter passengers to automobiles and the farm product business to trucks. For their particular line, the 26-mile gap to Tunitas had not been bridged and probably never would. The inclination of voters, and in particular San Mateo County voters (who had a long history of conflict with railroads), to open their wallets and help automobiles and trucks compete with them by building roads with tax dollars had to be galling. Private investors were disinclined to place yet more money behind this apparently failing business. At that moment, probably not fully aware of management’s frustrations, workers for the

Ocean Shore went on strike. They would never return to their jobs, because the company's leadership decided to give-up. On July 27, 1920, management filed an application with the Railroad Commission to abandon the south end of the tracks. On August 12, they did likewise for the north end. Before 1922, the railroad's rolling stock had been sold, and the rails had been taken up.⁹⁹

There are many visible reminders of the Ocean Shore. Besides its cuts in hills and roadbeds along ledges, some of the stations survive. Vallemar station, on Highway 1 in Pacifica, exists virtually unchanged on its outside. It is a bar and restaurant. Tobin station, just before Shelter Cove in Pacifica, also maintains much of its original appearance. Named for Coastside property owner and San Francisco banker Richard M. Tobin, it is now a single family home. Montara station, built in 1906, is at 2nd and Main in that little community. It is also a private residence. The large Granada Station has been altered through the years for use as offices and then a restaurant. It is visible from Highway 1 on Alhambra in El Granada. The Areleta Park Station on Railroad Avenue in Half Moon Bay has been rebuilt as a house. The Half Moon Bay station has been moved at least twice. It currently serves as offices for the Johnston House Foundation, south of town.

Perhaps the most remarkable architectural reminder of the railroad era on the coast was not built by the Ocean Shore. In 1908, prominent attorney Henry McCloskey (former Congressman Pete McCloskey's grandfather) built a large home on the hillside in Pacifica that locals have nicknamed "The Castle." Its strange, medieval appearance, complete with turrets and gargoyles, is truly unique. The house is virtually unchanged from 100 years ago.

The futility that surrounded the Ocean Shore's leadership was well-known. Interference from the Southern Pacific Railroad, an earthquake, bankruptcy, difficult reorganizations, landslides and, finally, automobiles, trucks and publically financed roads to support them, frustrated the company at every bend. The projected towns that it had promised to build remained lots and blocks of undeveloped land for generations, recognizable legacies of failure. Coastside residents referred to the stumbling railroad as "the line of rust." Moreover despite the Railroad and despite the new roads and autos and trucks, the Coastside mostly looked the way it did before the excitement of 1905.

However, from the long term prospective, the Ocean Shore Railroad did break the isolation of the Coast -- albeit not as quickly as most everyone at the time wished. Perhaps from the standpoint of today, the slower growth that occurred had favorable aspects. Many factors that plagued the Railroad, hindered transportation by autos and trucks as well and allowed much of the coast to remain a beautiful, natural place: very much appreciated by thousands of residents and millions of visitors today.

The over 55 proposed housing tracts, laid out between Edgemar and Tunitas, did not manifest themselves immediately, but some people did settle and began unique, affordable communities of great character.

As for the farmer, without question, the Railroad broke the isolation of the coast. Products could be brought to market easier, faster and more reliably than before. The introduction of automobiles, trucks and their roads replaced the Railroad, but even in death, the Railroad continued to contribute. When a new highway from San Francisco down the coast became a necessity, the hill cuts, road bends and ledges created by the Ocean Shore Railroad were of immense benefit to planners and builders. The hotel and restaurant owners, real estate salesmen and promoters that were leftover from the railroad days became the principle advocates for an improved highway system for Coastsides and San Mateo County and California on the whole.

These advocates were most vociferous only five years after the completion of Coastsides Boulevard, when the agitation started up again. Coastsiders pointed out how the eroding surface and grade of the road on Montara Mountain was already, in 1920, a problem. Heavy truck traffic had evidently initiated the deterioration. Moreover, the drainage system never seemed to function correctly. Washouts and landslides caused closures in the winter months. Even when the conditions were right, the curving nature of the drive made the trip slow. Old timers still tell of becoming car sick as children,¹⁰⁰ while sitting out the “Corkscrew” of “Old Pedro Grade.” Locals began lobbying government officials to abandon Coastsides Boulevard and instead convert the Ocean Shore Railroad roadbed at Montara Mountain into an automobile highway.

After all, it appeared that the automobile had come to stay. On January 15, 1927, the Dumbarton Bridge, touching down on the southern end of the San Mateo County Bayside, became the first automobile crossing of the San Francisco Bay. In December of 1927, work began on the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge, which at 7.1 miles in length, would be the longest automobile bridge in the world when completed.

Recognizing that the time had come for a better coastal thoroughfare, in 1928, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties came together to form Joint Highway District Number 9. The District’s plans called for building a 75-mile highway through the Coastsides that would, as suggested by Coastsiders, utilize the roadbeds laid out by the Ocean Shore Railroad. Funding would be raised through the state and federal governments.¹⁰¹ Thus Coastsides Boulevard’s days were numbered. The State of California took it over in 1933, designating it State Highway 56. After World War II, it was abandoned.¹⁰²

The federal government accepted the task of creating Highway 1. The first step was to negotiate with the Ocean Shore Railroad for the required legal rights. Some of the

issues were resolved, some not. At Montara Mountain no agreement could be made concerning the value of the roadbed around San Pedro Point and through the tunnel. The highway builders designed an eastern route instead, that led up to Devil's Slide, as the road is known to us today. Construction at Montara Mountain began in 1935 and was completed in 1937. Touted as one of the most beautiful highways in the world, even before it was finished, San Mateo County zoned this section of Highway 1, "scenic," thus outlawing billboards and hot dog stands. Greyhound bus service began almost immediately and served the Coastside until 1976 when Sam Trans took over the route.¹⁰³

And so, the Ocean Shore Railroad, which actually operated just 13 years, forever changed the history of the Coastside by its own train excursions and by showing highway engineers the way. The immediate ramification of the railroad was to vastly assist two Coastside legitimate industries, agriculture and commercial fishing. However, there was a third. The new highways, that the railroad inspired, allowed for automobile and truck transportation to become a reality. In the 1920s, the bootleggers and rumrunners on the coast would use the new roads to facilitate another industry for the Coastside -- this one an illegal one.

PROHIBITION DAYS AND RELATED ASPECTS

In 1929, Ray (or Rey -- spelled both ways in court documents) Mori was arrested for selling a few alcoholic drinks. Beyond that, the Mori family remained outside legal prosecution during the Prohibition period of San Mateo County History. However, evidence of thousands of gallons of illegal hooch confiscated from the family properties, testaments from local residents, newspaper reports and other sources plainly indicate the family's position as kingpins of bootlegging on the San Mateo County North Coast.

BACKGROUND FOR CORRUPTION (CONTEXTUAL)

Illegal yes -- but out of place with most neighbors up and down the Coastside -- no. The opportunities for making some easy money was exploited by many local residents. The Moris certainly had advantages in becoming involved with the new bootlegging "industry." Their Mori Point property was snuggled in on the rugged coastline with dark landing spots that encouraged partnerships with rumrunners. The place was also right for their own entrepreneurial initiatives, like operating a speakeasy.

Certainly the Moris were aware that working outside of the law was practically a historical legacy for San Mateo County residents by the 1920s. In fact, the County was born out of corrupt politics. At the moment of California statehood, in 1850, the Peninsula was included within San Francisco County, but then in 1856 an outlaw group of San Francisco criminals and political types saw to the creation of a new county to

suit their needs. While their reign on the Peninsula lasted only days, the tradition was long lasting.

San Mateo County, being such a rural place, adjacent to cosmopolitan, sophisticated and vigorous San Francisco, became an outlet of sorts. San Franciscans who could not get away with something in the City, could cross the county line, where law enforcement was nil, and get away with it in San Mateo County. For example, when in 1859, United States Senator David Broderick and former California Supreme Court Justice David Terry had a disagreement over the slavery issue, they tried to duel in San Francisco County, but the fight was broken up by the Sheriff. So the two agreed to meet in San Mateo County, and just across the county line, in today's Daly City, they shot it out. Terry proved the better aim, and David Broderick died in what was probably the most famous duel in western history.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, nothing much had changed regarding this relationship between the counties. In 1900, the population of San Mateo County was still not 13,000. Gambling operations were the underground vice activities of the day, and they existed in quantity on the Peninsula especially in North San Mateo County which was most convenient for San Franciscans. However, the economic opportunities brought about by Prohibition made all the dabbling of the past pale in comparison.

In 1919, the United States Congress approved the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages. On January 16, 1920, Congress passed the Volstead Act which allowed for the enforcement of Prohibition, which became the law of the land until repeal of the Amendment in 1933. In 1922, California passed the Wright Act, its own law to enforce Prohibition, and punish violators. In 1926, San Mateo County enhanced its own efforts by passing an ordinance to assist crime busters. The San Mateo County law made it illegal for proprietors of business establishments to keep their doors locked during business hours. Reading between the lines, raiders of speakeasies became tired of having to break down doors.¹⁰⁴ Passing all this legislation was one thing. Enforcement was quite another.

For one thing, San Mateo County had a large immigrant population that had no sympathy for the Prohibition protagonists whatsoever. Prohibition was born out of the Progressive movement at the turn of the century that had been anti-immigration and anti-Catholic in a variety of ways. This included criticism of the heavy consumption of alcoholic beverages by the newcomers. In a County that was one-tenth born in Italy, with many Portuguese, Irish and other Europeans, whose drinking was deemed a cultural necessity and right, the new laws seemed simply a nuisance at first, but then became a lucrative industry for quite a few people, immigrant or not.

Almost overnight the Peninsula became home to speakeasies (illegal clubs, central to

a booming, semi-clandestine entertainment business) and moonshiners (those concocting their own beverages and then selling them). Organized criminals recognized the rugged 40-mile San Mateo County Coast as a convenient spot to unload supplies of hooch, mostly Canadian whiskey. These were the rumrunners who utilized fast little ships to dart in and out of the coves of the coast where waiting trucks could get the major part of the liquor up to thirsty San Francisco. Instead of having to worry about locals attempting to assist the law, the Coastside welcomed the rumrunners as providing economic opportunity. Coastside boys earned their first money working for the rumrunners, helping them unload boats and then load trucks. Older locals drove the trucks. Some like “Boss” Patroni and the Moris came to understandings with the crime lords and provided safe havens for the illegal activities.

Sadly as these practices spread and became more and more acceptable, other types of destructive hustles grew too. Prostitution and gambling proliferated as they never had before.¹⁰⁵ Law enforcement problems became increasingly complicated and difficult to solve. In fact, local authorities, although supported by state and federal agents, never got the upperhand on the Peninsula during Prohibition, leading many on the other side to brag that San Mateo County was the “wettest” county in the United States (during those days “dry” meant without booze; “wet” meant with it).

In fact, how much cooperation the federal officials (the “prohis”¹⁰⁶) actually received from locals is debatable. The laws were unpopular, and the bootleggers learned how to spread the profits around, enough so that many in authority had reason to look the other way. Particularly notorious were the popular police chief of South San Francisco, Louis Balloni, who came to office in 1924, and County Sheriff Jim McGrath, who won elections throughout the period.

There were busts, and even the Coast Guard got into the act, chasing the rumrunners off the coast, but the law did little to turn off the spigot. In fact, of more concern for the established criminals were hijackers who would steal the hooch on the beaches from them or hold up their trucks.

The few spectacular raids that occurred only proved the extent of illegal activity, and that not all of it was happening on the Coastside. In June of 1922, prohibition burst into a rum factory in Colma and destroyed 13 moonshine stills that had the capacity of producing 1,000 gallons of liquor a day for San Francisco’s entertainment needs.¹⁰⁷ Another Colma factory with similar capacity was busted in 1925. All ethnicities seemed to be in on it. In 1927, San Bruno police smashed a Chinese rice gin operation that catered to the Bay Area’s large Asian market. In 1931, authorities raided the J.R. Roberts soda factory in South San Francisco that turned out to be a front for one of the biggest illegal distilleries in California. Amazingly, the factory was owned by the South San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. Investigators found it to be the largest

source of booze for the State of Nevada. The business was so robust that a spur line to the Southern Pacific Railroad was built right up to the factory's loading ramp.¹⁰⁸

As flagrant as the activities were on the Bayside, on the Coastside avoiding Prohibition law became a way of life. After all, the coast with its hidden coves, under cover of fog and darkness, was the perfect place for mastermind rumrunners like Thomas Murphy and Paul Rubio Pane to land their Canadian whiskey. For the locals, rumrunning operations meant well paying jobs. Meanwhile bootlegging itself gave renewed hope to restaurant, boarding house, hotel and inn owners. The same year the Ocean Shore Railroad went belly up, the Volstead Act passed. The new hope was that even though the trains would no longer bring tourists, perhaps a new type of patron would frequent Coastside visitor businesses, especially those excursionists that could afford a drink. With all the hooch being landed right on the beaches, it did not take much to acquire some for sale locally. These businesses in fact adapted readily to the new customers, who arrived by automobile with a lot of money to spend.

Rumrunning, speakeasies, moonshine factories: collectively, this was an industry that made millions of dollars.¹⁰⁹ Because the income was not taxable, and records were kept secret, how many millions is lost to history. However, anecdotal reports clearly state that illegal alcohol sales became the biggest business on the Coastside during Prohibition and perhaps for the entire County. For example, in 1923, newspaper accounts revealed that in just a few months, 75,000 cases of Canadian whiskey had been successfully landed at Half Moon Bay and in the Mori Point area. In other words, six million dollars worth of booze had been landed, seemingly without a hitch, on the San Mateo County coast and then trucked up to San Francisco.¹¹⁰

Even after the prohis made a successful raid on the Coastside, it did not mean that their captured haul would be safe in their own hands. For instance in September of 1921, agents seized a truck loaded with booze belonging to a group of Half Moon Bay speakeasies. While driving the truck up to San Francisco, they were ambushed by bandits. The lawmen got away initially, but the hoodlums possessed a fast touring car and caught them on Pedro Mountain Road. The government's group was overpowered, and the truck and liquor ended up in criminal hands again.¹¹¹

Federal agents learned that in order to deal with the outlaws of the coast they had to be more heavily armed. In 1923, lead federal field agent, W.R. Paget, led a raid against a rumrunning operation at Año Nuevo Island. He had his men carry sawed-off shotguns. Even with these lethal weapons, after his men closed in on the smuggling scene, the rumrunners fought back. A wild gun battle ensued. It did not end until the bad guys ran out of ammunition. Paget seized 241 cases of scotch, worth nearly \$22,000.

The United States Coast Guard found rumrunners at sea fast and well-armed. One of

Half Moon Bay, Christmas Eve, 1925, a cutter engaged the rumrunning vessel *Gaviota* in a battle. In most cases, the sleek rumrunning ships picked flight rather than fight, but this time, the *Gaviota* decided to stand its ground. The Coast Guard won out, captured the *Gaviota* and later put it to work assisting the federal campaign against bootlegging on the coast.¹¹²

More dangerous to the rumrunners than occasional federal interference were hijackers. Reports of the day indicate that meetings between bootleggers and hijackers were frequent and often violent and sometimes witnessed by many. One early morning in Half Moon Bay in 1925, the entire town was awakened to gunfire when hijackers tried to capture bootleggers driving a Cadillac. The hijackers managed to wound one of the bootleggers, but the latter got away. At Purissima, the bootleggers stopped to transfer their cargo of booze into a waiting Buick. Two boys driving a Ford truck happened upon them. The bootleggers ordered the boys to load the Buick at gunpoint and then sped off. The boys noted that the Buick was especially equipped for this business with 1,500 pound overload springs.¹¹³

Bootlegging operation sites, close to GGNRA properties, include Seal Cove at Moss Beach, a favorite landing spot for rumrunners, and Frank Torres' speakeasy above the cove on the bluff, known then as Frank's Roadhouse and today as the Distillery. These are just west of the National Park's *Rancho Corral de Tierra*.

In the same vicinity, at Princeton, were several operations. Among the most well-known were "Boss" Patroni's wharf, for rumrunners, and his restaurant, which was a speakeasy. (More on "Boss" Patroni can be found in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* portion of this study.) The Princeton Inn was perhaps most notorious place in the little town, as it was a celebrated brothel.

Southwest of Parklands at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, at Miramar, once known as Amersport, there were a couple of important establishments as well. Mimi Cowely's hotel, grocery store, speakeasy and whorehouse was located at the site of today's Miramar Beach Restaurant. Built about 1917, it was one of the businesses that made the change from Ocean Shore Railroad customers to thirsty motorists of the Prohibition era. The same can be said for Joseph S. Miguel's Palace Miramar Hotel, constructed in 1916 for \$30,000. Some called this speakeasy the most opulent hotel on the San Mateo County Coast.¹¹⁴

ACTIVITIES OF THE MORI FAMILY

The site of illegal Prohibition activities on GGNRA land is mostly at Mori Point. Here at the end of Mori's Point Road, sat the Mori's Point Inn, that overlooked the ocean. By all accounts, it functioned as a well-known speakeasy. Evidence suggests that farmer Stefano Mori's sons Jack and Steve built this roadhouse at the turn of the century.

The year 1899 has been used as the date of initial presence because a map indicates a road extension to the site at that time. No map actually shows any structure there until 1949. In fact only three residences are shown on maps at the Point before 1915, but none at the Inn site. Newspaper reports cite Steve Mori as managing the Inn in 1910 during a shooting incident. So it had to have existed at least that far back.

However, local historians have given 1880 and even 1878 as the date when the business started. In a 1960 ad, operators of the Inn promoted it as: “A Coastside favorite since 1881.” It is possible that the Inn occupied one of the three original ranch buildings and then moved to the Mori Road beach site after the turn of the century (or later on, to perhaps better serve Ocean Shore Railroad passengers). In its heyday, the building included 21 rooms for overnight accommodations, a bar, dancehall, restaurant and Italian delicatessen.

The Mori’s were not immune to trouble even before Prohibition. In a highly publicized case in 1910, Steve Mori shot and killed a San Francisco barber for trespassing. He was taken to court but escaped punishment a month later as the result of a hung jury.¹¹⁵

Prohibition brought opportunity for the Mori clan. Jack Mori fell in with the rum-runners and established a sophisticated set up to facilitate the unloading process. He installed warning lights and a marine telephone system for communications. He had a powerful automobile engine hooked up with a cable to pull boats used as lighters back and forth from ships. It was said that a freighter could be unloaded in one night.¹¹⁶ To understand the extent of this operation, during a raid in 1923, federal agents confiscated 24,000 cases of scotch from the Mori farm. Prohibition had driven the price of this spirit from 50¢ to \$7.00 a bottle, making this haul worth \$2 million.¹¹⁷

In the meantime, another of Jack’s brothers, Ray (Rey?), with his wife Maria ran the old Francisco Sanchez Adobe up San Pedro Valley as a restaurant and speakeasy. In fact old-timers who visit the Adobe, which is now a museum, regale the docents there about how it was additionally a bordello. Interior nail patterns on the second floor of the house suggest that many small rooms were installed at one point, seemingly corroborating this description. Old champagne glasses are frequently unearthed on the grounds surrounding the structure, indicating parties were taking place there.

That the Mori’s Point Inn functioned as a speakeasy was proven in August of 1924, when prohis raided it and took away \$50,000 in hooch. Nevertheless proprietor Jack Mori seemed to stay out of the clutches of the law. However, on August 21, 1929, his brother Ray was arrested for selling booze. In September, he was indicted in United States District Court for violation of Prohibition laws including “keeping for sale... intoxicating liquor... 20 bottles, more or less,” and “...sale of...four drinks of whis-

key.” Ray pleaded guilty for selling the four drinks and got four month probation and a \$225 fine.

Locals claim that Jack’s troubles with federal agencies over his rumrunning business eventually forced him out as “boss” of the Inn. By 1932, Ray and Marie were running it.

In 1933, Prohibition, recognized for the failed experiment that it was, ended when Congress circumvented the Eighteenth Amendment by passing the 21st Amendment to the Constitution. While most the nation celebrated, on the San Mateo County Coast-side this was not good news. Many lamented that their “Golden Era” was over.¹¹⁸ Two national forces hurt the coast’s economy: the loss of business from illegal alcohol sales and the onset of the Great Depression. It certainly became a quieter coast. Many went back to farming. Others went into the new commercial fishing industry. Some found jobs working on the new federally financed Highway 1 project. Everyone had to work harder. The days of easy money and fast living were over.

At Mori Point a fishing village was present at least as early as 1938 when famous Depression Era photographer Dorothea Lange photographed it as part of her work for the government. Apparently, the village which existed behind the quarry, occupied a place on the Point all through the 1930s and into the 1940s.

SAN MATEO COUNTY STRUGGLES WITH CRIME AFTER THE PROHIBITION (CONTEXTUAL)

As for San Mateo County on the whole, its struggles with lawlessness did not go away with Prohibition. Vice crime developed during the previous era gave gangsters new sources of income -- especially gambling. In fairness, gambling manifested itself in a variety of ways down the Peninsula -- some quite legal, however, some not.

As early as 1899, Tanforan Racetrack at San Bruno allowed betting on races. In 1908, laws outlawed gambling, and the track went into decline. However, on October 31, 1931, Greyhound racing was inaugurated at Belmont. Later investigation revealed that the operators, the Bayshore Kennel Club, acted as a front for big-name racketeers from Chicago, including associates of Al Capone. The next year, the Baden Kennel Club opened a second San Mateo County track at South San Francisco, just north of Tanforan. An entire city, Bayshore City, was incorporated in the north eastern corner of the County in 1932 to support the dog racing industry there. It disincorporated after two years when its track closed.

Legitimate horse racing received a major boost in 1933 when betting was made legal again, through the pari-mutuel system. Tanforan returned to successful form, while down in San Mateo, a second track at Bay Meadows was built in 1934.

While both tracks functioned in legal ways for the most part, illegal bookie operations and other criminal activities did accompany the race tracks in the County. More notorious were gambling houses operating completely outside the law. For example, Emilio Georgetti's Willow Tree in Colma was reported, in 1938, to be the most luxurious casino in California and the largest of its kind west of the Mississippi. Although it operated in a public way, County authorities seemed unaware of its existence.

Out on the Coastside the gangster element held on by controlling the artichoke business. By the time of Prohibition's repeal, organized crime's control of this farm product was entrenched. Farmers not willing to cooperate had their trucks hijacked, crates of the vegetable stolen right out of their fields and warehouses, and their crops damaged by machete wielding henchmen.

Because of the confused situation, with some farmers cooperating with the mobsters, while some farmers did not, and then having rival thugs raiding the "protected" crops of cooperating farmers, it is impossible to tell from today's standpoint just who was on the side of right and who was on the side of wrong. The record tells us there were "artichoke vigilantes"¹¹⁹ who patrolled the Coastside's back roads, armed by the County Sheri! with sawed-o! shotguns. Their presence neither ended the pilfering nor the vandalizing nor the violence.

The situation gained national attention. In New York City, Mayor Fiorello La Guardia recognized that artichokes sold in his city were handled by a national network of mobsters who used extortion, kidnapping and even, once, murder to control the crop. At that time, 1935, nearly 95% of the artichokes grown in America came from the coastal strip around Half Moon Bay. Saying Half Moon Bay artichokes in New York was the same as saying Mafia artichokes. The vegetable was particularly popular in New York's Italian neighborhoods. La Guardia and prosecutor Thomas Dewey estimate that the racket, just in their city, was worth \$500,000 a year. The mayor made the radical move of declaring the "sale display and possession"¹²⁰ of artichokes to be illegal in New York City on December 21, 1935. Dewey went on to build his reputation as a racket buster. He became governor of New York and twice ran for President as a Republican candidate, in 1944 and 1948.

LAST DAYS OF THE MORIS

At Mori Point, things seemed to have gotten a lot quieter with the end of Prohibition. After Ray Mori died, his widow Marie ran the Inn until the early 1940s. She remarried, to Lloyd Jones, and moved to Palm Springs where she eventually passed on too. Doug Hart came to operate the establishment for some years. An accountant, he started by handling the books for the Moris. After some time he leased the Inn to others. In the hands of Doug Hart, the Inn took on a sort of traditional but still informal character, beloved by many locals. Patrons particularly enjoyed Hart's Sunday brunch



Fig. 4.4: 1960 advertisement for dancing on Friday evenings at Mori's Point.

at the Inn. About 1956, the Inn's clientele may have been enlarged by the addition of a swimming or fishing pond at Laguna Salada. In addition, just to the north, the Fairway Park subdivision was completed in 1958.

A 1960 newspaper ad for the establishment evokes a "gay 1890s" sort of an image for the Inn, with cartoon characters dressed accordingly and the phrase "Since 1881" featured. "Live music," dancing, cocktails and special rates for parties and clubs were all part of the pitch.

However, the leaseholders that followed Hart did not seem to have his colorful character. The building fell into disrepair, was condemned and shut down to the public.

On February 26, 1966, the *Redwood City Tribune* reported "Historic Mori's Point bar and restaurant, overlooking the Pacific Ocean, burned to the ground last night in a spectacular fire visible for miles." The building had been vacated three months before, by the condemnation order. The Inn was apparently owned by an entity called the Mori's Point Corporation at that time. They had planned for a remodeling, according to the *Tribune*, but the "cost was too high."¹²¹ The structure had been slated to be burned down by fire officials perhaps as a training venture. Lost were the bar, kitchen equipment, antique headboards and additional furnishings which were supposed to be auctioned off the next week. The pieces were valued at \$20,000.

A Fairway Park resident alerted the Fire Department of the blaze at 6:40 p.m. Firemen fought the blaze for 15 to 20 minutes before the fire chief decided it was a lost cause and let it burn to the ground. Later, Fire Captain James Evans stated he felt the fire had started under "suspicious circumstances."¹²² He pointed out that the conflagration had started in a place in the building ideal for completely burning it down.

That week, *Pacifica Tribune* Editor Pat Lynn summarized the incident:

Historic old Mori's, not to be outdone by the wrecker's hammer, went out in a blaze of glory all her own Friday night. The old landmark died the way she lived -- in a bawdy and spectacular fashion. It was the hottest Friday night for the old restaurant-bar which dates back to 1880, and even a few old time firemen shed an invisible tear at her demise.

SHARP PARK AND THE INTERNMENT CAMP (CONTEXTUAL)

Just north of the National Park Service's Mori Point property is the Sharp Park Golf Course. During World War II the United States government used these San Francisco-owned recreation lands as an internment camp. Unlike its neighbor, Tanforan to the east in San Bruno, this facility operated throughout the War. Tanforan was an "Assembly Center," -- that is -- a place where people of Japanese heritage were brought until the more permanent camps had been completed in interior of the country. Tanforan has certainly generated more historical attention through the years, probably because of the large number of people (10,000) that were held there. Sharp Park detained far fewer and also had persons of other heritages, besides Japanese, on site.

The Sharp family of San Francisco had owned this acreage since the 1870s.¹²³ George F. Sharp, a San Francisco attorney, was part of a legal team interested in a railroad for the coast, but died before construction of the Ocean Shore Railroad began. In advance of his death, he instructed his wife, Honora, that he wished something tangible be done for the City in his memory. She passed away not long after, but the Sharps' executors abided by the couple's wishes. They settled on creating the golf course. Well-known golf course architect Alister MacKenzie designed the links, blending the sport with the natural surroundings. Landscaper John McLaren, who had done so much for Golden Gate Park, planted the many Monterey cypress trees still present. Angus McSweeney of Willis Polk's famed architectural firm designed the Mission Revival style clubhouse, also still on the property. The course opened to the public in 1932.¹²⁴

The Sharps' donation was an extensive piece of real estate that contained more than just the eighteen hole links. During the Depression years of the 1930s, San Francisco built and operated a camp for boys without homes on the eastern section of the park. The City offered these "older boys"¹²⁵ room, board, medical care and 25¢ a day for working in the park, doing such chores as planting John McLaren's trees.

As World War II began in Europe, J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, noted how the Nazis successfully used German loyalists in places like Poland, Belgium, Holland, France and, most notoriously, Norway. He lobbied for the federal government to be prepared, if the United States entered war, to target those that might try sabotage, espionage or other activities meant to undermine national security. As early as September, 1939, a federal Detention Program was in place. In 1940, Congress passed a complimentary Alien Registration Act. In the months before the Pearl Harbor attack, of December 7, 1941, Sharp Park had already been selected as a site to hold detainees. It was designated as an internment camp for German, Italian and Japanese people who might pose a threat. It was to originally function as a temporary holding area, until permanent arrangements could be made for the particular persons in question.

In early 1942, San Francisco turned over the boys camp to the federal government. On March 30, the internment camp opened. Some 193 people from the Angel Island Internment Camp (which had been damaged by a fire) were the first to be housed at Sharp Park. Quonset huts were erected to incarcerate between 450 and 1,200 possible foreign enemies. It is said that at one time as many as 2,500 were held there. People of German, Italian and Japanese origin spent time at Sharp Park, as did some Mexican, Canadian and Chinese nationals suspected of having anti-American intentions. Stanford professor Yamato Ichikashi remembered the camp at Sharp Park:

The ground is limited by tall iron net-fences and small in area; barracks 20' x 120' are well built and painted outside and inside and are regularly arranged; there are 10 of these for inmates, each accommodating about 40, divided into 5 rooms for 8 people each; if doubled decked [bunk beds] 80 can be put in.¹²⁶

After Italy surrendered in 1943, Italian detainees were released. A dozen internment camps kept 25,000 Germans interned within the United States. Sharp Park was one of them and held Germans and Japanese detainees until the camp closed in 1946.

Today, visitors have trouble imagining that an internment camp existed at Sharp Park. The site is largely covered up by an archery range (a rifle range was at one time here as well). Old-timers can point out beaten concrete steps leading to non-existent buildings, a water cistern filled with dirt and a garbage pit behind bushes as the last vestiges of this World War II story. According to locals, one of the Quonset huts was moved from the site and is now the Sharp Park Co-op nursery.

The Tanforan Assembly Center is today listed as California State Historical Landmark No. 934. It functioned for a few months in 1942 and then was turned over for military use. Sharp Park Internment camp, although smaller than Tanforan, served throughout the War. It possesses no national, state, county nor city historical designation.

MORI POINT PRESERVATION EFFORTS

About the time the Mori Point Inn burned down in 1966, quarry operations at the Point were perceived to be falling off. A 30-year period ensued during which the property sat in limbo. In the meantime, despite its being privately owned, the people of Pacifica used it as an urban park for hiking, bicycling and horseback riding. This unmanaged and unregulated usage had negative impact on the natural resources of the site.¹²⁷ The quarry, itself, became a community gathering place. “Western Days” (later “Frontier Days”) were held here as a weeklong arts and crafts festival that even, at times, included a rodeo. This Rockaway Quarry event ended in 1984 when the property owner refused to grant permission to use it for this purpose.

Naturally, with its beautiful views, Mori Point became the focus of developers who thought about its residential and commercial potential. An emerging environmental movement, meanwhile, rose up in hopes of preserving the Point as open space.

In 1984, matters came to a head when Pacificans voted in favor of a mixed use development that included a conference center.¹²⁸ Four years later, when developer Ron Sette presented his plan, it turned out to be much more of a construction project than what many locals had envisioned. The plan called for a 275-room conference center, two restaurants and as many as 60 houses.¹²⁹

The matter was fought out at Pacifica City Hall, in local newspapers and on community television. Resident Hal Bohner, a local attorney, complained that previously the convention center had not been proposed for the ridge line as now, in 1988, it was. Additionally a proposed equestrian center had been dropped from the original presentation. Pacifican Lynda Martyn asserted that given the chance to vote on this project again, the people of Pacifica would not approve the mixed-use proposal. City Councilman Jon Galehouse pointed out the impact the project might have on the endangered San Francisco garter snakes at Mori Point. He advocated that somehow the property be transferred to the GGNRA.

The controversy consumed the community's interest in April and May of 1988, as citizens took sides in the debate. It was agreed to put the plan up for a vote on November 6, as Measure C. This process stopped the plan but the developers began promoting new ideas. However, after six years, the environmentalists led by Hal Bohner, Michael Rothenberg and Julie Loncelle wore down their opposition.¹³⁰ In 2002, the Trust for Public Land stepped in at auction and outbid new developers.¹³¹ Its purchase paved the way for Mori Point coming into the GGNRA.

ENDNOTES

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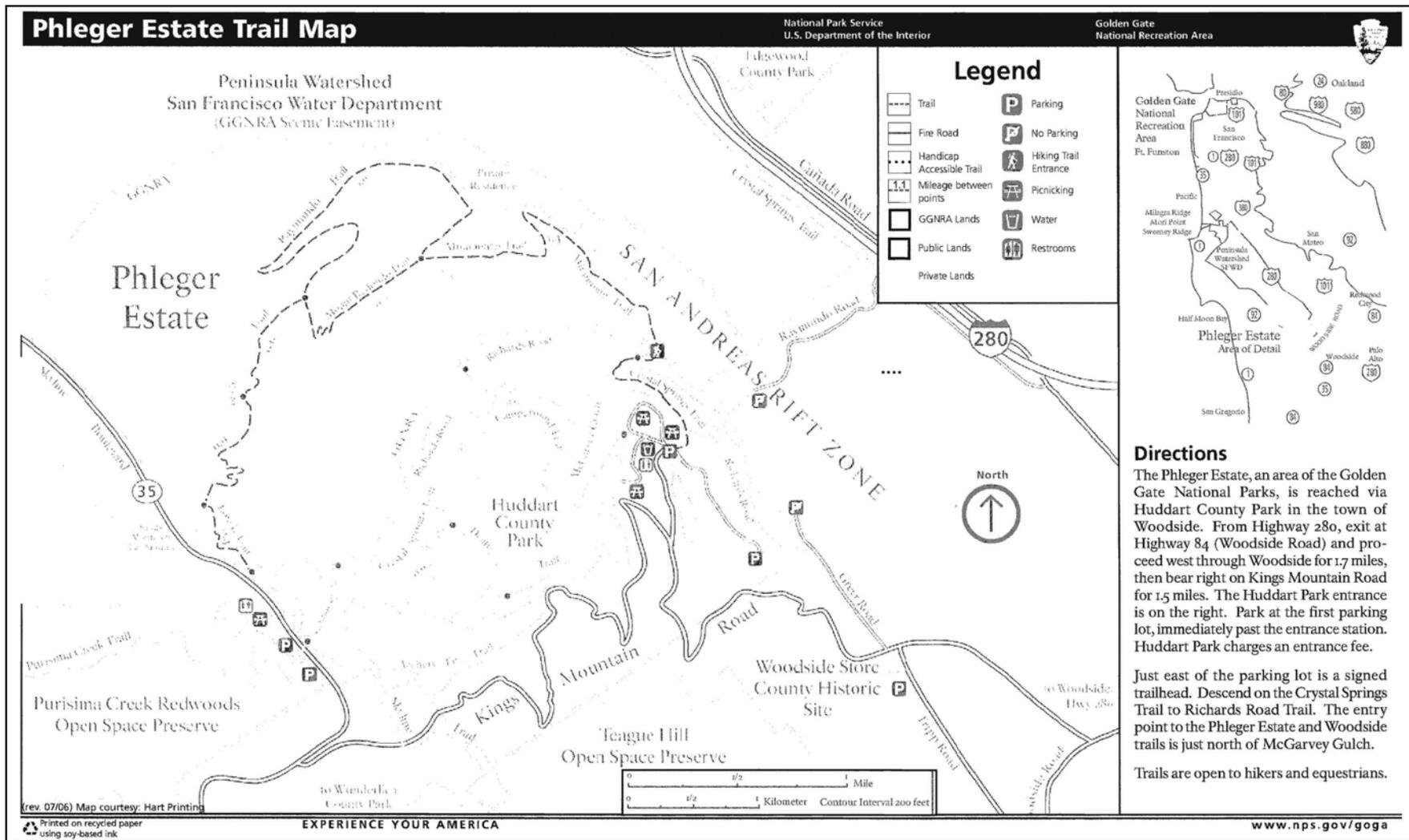


Fig. 5.1: Trail map of the Phleger Estate.

PHLEGER ESTATE

In 1935, Herman and Mary Elena Phleger purchased their Mountain Meadow property that has come to be known as the Phleger Estate. In 1984, Herman died. He and Mary Elena had been life-long boosters of conservation and environmental causes. In that spirit, Mary Elena offered the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) the opportunity to preserve the property. Within four years, POST managed to raise the necessary funding to make the purchase possible. On April 29, 1995, the Phleger Estate was dedicated as a part of the GGNRA.

The 1,084 acre parcel¹ is located west of Cañada Road and north of San Mateo County's Huddart Park in the southern hill country of the Peninsula, once a portion of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* in the heart of a robust logging industry during the nineteenth century. Its western boundary is a forested ridge plainly visible from United States Interstate 280 to the east. This ridge and slope is the eastern portion of Kings Mountain of the Sierra Morena or Santa Cruz Range of Mountains (also referred to as the Skyline) and at 2,315 feet is the second highest point in San Mateo County.² Three major drainages run from the Mountain into West Union Creek.

The Phleger Estate includes redwoods, mixed evergreens and tan oak woodlands. The redwoods are mostly in stream corridors of canyons of the Skyline and also along West Union Creek. These trees include mostly second-growth redwoods, however, the lumberjacks did not take every one of the original sequoias, because a few old growth trees, obviously the more inaccessible ones, live in the upper portions of the property. The tan oaks grow on the moist slopes often between grasslands and chaparral. The canopy from these trees is dense.³

EARLY OCCUPATION

INDIAN PEOPLE

When the Spanish arrived on the San Francisco Peninsula in 1769, the land from present day Belmont, south to Redwood City, and from the Bay into the hills was occupied by the Lamchin local tribe of the Ohlone group of California Indians. Their region of occupation included today's Woodside, Huddart Park and the Phleger Estate. At this time of contact, mission records tell us that the Lamchin consisted of about 350 people. The padres spoke of the Lamchin as possessing four villages, Cchanigtac, Guloisnistac, Oromstac and Supichon. It has never been precisely determined where these villages existed.⁴

The Spanish moved most of the Lamchin to *Mission San Francisco de Asís*, where they

were made Christians, between 1784 and 1793. A few were baptized at *Mission Santa Clara* during this same period.⁵

Before being brought to the missions, it's likely that the Lamchin living in the Phleger Estate area existed the way most Ohlone people did (see Introduction and Sweeney Ridge portions of this study for more about the Ohlones). Certainly this particular place rendered rich food sources. There were small mammals, waterfowl, deer, elk and fish readily available, along with acorn and other key substances. However, the people suffered by having the fierce grizzly bear present.

Archeological investigation of the Phleger Estate has been ongoing since 1974. One site has been found, a substantial village, which included a large midden (refuse heap) with 15 bedrock mortars (for acorn grinding). This 30,000 meter area is located on property still held privately. The village may have extended into GGNRA lands.⁶

THE SPANISH

The first Europeans to encounter the great redwood forests of the Peninsula were the members of the Gaspar de Portolá party of 1769. After having discovered the San Francisco Bay from Sweeney Ridge, this military expedition turned south in an attempt to find a way around the estuary. It is possible that they camped on or near the Phleger Estate, as they made note of the great trees.

The next Spanish soldier to explore the valley was Captain Francisco Rivera y Moncada in 1774. He was charged with scouting for locations to place a *presidio* and a mission. The party most likely passed east of the Phleger Estate. Rivera recorded visiting five large villages that he had not seen when he was with Portolá, five years earlier.⁷

When Lieutenant Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza came through in 1776, also scouting for the mission and *presidio* sites, he wrote about the redwoods and their potential for helping the community at San Francisco with future needs.

Despite Anza's observations, the Spanish generally did not see the immense redwood trees as great resources to help with building their mission communities. Instead they largely made use of adobe for construction. The trees were so huge that harvesting them seemed too labor intensive.

RANCHO CAÑADA DE RAYMUNDO

After secularization of the mission lands, the property now called the Phleger Estate was (in 1841) granted to John Copinger, as part of his 12,545-acre *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*.⁸ This massive portion of the central Peninsula included, in today's terms, the watershed area from Upper Crystal Springs Reservoir, south including nearly all of Woodside up to Portola Road and, roughly east from Cañada Road to the Skyline.

Within today's San Mateo County, Copinger was one of two non-Spanish or Mexican-born men to receive land grants during the Mexican era of California History (the other being American businessman Jacob Leese). Copinger was, in fact, born the son of Alderman John Copinger⁹ in Dublin, Ireland in 1810. There exists various tales about the man. Among them is one that he became a British Naval Lieutenant in the mid-1830s and in a dispute with his commanding officer threw a glass at him. He then deserted the Navy while his ship was anchored in the San Francisco Bay, near the little port of Yerba Buena.¹⁰

In 1836, Copinger became embroiled in California politics when he supported Sub-inspector of Customs at Monterey, Juan Bautista Alvarado, in leading a revolt against the Mexican appointed Governor, using the slogan: "California for Californians."¹¹ Down in Monterey, he served under Alvarado as a lieutenant and helped him defeat a small Mexican troop. Alvarado then became the new governor. Copinger travelled to the San Francisquito Creek area and joined Bill "The Sawyer" Smith and other non-Mexican drifters and whipsawyers to work among the redwood trees.¹² Such individuals were like Copinger, trying to find safe haven from authorities that might be looking for them.

Another story tells how Copinger found work with Doña Soto, the widow of Rafael Soto. Her father-in-law, Ignacio Soto, had been among the original California colonists with Juan Bautista de Anza in 1776. Rafael acquired *Rancho Rincoñada del Arroyo de San Francisquito* in the Palo Alto area of today. It could be said that if Copinger worked for Soto, then he married his boss' daughter -- Maria Luisa Soto (in 1839). As Maria's husband, Copinger became one of a number of English-speaking foreigners who would marry into Mexican families, allowing them increased access to the ruling elite in California.

This marriage, Copinger's record as a "war veteran" and his becoming a Mexican citizen all helped him to gain political favor. He also either converted to the Catholic religion, or was a Catholic already. Being a Catholic assisted him, also in 1839, to be appointed Justice of the Peace for "the Redwoods" by his friend Alvarado. His jurisdiction extended to the coast and made up about half of today's San Mateo County. The Governor then awarded him *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* the next year.

In 1841, Copinger began building an adobe home at his *rancho* which he finished in 1842. It stood northwest of the present intersection of Kings Mountain and Woodside Roads, which became known as Adobe Corner. The Great Earthquake of 1906 destroyed this house. Nearby, in the Bear Gulch area, he constructed a grist mill and dam. Copinger became involved in lumbering operations on his *rancho*. Extraordinarily, according to Mexican government records of 1841, 100,000 board feet of wood were ready at the embarcadero near Santa Clara for export to the Hawaiian Islands.

It is presumed that most or all of this was logged on Copinger's *rancho*, all in the day before lumber mills.¹³

With the outbreak of the Mexican-American War in 1846, Copinger began selling off his land. The exact nature of the boundaries of *Cañada Raymundo* would haunt the new owners for years. As early as 1841, Francisco Guerrero, of Rancho Corral de Tierra fame, was brought in to settle a dispute between Copinger and his neighbors, the Arguello family of *Rancho de las Pulgas*. Guerrero found in favor of the Arguellos. Nevertheless, heirs of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* sold portions of the disputed land creating endless court cases, that were not truly resolved until the United States Congress stepped in and enacted bill HR11404 on January 19, 1914, "for relief of claimants of the Coppinger (sic.) Grant."

Copinger died in 1847. Maria then married another Irish seaman, Captain John Greer.¹⁴ Greer became somewhat of a local legend too. He laid out today's Cañada Road (1862) and sold timber rights to a variety of parties. As the Gold Rush started in 1849, one of these, entrepreneur Charles Brown, initiated a more productive logging industry by introducing a water-powered sawmill to the redwood country.¹⁵

As with all the *rancho* owners, Maria Luisa Soto Copinger Greer had to prove she owned her land grant after the Land Act of 1851 passed. Lengthy and costly legal proceedings finally ended in a patent issued in 1859 to her and her daughter,¹⁶ Manuela Copinger Greer. In 1867, Manuela married Antonio Miramontes who lived in the Portola Valley. He was the grandson of Candelario Miramontes, owner of the extensive Coastside *rancho* at Half Moon Bay.

FOREIGNERS IN THE REDWOODS

While Copinger may have been the most prominent, there was an amorphous group of foreigners in the redwoods during the Mexican period that lived on or in the vicinity of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*. Beginning with Mexican independence in 1821, California was opened up for trade, and ships from around the world visited here, bartering a variety of goods principally for hides and tallow. Life at sea could be difficult and cruel, so there is no wonder why some sailors deserted ship when anchored at Yerba Buena. It was hard to hide on the windswept northern end of the Peninsula, and so these former seamen hid out in the wooded mountains to the south.¹⁷ As deserters, their character on the whole was questionable, looked upon by most as drifters and, worse, criminals. The *Californios* were known to catch and return sailors to their ships, for rewards, but in the redwoods, except for a couple of round-ups, these fugitives seemed to have found protected refuge. Once his ship left port the chances of a man being captured were reduced to practically nothing. Among the deserters, themselves, they felt "no stain upon a man's character" for leaving a ship, since most were "maltreated"¹⁸ aboard their vessels. They seem to have been largely

English-speaking, hailing mostly from the United States but also from England, Ireland and Scotland. Probably, they never numbered more than about 50 individuals on the stretch of land radiating outward from today's Kings Mountain and Woodside Roads. They called the place "*Pulgas* redwoods."¹⁹

These men turned out thousands of feet of lumber using the simplest tools and techniques. Other foreigners made do by operating stills. Such alcohol making operations were ubiquitous throughout the lumbering countryside.

In matters of socialization, there were no English-speaking women in the redwoods. So, the sawyers naturally attempted contact with Spanish-speaking women. The attitude about such relationships among the *Californios* was generally favorable. The English-speakers were encouraged to become citizens of Mexico, and, provided they were or could become Catholic, some, like John Copinger, were even granted land.²⁰ The *Californios* had fascination for the ways of the foreigners and welcomed their business sense and opportunities they brought with them. Marriages cemented relationships and made for important political and business alliances.

According to Richard Henry Dana in his *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840), the first of the "*Ingles*" (as the Californians called English-speakers) to make inroads into *Californio* society were the shopkeepers and traders who arrived with the first ships in the 1820s. They were numerous at Monterey where they stood in the middle between the goods of the merchant ships and the hides and tallow of the rancheros. The *Californios* were mostly suspicious of the ships' captains, but the *Ingles*, who lived amongst them, had become Mexican citizens, converted to Catholicism and married into their families; thus they could be trusted.

Several of the most important men of the Peninsula made great progress by entering into marriage with local women. They include names already discussed in this study, such as John Copinger, James Denniston (who came to own *Rancho Corral de Tierra*) and James Johnston (the dairyman at Half Moon Bay).

The marriages, while acceptable to the *Californios*, were sometimes looked down upon by east coast Americans. In general, people from the United States held certain prejudices, about the citizens of Mexico. They felt them lazy, wasteful and immoral. They also derided their Catholic religion, holding their Protestant work ethic and other values superior to a religion corrupted by power-hungry priests in Rome. Also, very real to them was the concept that people of Anglo-Saxon background were racially superior to Latin Americans. For most of the early *Ingles* of the *Pulgas* redwoods, these types of prejudices were left on the ships they deserted.

By all accounts the first of the foreigners to see the giant redwoods and to enter into

the logging business was Bill “The Sawyer” Smith. He came on the Woodside scene in 1832 with his whipsaw and built a small shake cabin near Woodside and Kings Mountain Roads, close to where Copinger constructed his adobe ten years later.²¹ In 1834, Smith (also known by the *Californios* as Guillermo Esmit) married Josepa Saenz at Mission Dolores.²² The couple lived down the Peninsula, where Smith continued his logging activities.

Among the stories concerning this legendary character of the redwoods is one about him, and another sawyer named George Ferguson. One night in 1835, a grizzly bear rampaged through their camp. The next day they constructed a trap by digging a pit. That night a bear was caught, and they tried to crush it to death with a log. After this failed and the bear escaped, Smith went to Yerba Buena and purchased an old musket. The two men killed a steer when Smith returned and used it for bait. They shot three bears in the hours between sunset and dawn.²³

Perhaps the most well-known of the early *Ingles* of the *Pulgas* redwoods was Charles Brown. He was born in New York in 1814. He served aboard the whaler *Helvetius*, until the vessel visited Yerba Buena, in 1833, and he deserted.²⁴ He arrived in the Woodside area within the year. About 1837, he married one of the daughters of Antonio Garcia of San Jose.²⁵ Around 1839, he purchased a portion of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* from John Copinger. He raised cattle there and built an adobe home that still stands on private property, near the junction of Woodside and Portola Roads.

In June of 1838, a severe earthquake along the San Andreas Fault split the earth between San Francisco and Santa Clara. Brown later described how giant redwood trees rocked, some splintering into pieces, and others were thrown down hillsides. He also noted that adobe structures were cracked and ruined.

After the Gold Rush started, Brown was among the first to realize the potential of the redwoods in building the great city that was growing exponentially at the northern tip of the Peninsula. He is credited with building the first lumber mill in the *Pulgas* redwoods in 1849.

Brown’s first wife died in 1850. He then married Rosalia de Haro, a sister of the well-known de Haro twins, Francisco and Ramon, killed during the Bear Flag Revolt. Her father, Francisco, owned *Rancho Laguna de la Merced* in today’s Daly City area. He had also been an *alcalde* of Yerba Buena. Showing how common the marriages of the *ranchero*’s daughters to the *Ingles* had become, this also represented Rosalia’s second marriage. She had married August Andrews back in 1844.²⁶

The list of deserters finding refuge in the *Pulgas* redwoods and marrying *Californio* women goes on. Another example is Scotsman James Pease (also seen as Peace). He

jumped ship in 1835 and married Pedro Valencia's daughter, Guadalupe. They eventually had two sons, James and Antonio.²⁷

Probably the most influential of the *Ingles* in the Bay Region was William Richardson. This Englishman, born in 1795, was first mate on a whaler visiting San Francisco Bay. He decided to stay, became a Catholic and married Maria Antonia Martínez, daughter of the *presidio's* *comandante*, Ignacio Martínez. Mexican authorities made him Captain of the Port in 1835, and he is said to have built the first house at Yerba Buena, a canvas and wooden structure. He constructed a proper adobe house the next year. He is thus credited for founding San Francisco as a commercial center. As the hide-and-tallow trade increased in importance into the 1840s, the community at Yerba Buena Cove, about where the Transamerica Building is located today, gained activity. Richardson ran two schooners manned by Indian crews back and forth from Santa Clara. He specialized in selling grain, hides and tallow. He valued the grain at 20¢ per *fanega*, hides 12¢ each and \$1.00 for a bag of tallow. Richardson was also notable for receiving *Rancho Saucelito* across the Golden Gate.²⁸

Back in the redwoods, the population in the late 1830s and 1840s grew too. Increasingly, men from around the world ended up there. This included Englishmen Jim "The Corporal" and "Sergeant" Lewis, marines who deserted H.M.S. Sulpher in 1836.²⁹ They were joined by fellow countrymen Robert Livermore and William Swinbourn. Americans we know about included Henry Jubilee Bee, Billy Bonito, Hopping Jack and Black George. Juan Moreno (John Brown) was probably a Swede. French Joe was possibly French or Canadian.

As a group, American William Heath Davis remembered them as an increasingly "loose and roving lot," and poor credit risks.³⁰ Under Governor Alvarado, the *Pulgás* redwoods were raided in 1840, and authorities took those who could not produce proper papers to Monterey. In May of 1841 a second sweep of the *Pulgás* redwoods was made. Ten were caught including two Englishmen, two Germans, one Scot, one Canadian, one Swede, one Portuguese, one Irishman and one Frenchman. Interestingly, no Americans were picked up.

With the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), the discovery of Gold (1848) and the Gold Rush (1849), new types of pioneers began showing up in the redwood country. Irishman Dennis Martin came to California with the first wagon train over the Sierra Nevada in the winter of 1844-45. He had started out in Missouri with his father and brother as part of the Elisha Stevens party. They crossed over the mountains two years before the Donner Party attempted it. He was at Sutter's Fort for some time and then came to the Bay Area, where in 1849 he married Bridget O'Neill at the Mission in San Francisco.

The couple moved to the southern part of the Peninsula and, in 1850, bought a portion of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* at San Francisquito Creek from John Greer, who had just married Maria Luisa Soto Copinger. Martin became one of the more established members of the community. He built a sawmill and a grist mill. He also created St. Dennis Chapel, for some years the only place of worship on the Bayside between San Francisco and Santa Clara. Sadly, Martin became caught up in the legal land battle between the heirs of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* and the Arguello family, of *Rancho de las Pulgas* and eventually lost everything. He died destitute in San Francisco in 1890.³¹

Irish Presbyterian Captain John Greer is also different from the earlier foreigners. He entered San Francisco Bay with his ship *Wild Duck* in 1849 and noticed a forest of masts parked at Yerba Buena Cove. Some 700 ships were there, deserted by their crews who left for the Gold Country. After the *Wild Duck* dropped anchor, his entire crew, with the exception of a salt so infirm he could hardly walk named McEchin, followed the other sailors into the Gold Country. In the next year his fortunes were radically changed when he married John Copinger's widow, Maria Luisa, and settled down at their *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*, in the heart of the thriving lumber country. They had five children together. Maria Luisa died in 1883 and John followed her in death in 1885.

THE LOGGING INDUSTRY AND THE BUILDING OF SAN FRANCISCO (CONTEXTUAL)

On January 24, 1848, James Marshall spotted something shiny in the American River while working on a mill for John Sutter. It was gold.

In part to justify the war with Mexico, that December, President James K. Polk displayed some eight pounds of California gold during his State of the Union address. The demonstration sparked the rush to the Pacific coast in the new year. San Francisco became a boomtown. It was the only oceangoing port on the California coast with access to the great river valley, which was itself only miles from the gold in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada.

Everybody (if not coming by covered wagon) and everything destined for the Gold Country stopped in the City first. Smaller ships and boats then completed the trip to jumping off places like Sacramento and Stockton.

The growth at San Francisco can be mostly described as frantic. Within two years of Polk's speech the population of San Francisco had jumped from a few hundred to 30,000.³² Even with the incredible influx of people, San Francisco existed as a place occupied by a largely transient population. Hence it has been referred to as a "place

without homes.”³³ The mostly male population did build auction houses, hotels, bathhouses, billiard rooms, boardinghouses, eating and drinking establishments, o+ ces (buildings reaching up four stories), banks, groggeries, gambling saloons and brothels. By the end of 1850 this instant city, built around its wharves at Yerba Buena Cove, suffered four devastating fires, necessitating it being nearly completely rebuilt each time. Construction materials became of vital importance for San Francisco, and entrepreneurs focused on the *Pulgas* redwoods down the Peninsula.

Of all the woods available to San Franciscans, redwood was the best. It does not warp. It resists insect infestation. It contains no resins. It is beautiful as a finished product. Most importantly, it is very durable. As late as the 1890s, observers of early construction in California marveled how the 1820s, Russian-built Fort Ross, made of redwood, was still a solid structure. The earliest fences in San Mateo County made of this material were “still sound”³⁴ as well.

Redwoods were plentiful throughout the world millions of years ago. However glaciers and other massive changes in the earth’s history left just a few places on earth where they still existed by 1849.³⁵ Between the Oregon border and Monterey lay a 500-mile strip within the fog belt of coastal mountains that still could support these gigantic trees, many of which were, themselves, thousands of years old.

Within this strip, the eastern and western slopes of the mountain ridge running through the middle of the San Francisco Peninsula provided a perfect environment for the *Sequoia sempervirens*³⁶ to thrive. Five to 20 feet in diameter, they existed in great numbers in 1849, and were amongst the first of the natural resources to be exploited in California at the beginning of the American period of the state’s history. The few “old growth” redwoods that still exist on the Phleger Estate are counted among the last of their kind.

The first Spanish in the area, with Gaspar de Portolá in 1769, made note of the trees. Padre Juan Crespi wrote: “The coastal plains and low hills were well forested with very high trees of a red cedar not known to us. . . in this region there is a great abundance of these trees, and because none of the expedition recognizes them they are named redwood from their color.”³⁷

While the fathers at *Mission Santa Clara* were, as early as 1777, teaching neophytes lumbering techniques,³⁸ it was probably not until 1787 that the missionaries at San Francisco, in the midst of updating their building, began using lumber from down the Peninsula. That year the padres reported “a good-sized cutting of timber was made for the construction of the Church.”³⁹

As mentioned previously, lack of adequate tools and technology limited these activi-

PHLEGER ESTATE

In 1935, Herman and Mary Elena Phleger purchased their Mountain Meadow property that has come to be known as the Phleger Estate. In 1984, Herman died. He and Mary Elena had been life-long boosters of conservation and environmental causes. In that spirit, Mary Elena offered the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) the opportunity to preserve the property. Within four years, POST managed to raise the necessary funding to make the purchase possible. On April 29, 1995, the Phleger Estate was dedicated as a part of the GGNRA.

The 1,084 acre parcel¹ is located west of Cañada Road and north of San Mateo County's Huddart Park in the southern hill country of the Peninsula, once a portion of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* in the heart of a robust logging industry during the nineteenth century. Its western boundary is a forested ridge plainly visible from United States Interstate 280 to the east. This ridge and slope is the eastern portion of Kings Mountain of the Sierra Morena or Santa Cruz Range of Mountains (also referred to as the Skyline) and at 2,315 feet is the second highest point in San Mateo County.² Three major drainages run from the Mountain into West Union Creek.

The Phleger Estate includes redwoods, mixed evergreens and tan oak woodlands. The redwoods are mostly in stream corridors of canyons of the Skyline and also along West Union Creek. These trees include mostly second-growth redwoods, however, the lumberjacks did not take every one of the original sequoias, because a few old growth trees, obviously the more inaccessible ones, live in the upper portions of the property. The tan oaks grow on the moist slopes often between grasslands and chaparral. The canopy from these trees is dense.³

EARLY OCCUPATION

INDIAN PEOPLE

When the Spanish arrived on the San Francisco Peninsula in 1769, the land from present day Belmont, south to Redwood City, and from the Bay into the hills was occupied by the Lamchin local tribe of the Ohlone group of California Indians. Their region of occupation included today's Woodside, Huddart Park and the Phleger Estate. At this time of contact, mission records tell us that the Lamchin consisted of about 350 people. The padres spoke of the Lamchin as possessing four villages, Cchanigtac, Guloisnistac, Oromstac and Supichon. It has never been precisely determined where these villages existed.⁴

The Spanish moved most of the Lamchin to *Mission San Francisco de Asís*, where they

were made Christians, between 1784 and 1793. A few were baptized at *Mission Santa Clara* during this same period.⁵

Before being brought to the missions, it's likely that the Lamchin living in the Phleger Estate area existed the way most Ohlone people did (see Introduction and Sweeney Ridge portions of this study for more about the Ohlones). Certainly this particular place rendered rich food sources. There were small mammals, waterfowl, deer, elk and fish readily available, along with acorn and other key substances. However, the people suffered by having the fierce grizzly bear present.

Archeological investigation of the Phleger Estate has been ongoing since 1974. One site has been found, a substantial village, which included a large midden (refuse heap) with 15 bedrock mortars (for acorn grinding). This 30,000 meter area is located on property still held privately. The village may have extended into GGNRA lands.⁶

THE SPANISH

The first Europeans to encounter the great redwood forests of the Peninsula were the members of the Gaspar de Portolá party of 1769. After having discovered the San Francisco Bay from Sweeney Ridge, this military expedition turned south in an attempt to find a way around the estuary. It is possible that they camped on or near the Phleger Estate, as they made note of the great trees.

The next Spanish soldier to explore the valley was Captain Francisco Rivera y Moncada in 1774. He was charged with scouting for locations to place a *presidio* and a mission. The party most likely passed east of the Phleger Estate. Rivera recorded visiting five large villages that he had not seen when he was with Portolá, five years earlier.⁷

When Lieutenant Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza came through in 1776, also scouting for the mission and *presidio* sites, he wrote about the redwoods and their potential for helping the community at San Francisco with future needs.

Despite Anza's observations, the Spanish generally did not see the immense redwood trees as great resources to help with building their mission communities. Instead they largely made use of adobe for construction. The trees were so huge that harvesting them seemed too labor intensive.

RANCHO CAÑADA DE RAYMUNDO

After secularization of the mission lands, the property now called the Phleger Estate was (in 1841) granted to John Copinger, as part of his 12,545-acre *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*.⁸ This massive portion of the central Peninsula included, in today's terms, the watershed area from Upper Crystal Springs Reservoir, south including nearly all of Woodside up to Portola Road and, roughly east from Cañada Road to the Skyline.

Within today's San Mateo County, Copinger was one of two non-Spanish or Mexican-born men to receive land grants during the Mexican era of California History (the other being American businessman Jacob Leese). Copinger was, in fact, born the son of Alderman John Copinger⁹ in Dublin, Ireland in 1810. There exists various tales about the man. Among them is one that he became a British Naval Lieutenant in the mid-1830s and in a dispute with his commanding officer threw a glass at him. He then deserted the Navy while his ship was anchored in the San Francisco Bay, near the little port of Yerba Buena.¹⁰

In 1836, Copinger became embroiled in California politics when he supported Sub-inspector of Customs at Monterey, Juan Bautista Alvarado, in leading a revolt against the Mexican appointed Governor, using the slogan: "California for Californians."¹¹ Down in Monterey, he served under Alvarado as a lieutenant and helped him defeat a small Mexican troop. Alvarado then became the new governor. Copinger travelled to the San Francisquito Creek area and joined Bill "The Sawyer" Smith and other non-Mexican drifters and whipsawyers to work among the redwood trees.¹² Such individuals were like Copinger, trying to find safe haven from authorities that might be looking for them.

Another story tells how Copinger found work with Doña Soto, the widow of Rafael Soto. Her father-in-law, Ignacio Soto, had been among the original California colonists with Juan Bautista de Anza in 1776. Rafael acquired *Rancho Rincoñada del Arroyo de San Francisquito* in the Palo Alto area of today. It could be said that if Copinger worked for Soto, then he married his boss' daughter -- Maria Luisa Soto (in 1839). As Maria's husband, Copinger became one of a number of English-speaking foreigners who would marry into Mexican families, allowing them increased access to the ruling elite in California.

This marriage, Copinger's record as a "war veteran" and his becoming a Mexican citizen all helped him to gain political favor. He also either converted to the Catholic religion, or was a Catholic already. Being a Catholic assisted him, also in 1839, to be appointed Justice of the Peace for "the Redwoods" by his friend Alvarado. His jurisdiction extended to the coast and made up about half of today's San Mateo County. The Governor then awarded him *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* the next year.

In 1841, Copinger began building an adobe home at his *rancho* which he finished in 1842. It stood northwest of the present intersection of Kings Mountain and Woodside Roads, which became known as Adobe Corner. The Great Earthquake of 1906 destroyed this house. Nearby, in the Bear Gulch area, he constructed a grist mill and dam. Copinger became involved in lumbering operations on his *rancho*. Extraordinarily, according to Mexican government records of 1841, 100,000 board feet of wood were ready at the embarcadero near Santa Clara for export to the Hawaiian Islands.

It is presumed that most or all of this was logged on Copinger's *rancho*, all in the day before lumber mills.¹³

With the outbreak of the Mexican-American War in 1846, Copinger began selling off his land. The exact nature of the boundaries of *Cañada Raymundo* would haunt the new owners for years. As early as 1841, Francisco Guerrero, of Rancho Corral de Tierra fame, was brought in to settle a dispute between Copinger and his neighbors, the Arguello family of *Rancho de las Pulgas*. Guerrero found in favor of the Arguellos. Nevertheless, heirs of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* sold portions of the disputed land creating endless court cases, that were not truly resolved until the United States Congress stepped in and enacted bill HR11404 on January 19, 1914, "for relief of claimants of the Coppinger (sic.) Grant."

Copinger died in 1847. Maria then married another Irish seaman, Captain John Greer.¹⁴ Greer became somewhat of a local legend too. He laid out today's Cañada Road (1862) and sold timber rights to a variety of parties. As the Gold Rush started in 1849, one of these, entrepreneur Charles Brown, initiated a more productive logging industry by introducing a water-powered sawmill to the redwood country.¹⁵

As with all the *rancho* owners, Maria Luisa Soto Copinger Greer had to prove she owned her land grant after the Land Act of 1851 passed. Lengthy and costly legal proceedings finally ended in a patent issued in 1859 to her and her daughter,¹⁶ Manuela Copinger Greer. In 1867, Manuela married Antonio Miramontes who lived in the Portola Valley. He was the grandson of Candelario Miramontes, owner of the extensive Coastside *rancho* at Half Moon Bay.

FOREIGNERS IN THE REDWOODS

While Copinger may have been the most prominent, there was an amorphous group of foreigners in the redwoods during the Mexican period that lived on or in the vicinity of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*. Beginning with Mexican independence in 1821, California was opened up for trade, and ships from around the world visited here, bartering a variety of goods principally for hides and tallow. Life at sea could be difficult and cruel, so there is no wonder why some sailors deserted ship when anchored at Yerba Buena. It was hard to hide on the windswept northern end of the Peninsula, and so these former seamen hid out in the wooded mountains to the south.¹⁷ As deserters, their character on the whole was questionable, looked upon by most as drifters and, worse, criminals. The *Californios* were known to catch and return sailors to their ships, for rewards, but in the redwoods, except for a couple of round-ups, these fugitives seemed to have found protected refuge. Once his ship left port the chances of a man being captured were reduced to practically nothing. Among the deserters, themselves, they felt "no stain upon a man's character" for leaving a ship, since most were "maltreated"¹⁸ aboard their vessels. They seem to have been largely

English-speaking, hailing mostly from the United States but also from England, Ireland and Scotland. Probably, they never numbered more than about 50 individuals on the stretch of land radiating outward from today's Kings Mountain and Woodside Roads. They called the place "*Pulgas* redwoods."¹⁹

These men turned out thousands of feet of lumber using the simplest tools and techniques. Other foreigners made do by operating stills. Such alcohol making operations were ubiquitous throughout the lumbering countryside.

In matters of socialization, there were no English-speaking women in the redwoods. So, the sawyers naturally attempted contact with Spanish-speaking women. The attitude about such relationships among the *Californios* was generally favorable. The English-speakers were encouraged to become citizens of Mexico, and, provided they were or could become Catholic, some, like John Copinger, were even granted land.²⁰ The *Californios* had fascination for the ways of the foreigners and welcomed their business sense and opportunities they brought with them. Marriages cemented relationships and made for important political and business alliances.

According to Richard Henry Dana in his *Two Years Before the Mast* (1840), the first of the "*Ingles*" (as the Californians called English-speakers) to make inroads into *Californio* society were the shopkeepers and traders who arrived with the first ships in the 1820s. They were numerous at Monterey where they stood in the middle between the goods of the merchant ships and the hides and tallow of the rancheros. The *Californios* were mostly suspicious of the ships' captains, but the *Ingles*, who lived amongst them, had become Mexican citizens, converted to Catholicism and married into their families; thus they could be trusted.

Several of the most important men of the Peninsula made great progress by entering into marriage with local women. They include names already discussed in this study, such as John Copinger, James Denniston (who came to own *Rancho Corral de Tierra*) and James Johnston (the dairyman at Half Moon Bay).

The marriages, while acceptable to the *Californios*, were sometimes looked down upon by east coast Americans. In general, people from the United States held certain prejudices, about the citizens of Mexico. They felt them lazy, wasteful and immoral. They also derided their Catholic religion, holding their Protestant work ethic and other values superior to a religion corrupted by power-hungry priests in Rome. Also, very real to them was the concept that people of Anglo-Saxon background were racially superior to Latin Americans. For most of the early *Ingles* of the *Pulgas* redwoods, these types of prejudices were left on the ships they deserted.

By all accounts the first of the foreigners to see the giant redwoods and to enter into

the logging business was Bill “The Sawyer” Smith. He came on the Woodside scene in 1832 with his whipsaw and built a small shake cabin near Woodside and Kings Mountain Roads, close to where Copinger constructed his adobe ten years later.²¹ In 1834, Smith (also known by the *Californios* as Guillermo Esmit) married Josepa Saenz at Mission Dolores.²² The couple lived down the Peninsula, where Smith continued his logging activities.

Among the stories concerning this legendary character of the redwoods is one about him, and another sawyer named George Ferguson. One night in 1835, a grizzly bear rampaged through their camp. The next day they constructed a trap by digging a pit. That night a bear was caught, and they tried to crush it to death with a log. After this failed and the bear escaped, Smith went to Yerba Buena and purchased an old musket. The two men killed a steer when Smith returned and used it for bait. They shot three bears in the hours between sunset and dawn.²³

Perhaps the most well-known of the early *Ingles* of the *Pulgas* redwoods was Charles Brown. He was born in New York in 1814. He served aboard the whaler *Helvetius*, until the vessel visited Yerba Buena, in 1833, and he deserted.²⁴ He arrived in the Woodside area within the year. About 1837, he married one of the daughters of Antonio Garcia of San Jose.²⁵ Around 1839, he purchased a portion of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* from John Copinger. He raised cattle there and built an adobe home that still stands on private property, near the junction of Woodside and Portola Roads.

In June of 1838, a severe earthquake along the San Andreas Fault split the earth between San Francisco and Santa Clara. Brown later described how giant redwood trees rocked, some splintering into pieces, and others were thrown down hillsides. He also noted that adobe structures were cracked and ruined.

After the Gold Rush started, Brown was among the first to realize the potential of the redwoods in building the great city that was growing exponentially at the northern tip of the Peninsula. He is credited with building the first lumber mill in the *Pulgas* redwoods in 1849.

Brown’s first wife died in 1850. He then married Rosalia de Haro, a sister of the well-known de Haro twins, Francisco and Ramon, killed during the Bear Flag Revolt. Her father, Francisco, owned *Rancho Laguna de la Merced* in today’s Daly City area. He had also been an *alcalde* of Yerba Buena. Showing how common the marriages of the *ranchero*’s daughters to the *Ingles* had become, this also represented Rosalia’s second marriage. She had married August Andrews back in 1844.²⁶

The list of deserters finding refuge in the *Pulgas* redwoods and marrying *Californio* women goes on. Another example is Scotsman James Pease (also seen as Peace). He

jumped ship in 1835 and married Pedro Valencia's daughter, Guadalupe. They eventually had two sons, James and Antonio.²⁷

Probably the most influential of the *Ingles* in the Bay Region was William Richardson. This Englishman, born in 1795, was first mate on a whaler visiting San Francisco Bay. He decided to stay, became a Catholic and married Maria Antonia Martínez, daughter of the *presidio's* *comandante*, Ignacio Martínez. Mexican authorities made him Captain of the Port in 1835, and he is said to have built the first house at Yerba Buena, a canvas and wooden structure. He constructed a proper adobe house the next year. He is thus credited for founding San Francisco as a commercial center. As the hide-and-tallow trade increased in importance into the 1840s, the community at Yerba Buena Cove, about where the Transamerica Building is located today, gained activity. Richardson ran two schooners manned by Indian crews back and forth from Santa Clara. He specialized in selling grain, hides and tallow. He valued the grain at 20¢ per *fanega*, hides 12¢ each and \$1.00 for a bag of tallow. Richardson was also notable for receiving *Rancho Saucelito* across the Golden Gate.²⁸

Back in the redwoods, the population in the late 1830s and 1840s grew too. Increasingly, men from around the world ended up there. This included Englishmen Jim "The Corporal" and "Sergeant" Lewis, marines who deserted H.M.S. Sulpher in 1836.²⁹ They were joined by fellow countrymen Robert Livermore and William Swinbourn. Americans we know about included Henry Jubilee Bee, Billy Bonito, Hopping Jack and Black George. Juan Moreno (John Brown) was probably a Swede. French Joe was possibly French or Canadian.

As a group, American William Heath Davis remembered them as an increasingly "loose and roving lot," and poor credit risks.³⁰ Under Governor Alvarado, the *Pulgas* redwoods were raided in 1840, and authorities took those who could not produce proper papers to Monterey. In May of 1841 a second sweep of the *Pulgas* redwoods was made. Ten were caught including two Englishmen, two Germans, one Scot, one Canadian, one Swede, one Portuguese, one Irishman and one Frenchman. Interestingly, no Americans were picked up.

With the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), the discovery of Gold (1848) and the Gold Rush (1849), new types of pioneers began showing up in the redwood country. Irishman Dennis Martin came to California with the first wagon train over the Sierra Nevada in the winter of 1844-45. He had started out in Missouri with his father and brother as part of the Elisha Stevens party. They crossed over the mountains two years before the Donner Party attempted it. He was at Sutter's Fort for some time and then came to the Bay Area, where in 1849 he married Bridget O'Neill at the Mission in San Francisco.

The couple moved to the southern part of the Peninsula and, in 1850, bought a portion of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* at San Francisquito Creek from John Greer, who had just married Maria Luisa Soto Copinger. Martin became one of the more established members of the community. He built a sawmill and a grist mill. He also created St. Dennis Chapel, for some years the only place of worship on the Bayside between San Francisco and Santa Clara. Sadly, Martin became caught up in the legal land battle between the heirs of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* and the Arguello family, of *Rancho de las Pulgas* and eventually lost everything. He died destitute in San Francisco in 1890.³¹

Irish Presbyterian Captain John Greer is also different from the earlier foreigners. He entered San Francisco Bay with his ship *Wild Duck* in 1849 and noticed a forest of masts parked at Yerba Buena Cove. Some 700 ships were there, deserted by their crews who left for the Gold Country. After the *Wild Duck* dropped anchor, his entire crew, with the exception of a salt so infirm he could hardly walk named McEchin, followed the other sailors into the Gold Country. In the next year his fortunes were radically changed when he married John Copinger's widow, Maria Luisa, and settled down at their *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*, in the heart of the thriving lumber country. They had five children together. Maria Luisa died in 1883 and John followed her in death in 1885.

THE LOGGING INDUSTRY AND THE BUILDING OF SAN FRANCISCO (CONTEXTUAL)

On January 24, 1848, James Marshall spotted something shiny in the American River while working on a mill for John Sutter. It was gold.

In part to justify the war with Mexico, that December, President James K. Polk displayed some eight pounds of California gold during his State of the Union address. The demonstration sparked the rush to the Pacific coast in the new year. San Francisco became a boomtown. It was the only oceangoing port on the California coast with access to the great river valley, which was itself only miles from the gold in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada.

Everybody (if not coming by covered wagon) and everything destined for the Gold Country stopped in the City first. Smaller ships and boats then completed the trip to jumping off places like Sacramento and Stockton.

The growth at San Francisco can be mostly described as frantic. Within two years of Polk's speech the population of San Francisco had jumped from a few hundred to 30,000.³² Even with the incredible influx of people, San Francisco existed as a place occupied by a largely transient population. Hence it has been referred to as a "place

without homes.”³³ The mostly male population did build auction houses, hotels, bathhouses, billiard rooms, boardinghouses, eating and drinking establishments, o+ ces (buildings reaching up four stories), banks, groggeries, gambling saloons and brothels. By the end of 1850 this instant city, built around its wharves at Yerba Buena Cove, suffered four devastating fires, necessitating it being nearly completely rebuilt each time. Construction materials became of vital importance for San Francisco, and entrepreneurs focused on the *Pulgas* redwoods down the Peninsula.

Of all the woods available to San Franciscans, redwood was the best. It does not warp. It resists insect infestation. It contains no resins. It is beautiful as a finished product. Most importantly, it is very durable. As late as the 1890s, observers of early construction in California marveled how the 1820s, Russian-built Fort Ross, made of redwood, was still a solid structure. The earliest fences in San Mateo County made of this material were “still sound”³⁴ as well.

Redwoods were plentiful throughout the world millions of years ago. However glaciers and other massive changes in the earth’s history left just a few places on earth where they still existed by 1849.³⁵ Between the Oregon border and Monterey lay a 500-mile strip within the fog belt of coastal mountains that still could support these gigantic trees, many of which were, themselves, thousands of years old.

Within this strip, the eastern and western slopes of the mountain ridge running through the middle of the San Francisco Peninsula provided a perfect environment for the *Sequoia sempervirens*³⁶ to thrive. Five to 20 feet in diameter, they existed in great numbers in 1849, and were amongst the first of the natural resources to be exploited in California at the beginning of the American period of the state’s history. The few “old growth” redwoods that still exist on the Phleger Estate are counted among the last of their kind.

The first Spanish in the area, with Gaspar de Portolá in 1769, made note of the trees. Padre Juan Crespi wrote: “The coastal plains and low hills were well forested with very high trees of a red cedar not known to us. . . in this region there is a great abundance of these trees, and because none of the expedition recognizes them they are named redwood from their color.”³⁷

While the fathers at *Mission Santa Clara* were, as early as 1777, teaching neophytes lumbering techniques,³⁸ it was probably not until 1787 that the missionaries at San Francisco, in the midst of updating their building, began using lumber from down the Peninsula. That year the padres reported “a good-sized cutting of timber was made for the construction of the Church.”³⁹

As mentioned previously, lack of adequate tools and technology limited these activi-

ties. However, some of the huge trees were chopped down and then pulled to the mission communities by oxen. In part this laborious task made oak for doors and rafters more preferable for the traditional adobe buildings.

Early Spanish records tell us that the soldiers at the San Francisco *Presidio* became more aggressive about using the redwoods for construction than their mission neighbors. In the 1790s, army officers identified timber at “a distance of more than ten leagues”⁴⁰ as necessary for their needs. The padres supplied ox-teams and Indian ax-men to do the work under the supervision of soldiers. It is probable that the Spanish performed their cuttings at the most accessible point to the trees, at today’s Woodside and King’s Mountain Roads.

Still, it was hard work. The soldiers knew that even a small redwood was difficult to fell and transport. In 1792, the sergeant in charge of the operation complained of the great distance to the redwoods (30 miles), and “with luck the journey can be made once each week, and this not at all seasons of the year.”⁴¹ This represented a three-day excursion, as oxen dragged beams, hewn and adzed in the redwood country. Redwood boards were hardly called for, as they required the tedious process of sawing and splitting. For example, at the Santa Cruz Mission in 1818, six men worked six days to make just five 12-foot planks.

Nevertheless, in 1793, *Alta California* Governor José Joaquín Arrillaga ordered the *presidios* strengthened, citing the increased possibility of foreign aggression. The Spanish had lost a diplomatic standoff with the British at Nootka Sound in 1790. In 1792, British Captain George Vancouver visited California and witnessed firsthand the weakness of the *Presidio* at San Francisco.⁴² Soldiers at San Francisco trained young oxen and built huge carts to pull the logs to the tip of the Peninsula, where they were building the *Castillo*, a fortress overlooking the Golden Gate, sitting on a bluff later cut away to create Fort Point in the 1850s. (See Milagra Ridge portion of this study.) Lumber was also shipped up the coast from Monterey. In 1794, the garrison employed 23 yokes of oxen (46 animals) to haul the timber to San Francisco.⁴³

Evidently, 1797 was the year of most activity when 51 trips for timber were made between spring and winter. The mission records tell us that the padres provided both the oxen and the Indians for this work.⁴⁴ The trails made for these shipments became future roads. For example, Santa Clara Road (now Sand Hill Road) was the route to *Mission Santa Clara*.⁴⁵ The wood taken to San Francisco followed El Camino Real.

Of course, during Mexican times it was the foreigners that performed the logging activities in the redwoods of the Peninsula. They would generally work in teams of two men. To fill a typical order might take six weeks. The loggers would dig a pit and then fell a tree. They would then roll the tree over to the pit where it could be rested on

cross-logs. The partners then ripped the tree with a two-man whipsaw with one working on top and the other beneath. The whipsaws had serrated blades and were about six feet long. The sawpits were actually more like trenches, 20 feet or so in length and three feet wide and some eight feet deep. While a simple process, the sawpit style of labor was a great improvement over the Spanish adz and axe.

Another innovation of the foreigners was to not pull the lumber all the way up to San Francisco. There was a trail developed from *Cañada de Raymundo* to Redwood Creek at least as early as 1841. It is likely that the *Californios* used this trail to get their hides and tallow to schooners at Redwood Creek for transport up to San Francisco.⁴⁶ In 1841, a United States Exploring Expedition recorded encountering Americans at a landing loading redwood on to a launch.⁴⁷ There were also embarcaderos used by loggers further south where San Francisquito Creek empties into the Bay and yet further down at Alviso.

Thus a foreign work force, new technologies and a better transportation route allowed the redwood lumber industry to advance. As mentioned, thousands of board feet of wood were already being harvested from the redwood forests of the Peninsula, even before the Gold Rush had begun.

After it did start, demand for Peninsula redwood grew many fold. By the middle of the 1850s, the City's population stood at 50,000. Periodic fires ravaged the place, requiring considerable rebuilding efforts.

Meanwhile San Francisco builders found redwood an excellent material for constructing roads over marshy areas. Workers drove piles into the bay mud and laid down planks on top of them. These thoroughfares were near the wharves, economically, the most important part of town. They proved wide enough for teams of oxen, mules or horses to pass one another. During the 1850s it was estimated that such wooden roads cost \$70,000 a mile, putting considerably more pressure on the redwood market. City crews also built sidewalks from redwood.

Throughout northern California, redwood was found to be valuable in other ways. Fence posts, for example, were made from redwood. Famous cattle barons Charles Lux and Henry Miller used wood from the Peninsula to build their first fence in the San Joaquin Valley -- 68 miles long.⁴⁸ Redwood tanks for water, beer, wine and other liquid products became popular first in California, then in Arizona and New Mexico and eventually in places as far east as Milwaukee, Toledo and Detroit.

Nineteenth-century technology kept pace with the demand. Clear-cutting and environmental devastation occurred, but the loggers of those days lacked the sensitivi-

ties of later conservationists and environmentalists. The land and trees were natural resources meant to be used, almost as a patriotic duty -- nearly a religious mandate.

At first, those with logging experience from the east were stymied, like everyone before, by the size of the redwoods. They were used to trees of 12 to 24 inches in diameter, not 5 to 20 feet! Their three-foot long saw blades were just too small. Some of the lumbermen resorted to using five-foot long hand augers to drill holes into downed trees, packing the holes with dynamite and blasting the logs into pieces in order to get the wood to a size suitable for cutting.

The greatest advancement the loggers brought with them was the creation of mills -- at first water powered and then steam powered. Because of the immense size of the redwoods, the mills were actually built to follow the cuttings,⁴⁹ even if it took many weeks to clear a site suitable for the construction of the mill. The mills were setup downhill from the logging sites to allow for gravity to assist in moving the felled trees.

The water powered mills possessed a straight (up and down) saw or two that moved up and down. Steam mills and later gang mills allowed for utilization of circular saws, a great improvement.⁵⁰ After longer two-man saw blades and other improvements in their tools were introduced, it still would typically take a crew about seven days to cut down a redwood. Another few days were necessary to chop it into maneuverable lengths. Perhaps a day was needed to then get these pieces to the mill site.⁵¹

A mill's length of activity at a site was usually about five years. After the clear cutting process, when practically nothing was left standing, it was time to move on. For loggers on the eastern slope of the Kings Mountain area, this meant moving up hill toward the Skyline. In order to facilitate this move toward the higher locations, skid roads were installed. The lumbermen used these paths to drag the logs downhill with oxen. For parts of the road not overly steep, 12-foot long logs were placed across the road; these were skids. In order to move things along, the team leaders, called "bullwhackers" (sometimes "bull masters"), would have the skids greased with animal fat, by crew members called "grease monkeys." According to local historian Gilbert Richards, the fat could take on a particular odor and: "It was a common saying that on a hot day the logs could float down on the fumes alone."⁵² By the 1860s, this process had proven so successful that most of the eastern slope of the Skyline had been clear-cut and mills were moving over the summit to get at the trees on the west side. Logging was no longer the job of a sawyer, his partner and his whipsaw. It had become a mechanized big business.^{53,54}

As has been alluded to, Charles Brown built the first mill on the Peninsula -- a small one -- with just one up and down saw with an edger. Brown, who purchased his property from John Copinger, called his 2,800-acre parcel *Mountain Home Ranch*. This

land lay in today's Searsville Lake area between Alambique and Bear Gulch Creeks. The mill stood at Alambique Creek and today's Portola Road. The site is California State Landmark, number 478. Some local historians report its being built as early as 1847, but San Mateo County Historical Museum Director Frank Stanger found its construction as completed in October of 1849, when Brown placed an advertisement in the *Alta California* for a millwright, of whom he promised "liberal wages."⁵⁵ Stanger admits that "nobody seems to know where he (Brown) got his machinery."

As this mill was fully dependent on water power, it was only operational during a few months in the year, when there was sufficient enough water running down the creek to move the water wheel. After a year, new mill owners replaced this power source with a steam boiler and a forty-horsepower engine, another "first" for the Peninsula.

Dennis Martin might have been the first to build a mill, also near today's Searsville Lake, but this initial project was destroyed by a flood before it could go into action.⁵⁶ Almost simultaneous to the completion of Brown's mill, Martin had his second mill operational, with two saws, as opposed to Brown's one. This one, on Dennis Martin Creek, had sufficient enough water to power Martin's mill with more force and to do so for more months out of the year than Brown's. For three of its years, Martin had William W. Waddell manage the operations here. Waddell would later relocate to the Coastside and build a mill. A grizzly bear attack ended his life (see the Mori Point section of this study). Martin built a third mill, a "gang" mill, further uphill which possessed 26 saws. He operated this mill until 1856.

By 1853, there were 14 mills, carving up the redwood forest on the eastern slope of the Skyline.⁵⁷

Unquestionably, activity was brisk that year. One observer reported counting 50 wagons unloading lumber at the embarcadero that was becoming the town of Redwood City.⁵⁸

Nine years later, in 1862, this brisk business had hardly diminished. At Redwood City, during the summer, an average of 50,000 board feet of timber, 1,730,000 shingles, 108,700 fence posts and 152 cords of firewood were being exported weekly to San Francisco.⁵⁹ Up in the City the milled wood helped construct new wharves, bridges, more planked streets, barns, stores and houses. Once a City "without homes," it was now the city of redwood houses. The redwood used for the pilings at the embarcadero were indispensable to San Francisco's success as a port city.⁶⁰ Even as the accessible lumber became harder to harvest, milling operations continued throughout the nineteenth century. All told about 35 mills operated at one time or another on the east side of the Skyline.

The effect of this economic activity in the Woodside area was substantial. More people lived in the redwood country than anywhere else below San Francisco on the Peninsula. This was reflected in school attendance. When in October of 1859, the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools counted pupils, he recorded 85 at Redwood City, the largest town in the County, but more than 200 were present in the lumbering districts. In fact the first San Mateo County group anxious to create a library, the Woodside Library Association, met in the redwoods that same year.⁶¹

The census of 1860 reveals 5,300 people living in San Mateo County, a 1,000 percent increase in population from that of 1849. In the meantime, that harbinger of nineteenth century progress, the railroad, was already planned for the Bayside, and by the beginning of 1864 a track was laid and functioning between San Francisco and San Jose.⁶²

With all this growth came a new type of entrepreneur to the redwoods. These individuals were not here just as exploiters of the forest. They came to make money, certainly, but they settled here as well. No better example of this type of pioneer is the legendary Dr. R.O. Tripp.

Tripp was born in New Port, New York in 1816. Orphaned, he grew up on his uncle's farm. He trained to become a dentist at Foxboro, Massachusetts, and practiced there until word of gold in California compelled him to come west. He and a friend, James Ryder, sailed to Central America in 1849 and booked passage to California. In San Francisco, he established a dental business, extracting teeth for four dollars each and plugging them for eight. The unethical practice of other dentists in the area are said to have soured Tripp on the profession -- plus he desired to live in a drier climate.⁶³ Tripp and Ryder entered into a partnership to cut logs in the Woodside area with William Lloyd, a blacksmith, and Alvinza Hayward, a bullwhacker from Amador County. Their aim was to provide lumber to build wharves at San Francisco.

In early 1850, the partners found the access to the Bay at today's Redwood City and started bringing lumber down from the mills. Tripp leased cutting rights from the owners of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*.

William Lloyd soon went on to become a farmer in the Searsville area. Alvinza Hayward eventually made a fortune in mining stocks and established a massive estate in San Mateo. In a horrific incident, Tripp's old friend, James Ryder, was severely mauled by a grizzly bear. He lived through the ordeal and left the area to move back east. He forever after was known as "Grizzly Ryder." Meanwhile, the name of the gulch where he had encountered the mother bear and her two cubs took the name "Bear Gulch."

That left Tripp, now 35 years old, without partners. In 1851, he entered into a new

arrangement with two shingle makers, M.A. Parkhurst and Parkhurst's partner, a man named Ellis. According to Tripp, Ellis "drank hard,"⁶⁴ and eventually moved on. However, with the 22-year-old Parkhurst, Tripp established a 12-year, productive collaboration.

In 1851 they opened a general store, the Woodside Store. (See next section for more about the Store.) Tripp became embroiled in local politics, in fact serving as a San Francisco County Supervisor before San Mateo County was formed. After San Mateo County did become established, the first raising of an American flag in the County occurred at his store on July 4, 1856. That same year he married his housekeeper, Emeline Skelton of Lexington, Massachusetts.

Tripp became the county's first "public administrator" in 1859. Later he continued his political career by assuming the position of postmaster in the Woodside area during Republican administrations. Parkhurst, too, was a pillar of the community. He was a charter member of the Woodside Library Association. Sadly, he died a young man in 1863.

Tripp and Emeline continued to run the store and built a house across the road. They had one daughter live to adulthood, Addie. Emeline died in 1883, but Tripp lived until 1909, and ran the store as a 93-year-old. With his death, Addie closed the Store.⁶⁵ It is now open to the public as a museum at the intersection of Kings Mountain and Tripp Roads.⁶⁶

The lumber business certainly left its mark. After the accessible redwoods on the eastern side of the Skyline had been taken, loggers moved to the summit of Kings Mountain and then over to the west side. By 1890, nearly all the old growth redwoods had been taken in San Mateo County, except for those surviving at the headwaters of the Pescadero and Butano Creeks, far to the south on the Coastside.⁶⁷ Any left on the Bayside were basically thought to be "inaccessible".⁶⁸ By 1900, nearly all the mills were gone, even those that had been cutting up the new growth redwoods or other kinds of trees. Although there was terrific demand for lumber after the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, most of the wood necessary for the rebuilding of the City came from the large mills up in the Pacific Northwest.⁶⁹

LOGGING AND OTHER ACTIVITIES IN THE VICINITY OF THE PHLEGER ESTATE

There are three mill sites that supported five separate redwood logging operations on what is now called the Phleger Estate. All were in the vicinity of West Union Creek. Streamlets high up Kings Mountain run into it as it heads northeast then southeast

down *Cañada Raymundo*. The waters eventually drain into San Francisquito Creek and then meander into San Francisco Bay.

Willard Whipple is the name most associated with the history of the area, since busy Whipple Avenue in Redwood City is named for him. The thoroughfare was originally called Whipple's Mill Road because of the lumber he hauled on it and then Whipple Road, before its current appellation, Whipple Avenue.⁷⁰

Whipple was born in New York, around 1803. He married Elizabeth Hayes in 1824 and followed his parents by entering into the Mormon Church. It is thought he left the Mormon settlement at Nauvoo, Illinois in 1844, and then came to California.⁷¹

That his politics were pro-North, as the Civil War approached, is evident in his naming the Creek of which he is associated: "Union Creek." As the stream flowed between his two mills, he originally referred to sections of the Creek as "East Union Mill" and "West Union Mill". Common usage, however, designated the "Upper Mill" as the western site and "Lower Mill" as the one to the east. The Creek itself simply became West Union.

Whipple originally got into the redwood business in the Woodside area when he, with Isaac Branham and a man named DeHart, built a steam-powered mill at the site of Charles Brown's mill at Alambique Creek. Whipple, with a previous partner, had evidently brought a steam boiler around Cape Horn. It may have been the first on the Pacific Coast.⁷² It was certainly the first on the Peninsula.

Whipple made it his business to deliver logs to this mill, charging his partners \$25 per thousand board feet. He eventually bought out his companions and made enough with this mill to build two new mills on West Union Creek.

Before the buyout, with his associates, in July of 1852, he leased rights to log trees to the north and west of his original mill, including land all the way to the summit of the mountains, from John Greer of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*. These lands included the property known today as the Phleger Estate.

After establishing full control of his logging operation, he developed roads to connect his mills together and to reach the embarcadero at Redwood City.

The road leading from the Lower Mill to the Upper was substantial in comparison with others of the day. It included two log-and-plank bridges with concrete abutments for support. The road was used for transporting goods and men back and forth as well as serving as a skid road. Lumber from the Lower Mill was hauled north to the Upper one.

Lumber from both was then transported northeast to the embarcadero at Redwood Creek. This road to the embarcadero began at the Phleger house site, down its driveway, then down today's Edgewood Road and continued northeast, to Whipple Avenue. In those days this route (Whipple's Mill Road) would have basically followed Cordilleras Creek Canyon, across flatlands to the waterfront at Main Street in present Redwood City. In total, this was about a 5.5-mile trip. Once at the embarcadero, the wood was prepared for shipment to San Francisco.

In addition, Whipple built a second road linking the mills on the east bank of West Union Creek. There was also present a variety of skid roads stretching up the canyons and gullies to reach the redwoods. Remnants of at least two of these subsidiary linkages are still visible today.⁷³

Another entrepreneur, named Richards, built a mill just over the summit of Kings Mountain on Phleger property, but Richards' Road to the embarcadero did run through today's National Park land. About 1853, Richards constructed his milling operation near today's Old Ranch Road on Ware Road about a quarter mile west from Skyline Boulevard.⁷⁴ The property, which included a steam mill, had an assessed value of \$10,000.⁷⁵

Richards' Road was a skid road to the Redwood City embarcadero. It was about nine feet across, and headed southeast from the Richards' mill down Skyline Boulevard for about a mile. It then turned east down the mountain and, presently, separates the Phleger Estate from San Mateo County's Huddart Park. At West Union Creek, the road intersected Miramontes Trail, at the site of the Lower Mill. It then continued southeast along Greer Road and then Kings Mountain Road, passing the Woodside Store, and then down present Woodside Road (originally called Pescadero Road) to the embarcadero. It is possible that Whipple also used this route to get his lumber to Redwood Creek from the Lower Mill.⁷⁶ In the late 1850s, Richards' mill went through an ownership change and came into the hands of C.H. Lapham for some years.

Whipple built his Upper Mill maybe a little before, perhaps simultaneously with his construction of the Lower Mill in late 1852. Both the mills were steam powered. The Upper Mill sat at the site of today's Phleger House (now owned by Intel-founder Gordon Moore). Most probably all the lumber from this mill moved down Whipple's Road to Redwood City. The Lower Mill was built a mile northwest of the Upper Mill, down West Union Creek, a little north of McGarvey Gulch.⁷⁷

At first, the only semblance of a community place for the logging country was R.O. Tripp's and M.A. Parkhurst's Woodside Store. Their first store was built in 1851 on 126 acres at the present junction of Kings Mountain and Tripp Roads.⁷⁸ They replaced it with a larger one in 1854. It was for years the only general store between San Fran-

cisco and San Jose on the Bayside. In those early days the Store served in a variety of ways. Besides being an emporium of goods for the loggers and farmers in the area, it functioned as a bank, post office, library and dentist office. Tripp himself was a community icon, as the only dentist for many miles around, and as the postmaster, and as a politician.

The Store was sort of a transportation hub. Stagecoach service to Redwood City was initiated as early as 1852. By 1853, three stages a week left the Store for San Francisco. Not long afterwards the service became daily for this six-hour ride. From the Store stages also reached Pescadero. When it came time for that far off coastal town to establish its own general store, proprietors John Bidwell and J.N. Besse purchased their original stock from Tripp and Parkhurst in 1856.⁷⁹ Quite probably the only reason the Store did not become the center of a proper town was the reluctance of its owners to sell any of their surrounding property.⁸⁰

The closest community after the Woodside Store, going south, was at Searsville. Here, in 1854, John Sears opened an inn at the present day junction of Sand Hill and Portola Roads. It soon achieved the reputation of a rough place because of the drinking, gambling and brawling that went on there.

After Whipple got his Upper Mill going, a third community developed east of his operations called West Union, after the Creek. However, Whipple did not stay in the community for long.

In 1855, two bad accidents struck his mills. The first was a boiler explosion at the Lower Mill. It killed the engineer and severely scalded the fireman. Within that same year, a fire damaged the Upper Mill.⁸¹ Evidently, Whipple found these happenings disconcerting, and he decided to give up his work on West Union Creek.⁸²

However, his days as a logger were not over. In 1861, he went off to Yolo County with twelve wagons drawn by nearly 100 oxen. He had with him a complete sawmill and all the necessary equipment. Yolo silver mines needed timber, and he was never one to shy away from an opportunity. He died on March 10, 1873, and is buried in the Union Cemetery (of course) in Posey, Indiana.⁸³

After the fire, the Upper Mill fell into the hands of John Greer who had leased the property to Whipple to begin with. Greer rebuilt the mill and improved it by adding a circular saw. The total cost was about \$6,000. In 1858, he moved the mill a mile southwest up one of the small streams that feed into West Union Creek. This second site (off Lonely Trail on the Phleger Estate⁸⁴) also fell victim to fire. However, the machinery survived. This mill operated until 1872. Two years after Whipple's boiler explosion, Daniel Jagers acquired 250 acres of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* that

included the wrecked Lower Mill. By 1858, he had built a shingle mill on the site of the original mill. He also ran about four dozen head of cattle on the property. The mill operated sporadically. For example, it was down in May of 1858, but started up again in December.

The community at West Union began as a logging town for the workers of Whipple's Upper Mill. After awhile Lower Mill employees also lived here. Perhaps as many as 40 men (some with families) called themselves residents. As the years went by, prospectors who had given up in the Gold Country, got the idea of becoming farmers and also dwelled in the vicinity of West Union.⁸⁵ At its peak the community included a store, schoolhouse, saloon, water tower and a scattering of houses and barns.⁸⁶ It existed at today's Cañada Road between Edgewood and the water Department Boundary line.⁸⁷ Most of it was east of Phleger property although a structure or two might have extended into present National Park land. The place was called West Union after the creek, and the presence of the schoolhouse allowed the area to be designated the West Union School District for a far longer period of time than the life of the "town".

John Greer donated land for the building of the original schoolhouse.⁸⁸ County records reveal that 72 children were enrolled within the West Union School District in 1859. Exactly where they went to school is up for conjecture since the community did not get around to completing a schoolhouse (costing \$600) until May 7, 1861. Robert Greer, John Greer's brother, spearheaded this project. He went on to become superintendent of San Mateo County Schools.⁸⁹

The building stood at the site of present stone gates at Edgewood and Cañada Roads. It measured 23 feet by 38 feet and is said to have been able to seat as many as 100 students, although that seems crowded. Its first teacher was Michael Kelly of Woodside.⁹⁰ On the morning of March 30, 1876, pupil Charles Knights discovered the building on fire. It was completely destroyed.

Until a new school could be constructed, Jacob Kreiss provided space at his place so the local children could continue their education. Kreiss was an immigrant from Alsace, France. He had created an orchard and a vineyard in the West Union area.

By April 14, 1877, the community had a new school house. This one sat on the east side of Cañada Road at the present PG&E substation. The land was donated by heirs of the Arguello family (of *Rancho de las Pulgas*). According to County records of 1878, the West Union School District had 27 children between the ages of five and seven (18 boys and nine girls). Of these all were "white" and 24 of the 27 had attended school that year. There were an additional nine children, all "white," who were under five.⁹¹

The school year at West Union ran eight months. Its teacher, Alice Felt, was paid \$60

a month. The total annual budget for the District was \$455. Its total valuation of property came to \$495. The trustees for the District were Thomas Knights, Antoine Miramontes and Jacob Kreiss.⁹²

According to local old timers, the schoolhouse was still standing as late as 1912, on what locals called "Schoolhouse hill."⁹³ In 1918, the West Union School District was absorbed into the San Carlos District.

Clearly, as lumbering activities on the nearby hillsides declined, so did West Union. San Mateo County historian Dr. Frank M. Stanger, the foremost expert on the San Mateo County lumber industry, explained that by 1870: "...John Greer and his predecessors had...cut all the good redwood timber"⁹⁴ in the vicinity of West Union. A second wave of activity occurred in the cutting up of firewood. Stanger tells us that in general most of this work was conducted by Chinese laborers. In an 1870 contract, 50,000 cords of wood, chopped up from 1,059 acres of *Rancho Cañada Raymundo*, completed the clear cutting in the area. By the late 1870s, two area wineries employed some people that augmented the shrinking economic activity in the West Union neighborhood.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, the *Times Gazette* of December 11, 1886, made it sound as if the community were dead, if not close to expiration:

*Years ago a little cemetery was located at West Union, 5 miles north of Woodside. As the settlement of West Union declined in population and importance this burial place was not only disused, but abandoned. Neglect was followed by the usual dilapidation and defacement. Only one body has been removed from the cemetery, that of a young man named Alexander McDonald, killed while logging in the woods many years ago. The removal was made by undertaker Crowe Saturday, the remains being sent to San Jose. The land has come into the possession of some Italians who propose to use it as part of a vineyard.*⁹⁶

By 1910, the clear cutting on the eastside of the Skyline had been complete. The vineyards in the vicinity of West Union were largely out of business. Most of the residents by this time had torn their houses down, loaded the salvageable materials into wagons and moved to Redwood City. No standing structure is left of the community of West Union.⁹⁷

As far as reminders of the logging industry on the Phleger Estate: there are some features still visible. At the Whipple's Lower Mill site, stone foundations can be seen through grass and brush. At Greer's second mill (the reader may remember he moved Whipple's Upper Mill up the hill to the southwest) particles of boiler and brick can be detected. Richards' Road is still present as a hiking trail. From Whipple's Lower Mill Road, a visitor can make out concrete abutments that supported two bridges. At least two subsidiary skid roads can be partly seen. An iron property maker, most likely

indicating a corner of land owned by Jacob Kreiss and A. Bassetti plus other artifacts associated with their occupation, are present as well.⁹⁸

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MILLS ON THE PHLEGER ESTATE

What is the historic significance of logging activity at West Union? Local lumber industry historian, Ken Fisher, has worked for years studying the redwoods of San Mateo County and their utilization. He points out that the West Union mills were constructed and in operation relatively early in the logging history of Kings Mountain and the coastal hills, but they were not first. They were small and inefficient compared to those established later that cut trees on the western slopes. The wood from the early mills on the east side - - both boards and shingles - - was to a large extent used for local construction at Redwood City and not just for use in San Francisco. Nearly all the wood taken from the western slope was shipped to San Francisco for construction there.⁹⁹ Thus the mills at West Union were neither the first nor the most significant in the history of the Peninsula's logging activities.¹⁰⁰

AGRICULTURE AT CAÑADA DE RAYMUNDO

EARLY PIONEERS (CONTEXTUAL)

Even while the logging industry was at its height, old Rancho Cañada de Raymundo was being occupied by ranchers, farmers and vintners. The December 15, 1860, edition of the San Mateo County Gazette reported:

The “Canada” is being fast settled up. New houses are seen here and there throughout its extent, put up by families newly arrived, and clearings, where needed, are also being made, the open or less wooded lands being mostly occupied, having been the first to be taken up. Some of the more opulent citizens have selected the more picturesque locations, and have erected fine cottage residences. The grounds of these are being beautifully ornamented. In time, not long hence, the valley will be populous, and those who have appreciation of the beauties of nature, and the advantages of soil and climate, cannot find a locality more desirable.¹⁰¹

In 1878, when Publishers Moore and DePue produced an *Illustrated History of San Mateo County*, the eight residents of *Cañada de Raymundo*, listed as patrons of the effort, were either farmers, dairymen, stock raisers or teamsters, or some kind of combination of two of these, except one, J. Edalgo, who listed himself a little differently -- as farmer and butcher. He recorded his “nativity” as “China,” claimed to have arrived in California in 1849, and San Mateo County the same year, and reported owning 30 acres of the valley. Remarkably only two of the nine had been born in the United States. T.J. Blackwell (farmer and dairyman) hailed from Virginia, came to California in 1850 and settled in San Mateo County in 1865. J.S. Dickey (farmer and teamster) was from Pennsylvania, came to California in 1851 and was in San Mateo County by 1852.

Indicative of their important presence throughout the Peninsula, three of the nine were from Ireland. M. Bryne (farmer and stock raiser) came to California in 1851 and San Mateo County in 1856. M. Casey (farmer and stock raiser) came to California in 1856 and San Mateo County the same year. A. McCormick (farmer with 30 acres) came to California in 1849 and San Mateo County in 1855.

One of the nine was a *Californio*, Owen Miramontes -- who also possessed the most land -- 1,500 acres. Jacob Kreiss (farmer and teamster) was, as mentioned previously, from France and held 150 acres, some of which may have extended onto present Phleger Estate property.¹⁰²

A family whose farm also extended into the vicinity of Phleger property were the Swifts. Their house sat west of Cañada Road near Whipple’s Mill Road. Although not

listed in the *Illustrated History*, the Swifts achieved some prominence. They were here early -- in the 1850s. James Swift was born at West Union in 1862 and went to work as a printer for the *San Mateo County Times-Gazette* in Redwood City in 1876. He rose in the newspaper business, becoming the editor of the paper when it became the *Redwood City Democrat*. Eventually he came to be owner and publisher. This influential Peninsulan counted Fremont Older, the publisher of the *San Francisco Call-Bulletin*, among his friends.¹⁰³

Another prominent family, not listed in the *Illustrated History*, were the Knights whose property existed on the northwest corner of today's Cañada Road and Raymundo Drive. Simon Knight was the famed stage coach entrepreneur who ran a service from Redwood City to Pescadero. He grew up in Searsville. At his *Cañada* property he built a house with a wine cellar, a barn and a corral.¹⁰⁴

Two other well-known families close to the Phleger Estate were the Lockers and Browns. Both came to "the Cañada" in the late 1870s and had "town" residences in Redwood City. On their country properties they built homes, barns and a water tower. Robert Brown was particularly well-known in Redwood City as a home builder. He hailed from Scotland.

THE VINTNERS

Besides traditional farming and stock raising, *Cañada Raymundo* lands saw the development of a wine industry. In fact, vineyards were planted as far north as the Crystal Springs Valley and as far south as the present Town of Woodside.

Activity in this enterprise began in 1853 when Agoston Haraszthy purchased two 320-acre tracts of land just north of today's Highway 92 at the causeway separating Lower and Upper Crystal Springs Lakes. Here on the northeast face of the hill, he built a house and barn, cleared away chaparral and in March of 1854 planted 30 acres of grapes, including Zinfandels and Muscats. He also planted 20,000 fruit trees, strawberries and grain. He even raised cattle on the property.

Haraszthy had originally come to the United States in 1840, fleeing political persecution in his native Hungary. Born in 1812 of noble heritage, he was the only son of General Charles Haraszthy. He followed his father into the military, retiring as a colonel. He then worked as secretary to the viceroy of Hungary. His deep commitment toward creating an independent Hungarian state made him an unwelcome person in the court of the Austrian emperor. However, he kept active in the Hungarian Diet, making enough trouble to force him out of the country.

He first settled in Wisconsin, where he founded Town Haraszthy, now known as Sauk City. He successfully engaged in a variety of businesses there, including starting the

first hop yard in the state. The lure of the Gold Rush brought him to California in 1849. At first he settled at San Diego, where he served as sheriff for a while. In 1851, he moved up to San Francisco.

Haraszthy at first thought he had purchased government land at Crystal Springs, but in 1854, his properties were proven to be part of the Sanchez family's *Rancho Feliz*. He kept 385 acres by buying from the rightful owners and then bought another 645 acres from them in 1856.¹⁰⁵

However, by January of 1857, Haraszthy had determined to transfer his wine-grape-growing center from the Crystal Springs Valley to Sonoma County. He felt the Valley's climate to be too damp because of the frequent fogs. He had his son, Attila, move grapevine cuttings from Crystal Springs to his new place, he called Buena Vista. He quickly developed this vineyard into California's first large-scale grape growing operation.¹⁰⁶ Haraszthy is therefore regarded by historians of the state's commercial wine industry as among its most important founders. Nineteenth-century historian H.H. Bancroft refers to him as the "father of viniculture in California."¹⁰⁷

While Haraszthy gave up on his San Mateo County winemaking, south of his Crystal Springs land, on old *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*, locals found the fog less a problem and achieved some success. Among them was Frenchman Jacob Kreiss.

Kreiss had spent some time in the gold fields, but, by 1864, he and his brother Michael had settled in San Mateo County. Michael founded the Pioneer Brewery in Redwood City, while Jacob purchased his property in the vicinity of West Union. His lands eventually stretched out from today's Edgewood and Cañada Roads for 600 acres. Another 150 acres existed northeast from West Union Creek adjacent to Whipple's Lower Mill.¹⁰⁸

He grew wheat and other crops on his property, plus he had orchards of peach and apricot trees. He also planted a vineyard on what he named the "Upper Meadow." After the grapes proved to be suitable for wine making, he built a winery, probably some 500 feet west of today's Cañada Road beyond a double row of Eucalyptus trees.¹⁰⁹

According to a publication called the *Resources of California*, by September of 1892, Kreiss' 750-acre ranch, "of which 150 acres are well-improved," included an orchard of 200 trees, piped-in spring water, "houses, large barns, stables for stock, granary, carriage house etc..." Interestingly, no mention was made of vineyards or the winery. Locals have it that the winery burned down around the end of the 1800s.

Kreiss died in 1898 in a hunting accident. The family kept the property until at least 1909, according to an official San Mateo County map.¹¹⁰

By the 1880s, there were quite a few winemakers on old *Cañada de Raymundo*. Most of these sold their wine in bulk -- by the barrel or jug -- to distributors primarily in San Francisco.¹¹¹

The early vintners usually made wine as a sideline. For example, in 1882, J.K.G. Winkler, the Woodside town blacksmith (by this time a village was growing at today's Cañada and Woodside Roads that would become the Town of Woodside), had a 13-acre vineyard. By 1887, Winkler had developed a good local reputation for his claret.¹¹²

According to the *San Mateo County Times Gazette* of May 23, 1885, Dr. Tripp had five acres of grapes. He actually bottled his wines under the label "San Mateo County Pioneer Brand," with a drawing of a grizzly bear on it, perhaps taken from the logo of the California Pioneer Society. Tripp sold the product at his Woodside Store. Remnants of his winery still exist on private property adjacent to today's Woodside Store Historic Site. The *San Mateo County Times Gazette* in the same article listed others growing grapes for wine: B. Halliburton (nine acres), Chris Johnson (16 acres), L. Blenchar (eight acres), William Halsey (five acres) and William Hacker (six acres).¹¹³

Closer to the Phleger Estate, a firm from Salt Lake City called Billings and Sickert had begun operations in 1885. The *San Mateo County Times Gazette* article identified this as a substantial enterprise, with 200 acres containing 800 vines to the acre. Billings and Sickert had purchased their property east of Cañada Road, near present Woodside Road, for \$40 an acre. They held another 200 acres ready for future plantings. These winemakers shipped their product in bulk to Ben Lomond where they had a plant for aging and bottling.

Across the Road from Billings and Sickert, Louis Altschul had a ten acre vineyard on his 200-acre farm in 1855, but gave up wine-making two years later.

Probably the best of the early San Mateo County wines came from Emmet Hawkins Rixford's La Questa Winery. He purchased 40 acres of *Rancho de las Pulgas* property in the western portion of the present Town of Woodside in 1883. That same year he encapsulated much of what he knew about wine making in a book entitled *The Wine Press and the Cellar*, which gained attention as a highly regarded work. Here was a serious viticulturist. He had studied the winemaking of Chateau Margaux and planted cabernet sauvignon, merlot, malbec and verdot grapes. Many of the vines were imported directly from France. By 1892, he had 7,000 of these vines growing for both wine production and for table grapes.

Rixford bottled his wines. The La Questa cabernet sauvignon became one of the most prized wines in California. In 1905, it won a silver medal at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition in Portland, Oregon. Later, in 1915, it won gold at the Pacific-

Panama International Exposition in San Francisco. It even competed and won medals in France.

As on the Coastside, on the Bayside Italians began to make their appearance on the scene in the 1880s. The Mediterranean climate, soil and general conditions of old *Cañada de Raymundo* were well suited to their agricultural skills which included viticulture.

Perhaps the most well-known of the Italian wine growers on the local scene was Charles Scalmanini of San Francisco. On lands formerly owned by the Miramontes family, he had a substantial operation underway by 1882. Apparently he had purchased a total of 1,700 acres for a low price at a sheriff's sale.¹¹⁴ Much of the property existed in the area just southeast of the Phleger Estate with some overlap possible. On June 18, 1887, the *Times Gazette* noted Scalmanini's Capella winery had 75 acres of vines. In the *Winegrowers Register of 1889*, it had him as owner of 82 acres of Zinfandel, Burgundy and Malvoisie grapes. For years the Capella winery was very visible from Cañada Road with its large brick building situated against the side of the hill leading up to the Skyline.

Apparently the building was destroyed about 1908. William Bourn came to own the Spring Valley Water Company that year. The Company, during 1908, decided to close its lands to commercial farming. The Capella vineyard was on Spring Valley property and was thus abandoned. Besides the brick building other improvements were destroyed as well.¹¹⁵ Evidently the Scalmanini family stayed active in the community as proprietors of the Pioneer Livery Stable in Redwood City.

Close to the Kreiss property, G.B. Cevasco (also spelled Cervasco by various authorities) owned acres that were used for growing grapes for wine. This Italian pioneer lived in San Francisco and published a weekly newspaper in Italian called *La Voce del Popolo* ("Voice of the People"). According to the *San Mateo County Gazette* of May 23, 1885, Cevasco was actually leasing his vineyard of 30 acres to a Portuguese, John Cunha. However, in 1890, Cesar and Theresa Lodi came to work for Cevasco at his winery. It is thought that this winery burned down, and some of its ruins may remain on San Francisco Water Department lands today.

Just south of Cevasco, another Italian of San Francisco, B. Frapoli, had a 40-acre vineyard. Also nearby, a Captain Bruno had a small vineyard on a quarter acre. A parcel of the Kreiss ranch was sold to A. Bassetti sometime at the beginning of the twentieth century; it is surmised he was a winemaker too.

By 1900, San Mateo County was at its peak in wine production with about 1,000 acres of commercial vineyards nearly all located in the Woodside area, and with the concen-

tration of activity within the Old *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo*. Phleger Estate land at one time or another was touched by the winemaking activities of Frenchman Kreiss and Italian vintners Scalmanini, Cevasco, Frapoli and Bassetti (and perhaps others).

After the turn of the century, the wine business of San Mateo County declined. As mentioned, the policy of the Spring Valley Water Company after 1908 was to discontinue commercial farming of any kind on its properties, ending winemaking on the north end of *Cañada de Raymundo*. Prohibition (1920-1933), of course hurt the industry. Some of the winemakers tried to stay alive by selling grapes to local residents so they could make their own wine. E.H. Rixford successfully kept going this way. He died in 1928, and his sons, Halsey and Allen, managed the business. Nevertheless, only 54 acres of vineyards remained active by 1936, and by 1945, the land dedicated to grapes decreased to 39 acres.

The Rixford's La Questa was said to be the only winery to reopen after Prohibition. Even this venerable old firm succumbed in 1945, however, when a major portion of its land was subdivided for housing in what was becoming middle class, suburban Woodside. Three acres of La Questa still grow grapes for winemaking in Woodside, on the vineyard of Bob Mullen's Woodside Winery.

Remnants of the wine industry can be found on or near the Phleger Estate. The burned out winery on the eastern edge of the property might have belonged to Jacob Kreiss or G.B. Cevasco or it may be one in the same.

THE PHLEGER ESTATE AS IT RELATES TO SUBURBAN SAN MATEO COUNTY (CONTEXTUAL)

When Herman and Mary Elena Phleger bought their estate in 1935, they were representative of the tail end of a suburban phenomenon for the Peninsula. They had joined an elite group who had made San Mateo County a suburb. Since 1864, when the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad became the first commuter railroad west of the Mississippi, the great capitalists of California, doing their business behind their desks in San Francisco (the "imperial" city of the West Coast), made the Peninsula their suburban retreat. The ramifications for San Mateo County, the first railroad suburb west of the Mississippi, were enormous.

Today, the built environment of San Mateo County is largely the product of suburban development from the era after World War II. In 1940, the County's population stood at 112,000. Within 30 years, it grew nearly fivefold to 555,000 (the 2000 census places the number at 707,000). During the 30 years that included World War II and the postwar boom, the mass construction of housing and the infrastructure necessary to support all the new people coalesced into the Peninsula familiar to us at present. By

1970, the housing, commercial centers, patterns of roads and highways, and institutions (like hospitals, government centers, libraries and schools) were all in their places and recognizable to us today.

The developers of this 30 year period had the most profound impact on the built environment of the Peninsula in its history. However, the “California Dream” they sold was based on the creation of the area as a suburban retreat a century before, with the estate builders of the railroad era.¹¹⁶

One must realize that the history of the Peninsula as a suburb begins with the possibility of a commute. Starting with the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad, convenient transportation made the commute into San Mateo County possible for the first time. Another aspect to consider about this history is that suburban living was not possible for everyone. In the beginning, only the elite could manage it. This was by no means extraordinary. The pattern was already established on the East Coast, where America’s rail suburbs began.¹¹⁷

Generally speaking, railroads made possible the idea that the suburb could be a desirable place to live. Throughout history, up until the building of the railroads in the nineteenth century, areas outside the cities were for the lower classes. Because of the lack of transportation, the wealthiest citizens of major cities in Europe and the United States desired to live as close as possible to the urban core, where business, government, culture and entertainment were centered. The railroad changed all that, especially for Americans. As the tracks extended from industrializing cities such as New York, Boston and Philadelphia -- the American upper classes desired to lift their families out of the squalor of such cities and deliver them to the healthier confines of rural life in a new suburban way. The railroad made a comfortable and rapid commute possible. The elite of America’s industrializing society made use of it and established their estates and exclusive communities in the country.

On the Peninsula, these upper crust original suburbanites tended to be opulent in the way they created their estates. The first among them were the Howards, who actually arrived before the train tracks.

W.D.M. Howard was born in 1818 in Boston. He went to sea at the age of 16 and ended up at Yerba Buena in 1839. During the 1840s, he formed a partnership with Henry Mellus. The two reportedly bought out much of the stock of the Hudson Bay Company’s holdings at San Francisco, which set them up as premier merchants after gold was discovered in January of 1848. Howard became one of the leaders of the developing town. In 1847, he was elected to the first city council, and in 1848 he is credited with building San Francisco’s first brick building. The partners’ business grew beyond the

City. They established branches of the Howard and Mellus mercantile firm in Sacramento, San Jose and Los Angeles.¹¹⁸

In the midst of the hostilities between Mexico and the United States, the partners purchased *Rancho San Mateo* from Cayetano Arenas of Los Angeles for \$25,000 -- about \$4 an acre. This 6,000 acre parcel was small as land grants went, but the property was prime. It included today's south Burlingame, Hillsborough and San Mateo north of San Mateo Creek.¹¹⁹

In 1849, after a whirlwind romance, Howard married 16-year-old Agnes Poett, who was stranded at San Francisco with her family as the crew of their ship had run o! to the Gold Country. Howard must have been happy to find a wife in Gold Rush California, where women were scarce. Agnes must have been pleased to marry a rich man.

In 1850, Howard decided to own *Rancho San Mateo* by himself and bought Henry Mellus' share. He continued to be an important personality in the City, but as the years went by, he spent more time at his *rancho*, involving himself in projects such as introducing the first purebred cattle to California: bulls Orion and Harold IV, with five cows. At some point, Howard decided to make San Mateo a showcase estate for Agnes and himself. However, at the age of 37, he passed away in 1856. Lost in history is the exact account of how the magnificent home that dominated the estate came into being. The 23-year-old widow married her dead husband's brother George, and he continued the improvements. George may have been the mansion builder. The great house was called "*El Cerrito*" for the little hill it was built upon (later referred to as "The Mound").¹²⁰ George died in 1878, and Agnes married a third time, to Henry P. Bowie, who also continued to improve *El Cerrito*. It was the Peninsula's first great estate. Many followed.

As stated, the key ingredient for initiating an upscale suburban transformation is rapid transportation. Before the railroad, San Mateo County did not have it. During the Gold Rush era, whether one traveled by boat or by stagecoach, the trip took most of a day.¹²¹ The stage ride was preferred, but it was uncomfortable and expensive (\$32 in the famous year of 1849, to go from San Francisco to San Jose).¹²² However, early on it was recognized that a rail link between San Francisco, the West Coast's most important city, and San Jose, California's sometime capital, was important.

The dream of creating the railroad had its start with the organization of the Pacific and Atlantic Railroad in September of 1851. It was just one of several unsuccessful schemes that tried to achieve the link between the two cities.¹²³ Finally in 1860, three men who would become important Peninsulans, Charles Polhemus, Timothy Guy Phelps and Peter Donahue, formed the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad Company and initiated the project.

From an engineering point of view, the route established for the line had few obstacles. It basically paralleled El Camino Real. A few bridges were required over creeks, but grades were slight.¹²⁴

On May 1, 1861, the company broke ground at San Francisquito Creek. Some 4,000 tons of rail and the rolling stock was shipped to San Francisco from the East via Cape Horn.¹²⁵ Heavy rains that winter slowed construction. Another problem was getting enough building materials from northern sources as the Civil War (1861-1865) raged. Nevertheless, by the summer of 1863, the grading and construction of bridges had been accomplished. Three hundred laborers laid track from five different construction camps. Eventually 50 miles of railroad were built to connect San Francisco and San Jose. Also in place were 26 sidings, 75 bridges, 37 switches, 33 culverts, seven water tanks and two turntables. All the improvements together cost \$2 million.¹²⁶ In October, Governor Leland Stanford conducted ceremonies, celebrating the opening of the line from San Francisco to Mayfield, a community just across San Francisquito Creek in Santa Clara County. On January 16, 1864, a gala was staged in San Jose marking the completion of the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad.

A commuter could now travel between San Francisco and San Jose in the astonishing short time of one hour and 15 minutes. Twice daily, the railroad had four or six passenger trains steaming back and forth. By April, the line had already carried 16,925 passengers, plus 100 tons of grain and thousands of pounds of other cargos.

As the key rail link to San Francisco, and as the railroads of the West began to cross the nation, the San Francisco-San Jose became the target of ambitious entrepreneurs. In 1868, it was absorbed by the original Southern Pacific Railroad. Then, in 1870, the Southern Pacific itself was bought by the "Big Four" of the old Central Pacific.¹²⁷

Of course the people of the Peninsula were thrilled with the railroad. The centers of settlements at places like San Mateo began to move from El Camino to surround the new rail stations. However, growth for all the rest of the nineteenth century was slow for San Mateo County. Between 1860 and 1900, the population increased from 5,300 to 12,000. While this equaled a more than doubling of the number of people in 40 years, San Mateo County still grew more slowly than any other in the Bay Area during that time.¹²⁸

Why was this so? San Mateo County historian Alan Hynding tries to make sense of the fact that that harbinger of 19th-century progress -- the railroad -- actually retarded growth on the Peninsula. He explains that the new suburbanites -- the elite business class of San Francisco -- acted to slow growth by buying up large tracts of land on both sides of the tracks. These "best" lands were then out of reach for commercial centers,

industry or farms. Thus: “At a snail’s pace, San Mateo County crept into the twentieth century.”¹²⁹

Even before the railroad was completed, perhaps in anticipation of it, some of the great families of California decided to follow the Howards and make their move to establish country, “summer homes” down the Peninsula. Among the first to move their families into San Mateo County were Frederick W. Macondray and Faxon Dean Atherton. Mary Elena Macondray Phleger was granddaughter to both.¹³⁰

Frederick W. Macondray was born in Massachusetts. He went to sea and became a captain, engaging in the hide-and-tallow trade on the California coast. He also lived for six years at Macao, China. He arrived to settle in San Francisco on January 1, 1848, only days before James Marshall made his big gold discovery on the American River. Macondray found himself in the right place at the right time to establish the import/export firm, Macondray and Company. The trade he engaged in was mostly in Asia and the Philippines. The outfit, in fact, had offices in Manila.

By 1853, he had established a country estate at San Mateo he called *Brookside* (today’s Baywood neighborhood which lies west of El Camino, from downtown San Mateo to Alameda de las Pulgas). He kept an extensive garden there and furthered his interest in landscape design by helping to found the California Agricultural Society. For the local community at San Mateo, he was a benefactor, contributing the land necessary for a public school in 1854.¹³¹

In 1859, Macondray received a visit from travelogue writer Bayard Taylor. Back in 1849, he had accompanied Taylor on the author’s first visit to the region. Taylor was overjoyed with the reunion:

*As we reached the house, through a lawn dotted with glittering bays and live oaks, the captain came out to welcome us; and I could not refrain my delight that San Mateo had fallen into hands which protect its beauty. . . . Such peaches, such pears, such apples and figs! What magic is there in this virgin soil?... Colossal, splendidly colored, overflowing with delicious juice, without a faulty specimen anywhere, it was truly the perfection of horticulture. In the glasshouse (necessary only to keep off the cool afternoon winds) we found the black Hamburg, the Muscatel, and other delicate grapes, laden from root to tip with clusters from one to two feet in length. The heaps of rich color and perfume, on the table to which we were summoned, were no less a feast to the eye than to the palate.*¹³²

Captain Macondray sold *Brookside* to John Parrott in 1860. Parrott renamed the property *Baywood*. Macondray fell ill and died two years later.¹³³

Faxon Dean Atherton arrived with the first wave of estate builders in South San Mateo County in the 1860s. Among the others were famous names such as Hopkins, Flood, Donohoe and Felton. With the railroad still being constructed, these estates tended to be self supporting. They raised their own cows for milk and butter. They also had chickens, hogs and other farm animals. The community of Menlo Park formed to service these estates and originally consisted of no more than two general stores, a couple of livery stables, six to eight saloons and three hotels for visiting workers.

Faxon Dean Atherton was born in Dedham, Massachusetts, in 1815. He settled in Valparaiso, Chile in 1833 and met and married Dominga of the prominent de Goti family on July 7, 1843. The couple had seven children, six of whom were born in Chile and one in California. He owned a ship's chandler's store while at Valparaiso. In 1860, he decided to move to California. That year he purchased 640 acres of land that would one day become a large part of the Town of Atherton. On September 14, 1861, the *San Mateo County Gazette* announced that the Atherton mansion and estate, *Valparaiso Park*, had been completed.

One of Atherton's daughters married the son of Frederick W. Macondray, Frederick, Jr. Mary Elena came from this union. After Junior passed away, Mary Elena's mother married Percy Selby of yet another influential family.¹³⁴

Percy's father, Thomas H. Selby, established the first major smelting works in California at San Francisco's North Beach.¹³⁵ In 1863, he bought up 480 acres of property just north of the Athertons. He called his estate, *Almendral*. He raised cattle and grew grain there. Selby also possessed what was thought to be the largest fruit orchard in San Mateo County at that time.¹³⁶ Selby additionally gained fame as a mayor of San Francisco.

To the north, in 1860, D.O. Mills, banker and financier, and his brother-in-law, Ansel I. Easton, a self described "gentleman,"¹³⁷ each acquired 1,500-acre parcels of *Rancho Buri Buri* in today's Millbrae and Burlingame to erect their estates. After the railroad was completed, many more famous families established their homes. The first of this lot was William C. Ralston.¹³⁸ This substantial capitalist, whose investments included holdings in Nevada silver mines, the Bank of California and the Spring Valley Water Company, purchased 14.2 acres at today's Belmont from Italian Count Leonetto Cipriani. A house was present, around which Ralston fashioned a showcase mansion. It was finished in 1868, complete with 80 rooms and accommodations to serve up to 100 overnight guests. The dining room could seat 110.¹³⁹ The extravagant edifice was actually an inspiration for the elegant additions at Ralston's Palace Hotel in San Francisco.

Ralston's Belmont estate was visited by prominent people from around the world. In 1872, Japanese Ambassador Tomoni Iwakura, with the Japanese Minister of Finance,

Toshimichi Okubo, and an entourage of 107 other Japanese visitors were hosted by Ralston. Okubo gave a toast acknowledging Ralston as the “*Tenno* of Belmont” (Emperor of Belmont).¹⁴⁰

Sadly, the Emperor of Belmont fell on hard times. During the summer of 1875, he directed his troubled Bank of California to buy up significant portions of the Spring Valley Water Company on the speculative hunch that the City of San Francisco was preparing to buy it. He was only 25 years old. In August, he was removed as the bank’s chief executive, and, the next day, his body was found floating in the Bay, perhaps as the result of a swimming mishap;¹⁴¹ others felt it was a suicide.

Nevertheless, the building of the Peninsula’s great estates got into gear in the 1860s, developed more fully in the 1870s and 1880s, was revived in the mid-1890s and was extended into the twentieth century. The polo fields, race tracks, stables, gardens and other embellishments surrounding the great houses became the dominant landscape features of the Bayside of San Mateo County.

Among the most prominent of the estate builders was another Atherton family neighbor, Charles N. Felton, who in 1870 fashioned his Felton Gables estate near the tracks on the north side of today’s Encinal Road in Menlo Park. Besides being a rich man, he engaged in politics. First, he served in the State Assembly, then he was elected to Congress in 1878, and finally he was appointed to the U.S. Senate in 1891. Counted among the visitors to his place were presidents U.S. Grant, Rutherford Hayes and Benjamin Harrison.¹⁴²

In 1872, John McLaren appeared on the California scene and gave a major boost to the gardening activities of the San Mateo County estate owners. He had been a gardener’s apprentice in Scotland and had graduated from the Royal Botanical Gardens at Edinburgh. His first assignment on the Peninsula was to plan the gardens for George and Agnes Howard at their *El Cerrito* on the old *Rancho San Mateo*. McLaren soon became sought after as the most renowned landscaper in the area. San Francisco eventually made him superintendent of Golden Gate Park. In 1930, *Sunset Magazine* declared him the greatest horticulturalist of the West.

Other standouts of the 1870s crowd of estate builders include Milton S. Latham who began constructing his \$75,000 Thurlow Lodge at Menlo Park in 1872. In 1874, Swiss-born banker Antoine Borel purchased 300 acres west of El Camino and south of the village at San Mateo for \$25,000 and started creating his place.

Perhaps the most opulent of the mansions of San Mateo County was constructed by James C. Flood, the “Silver King.” In 1875, Thomas H. Selby sold his estate to him. Flood then went to work to erect *Linden Towers*. It stood near today’s Middlefield

Road. This was a three-story, 43-room affair, decorated with turrets, cupolas and gables. The house was capped by a 150-foot tall tower. It was painted white with gold trimmings. The roof was constructed of patterned black slate. It was rumored to have cost \$1 million. Locals referred to it as “Flood’s wedding cake” because of its overdone architectural detail.

Just across San Francisquito Creek from the Menlo Park - Atherton estates, Leland Stanford, former California governor and member of the “Big Four” (who built the western portion of the transcontinental railroad), purchased 650 acres in 1876 to begin establishing his Palo Alto ranch. He would eventually come to own 8,800 acres from El Camino to the foothills. Stanford first brought specialty horses to the property in 1877. By 1890, his farm was revered as the largest racehorse breeding center in the world. The facilities included two tracks (one for trotters and one for single mounts) and a trotting park. Some 60 acres were devoted to growing carrots for special treats for the horses.

Up near San Mateo one of John Parrott’s daughters, Mary Katherine (Minnie) married French nobleman Christian de Guigné in 1879. De Guigné owned an estate near Bordeaux called *Chateau Senejac*. He came to California after serving in the French army during the Franco-Prussian War (1870). After marrying into the Parrott clan, he partnered with Hans Stauter to create the Stauter Chemical Company. The estate the de Guignés built was located just east from Baywood, currently at Third Avenue in downtown San Mateo. They called their place Minne-haha.

South of the de Guignés, another silver king, Alvinza Hayward, created yet another huge mansion. Construction on this one began in 1880. The 22-room house was surrounded by 144 acres of lawn, trees and shrubs. There were literally miles of pathways through the gardens. Also featured were a racetrack, a lake for swans, an aviary of exotic birds, and quarters for his deer and elk collection. Hayward’s gas-lit horse stables were embellished with finely polished woods. Harnesses in the plate glass tack room were trimmed with some of his silver from the Comstock.

By the middle part of the 1890s, these Victorian mansions began to take on a stodgy look. Then a fresh wave of estate builders came onto the scene

This new round of activity was sparked by the Sharon Estate which was seeking to divest itself of its mid-Peninsula properties. The project belonged to Senator William Sharon’s son-in-law, Francis Newlands. He had come to California in 1870, looking for work as an attorney. After the Senator hired him, he married his boss’s daughter, Clara Adelaide, in 1874. William Sharon was the largest taxpayer in San Francisco. He, in fact, had holdings that stretched to Nevada and even to the East Coast. This included about a 1,000 acres of Mid-peninsula land that had once belonged to Wil-

William Ralston. Sharon was one of Ralston's largest creditors when he died in 1875 and ended up with the Palace Hotel in the City, the Belmont mansion and much more, including this 1,000 acres that makes up a good portion of the town of Hillsborough today. After Sharon died, Newlands wanted to sell off some of the family's property, including this San Mateo County parcel.

He had trouble with finding purchasers, and then came up with an idea. Back near Washington D.C., the Sharon Estate owned acreage at a place called Chevy Chase. Here in 1890, Newlands, in order to enhance real estate sales, organized a planned community, including consideration for proper roads, water, sewage and social embellishments, which featured a country club. The strategy worked. People began buying into this exclusive suburban retreat. Newlands took it upon himself to organize the country club there, which opened in 1893.¹⁴³

Newlands then asked himself: why not try this idea on the Sharon Estate's San Mateo holdings? It should be added at this point that the whole concept of the country club was brand new. This was an American invention. In 1882, the first country club, "The Country Club," was formed at Brookline, Massachusetts. The objective of these new clubs was to bring to Americans English country sports such as the hunt, polo and golf. In England, these activities could be conducted on one's private estate, but wealthy Americans, in general, were tied to their holdings in the cities. So they moved to the country in clusters around these country clubs. American country clubs also differed from British specialized clubs such as the polo club at Hurlingham and the golf club at St. Andrews, because they did not center on just one sport. Moreover the American clubs allowed for extended social stays. Thus while they were emulating the European aristocracy, the American elite were creating their own new way to do it.¹⁴⁴

As Newlands studied the matter, he realized that as yet no country club had been established west of the Mississippi. What better place to do so but near San Francisco, the "imperial" city of the West? And what better property to bring this about but his Burlingame tract (as the Sharon Estate came to call it)? A travel brochure of the early 1890s asserted about the mid-San Mateo County area in general that it "... is much more accessible than any other place of suburban residence around San Francisco." It pointed out that between the streetcar in the City and the Southern Pacific down the Peninsula, one could reach Burlingame in about 40 minutes from downtown.

Environmentally, San Mateo County was already renowned as a sporting retreat for city dwellers. The foothills still abounded in four-legged game. Large populations of ducks and geese made for great hunting down on the marshlands. Local creeks yielded salmon and trout. El Camino was becoming a popular bicycle route, and Coyote Point was noted for its beach. *Sunset Magazine*, sensing the desire to be all things English, put it this way:

*There is not the least hazard in asserting that in no section of the United States --- or in this hemisphere, in fact --- [is there a place] where an Englishman of sporting proclivities would feel so much at home as in San Mateo County. This section is nearly a counterpart of the most favored parts of the mother country, saving that in place of baronial halls and castles, built centuries ago, there are palatial residences of later date.*¹⁴⁵

Newlands gambled that promise of creating a country club at Burlingame would lead to real estate sales as it had at Chevy Chase. He carved out 16 acres of land near El Camino and selected famed San Francisco architect A. Paige Brown to plan for the construction of six “country cottages” (summer homes for the elite) to initiate sales. The Tudor style buildings were finished early in 1893; however, there were no buyers. Undeterred, Newlands decided to reverse the Chevy Chase pattern by forming the country club first.¹⁴⁶ He invited a well-chosen group of sporting enthusiasts from San Francisco for a picnic under oak trees on the property. Drinks were served. An offer was made to allow the club use of one of the cottages for a country club, and the process worked. On July 1, 1893, the Burlingame Country Club was organized. Soon the Burlingame area became well-known among members of San Francisco’s upper crust. The five unused cottages and lots around them began selling. A new suburban community had been created for the Peninsula.

Within a year, the Club had become so popular with its members that they joined with the Southern Pacific Railroad to build a train station nearby. This Burlingame Station became the first permanent structure in California designed in the Mission Revival style of architecture. It still exists today at the end of Burlingame Avenue. A small community, whose purpose was to cater to the needs of the country club set, developed around the station. It was known as Burlingame as well.

The country club idea caught on throughout California. On the Peninsula, those that preferred the warmer, more southerly parts of San Mateo County formed the Menlo Country Club in 1912. Actually set in today’s Woodside, it had an eighteen-hole golf course that Burlingame (organized for polo in the early years) did not originally possess. It also had a swimming pool, and Burlingame did not.

It was widely known that the Burlingame Country Club was restrictive -- that is -- no Jews. The large and wealthy Jewish community in San Francisco wished to create a country club for their families. In 1911 they organized the Beresford Country Club (today, the Peninsula Golf and Country). They purchased property southwest of the City of San Mateo and opened for its members in 1912 with a temporary clubhouse. By 1914, its \$150,000 Tudor Revival clubhouse had been built, accompanying its 18-hole golf course, swimming pool and other embellishments.¹⁴⁷

The particular needs of the equestrian set in the South County inspired the opening of the Menlo Circus Club (originally the Children's Circus of Menlo Park) in today's Atherton in 1923. Carved out of 19 acres on former property of the Atherton Estate, the facilities included a half mile riding track, tanbark ring for jumping, a variety of buildings and an elaborate grandstand complete with box seating.

As late as 1929, horse enthusiasts had open Gymkhana, as a club near already present polo fields at today's 20th Avenue in San Mateo. The focus here was on teaching children how to play polo and engage in other sporting activities revolving around the horse.

And so a fresh wave of mansion building swept the Peninsula's Bayside. The Crockers led the way. Heirs to Charles Crocker of "Big Four" fame, the generations that followed the old railroad man created lavish estates down the Peninsula. In 1910, William H. Crocker completed his *New Place* on 500 acres in Hillsborough. Designed by Lewis P. Hobart, the house contained 12 bedrooms, and 10 baths upstairs. Crocker employed 60 servants -- 15 worked in the house and 45 policed the grounds, which included a dairy and nursery. Episcopal Bishop William Ford Nichols presided over the opening of the estate in March. During the 1920s and 1930s, *New Place* was known for entertaining Hollywood movie stars, foreign diplomats, high-ranking military figures and political leaders. The press referred to the social scene there as "*New Place* Society." *New Place* is currently the home of the Burlingame Country Club.

In 1913, work on C. Templeton Crocker's place began. His Hillsborough estate, the *Uplands*, cost \$1.6 million. Designed by Willis Polk, its construction included steel-reinforced concrete walls, hand carved marble fireplaces and European wooden interiors. This neoclassic home of 35,000 square feet, encompassing 39 rooms, was completed in 1917. It now serves as a private school (Crystal Springs Uplands).

Perhaps reflecting his family's Italian immigrant background, Bank of Italy (which became Bank of America) founder A.P. Giannini purchased a more modest home, *Seven Oaks*, just west of downtown San Mateo in 1905. Giannini lived in it for the rest of his life. This 10-room, gabled, Tudor-style house still exists as a single family residence on El Cerrito, just off El Camino Real.

Also close to San Mateo, Eugene de Sabla, Jr., the first president of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, bought the Howard Estate's *El Cerrito*, in 1906. The old house was moved off the property and for years served as the Hillsborough town hall. In its place, de Sabla built a 35-room mansion on the 30-acre site. John McLaren designed 14 acres of gardens here. The house, complete with battlements, was ready for occupation by the de Sabla family in 1917.

North of the de Sabla place near El Camino in Hillsborough, Lewis P. Hobart designed a grand mansion as a sort of Italian villa for George Almer Newhall. Newhall died in 1929. A subsequent owner, Dorothy Spreckels, named the place *La Dolphine* (not a word in any language) because of her fascination with a golden dolphin in one of the several bathtubs.

In 1915, Charles Frederick Kohl built a red-brick, 63-room Tudor mansion on Adeline Drive in northwest Burlingame for \$525,000. Kohl's father had created a mansion that sat at today's Central Park in San Mateo. (Before the estate became a park, the mansion functioned as the first campus for the San Mateo Junior College.) Kohl's new estate included a sunken English-style rose garden. It now serves as a private school (Mercy High School).

John Parrott's grandson, Charles Joseph Christian de Guigné, II, completed his estate in 1916 on 50 acres near Crystal Springs Road, on the side of the canyon. It became acclaimed for its French styling and beautiful setting.

However, the most magnificent mansion was that of Harriett and Francis Carolan. The wealth that enabled their project to go forward came from Harriett, whose father, George Mortimer Pullman, made a fortune making railroad sleeping cars.¹⁴⁸ She married Francis J. Carolan of Sacramento at her family's home in Chicago. Although Francis was a graduate of Cornell University (class of 1882), in later years, Harriett would degrade him by saying he was actually never more than a \$250 a month clerk when they met.

In 1897, the Carolans entered Peninsula society when they bought co! ee importer William Corbitt's San Mateo Stock Farm in today's Burlingame and Hillsborough. Here at Crossways, they built a 30-room house, and also put in place a tennis court, hot houses, terraced gardens and spacious lawns. In 1899, the Carolans commissioned architect Willis Polk to build a carriage house complete with a Pantheonic centerpiece that could be used as a ballroom.¹⁴⁹ The project cost \$200,000 and was touted as the greatest of its kind in California. Polk was also commissioned to build a polo pavilion that became of use for the eager players at the Burlingame Country Club.

In 1900, Harriett began entertaining in earnest. At the end of the summer, she threw a floral-themed ball. Guests were brought down the Peninsula by a special train of Pullman railroad cars. Then, horse-drawn carriages met them at the Burlingame train station and drove them to Crossways, where they were delighted by a variety of entertainments, including Japanese and Spanish dancers. The party was illuminated by 5,000 Japanese lanterns.¹⁵⁰

Harriett's love of architecture and things European grew. Trips to France inspired her

to create a new mansion in the French, pre-revolution, aristocratic style. Some said that she placed her new estate high on the hill overlooking Hillsborough so that she could look down on her social rivals, the Crockers.

In 1912, she acquired some 554 acres of land. After great deliberation, she settled on Frenchman Achille Duchêne as the landscape designer. Ernest Sanson, considered the best architect of private houses in Paris, was chosen to plan the house. Experienced San Franciscan Willis Polk became the project's supervisor.¹⁵¹

The house's design was based on *Chateau Vaux le Vicomte*, which had actually served as the inspiration for the Palace of Versailles. The *Chateau Carolands*, as Harriett called it, was built to possess 92 rooms. Constructed with concrete and brick, it included grand staircases, wrought-iron banisters and gold leaf trimmings. Rooms were lifted out of *Le Grand Lebrun*, a historical house in Bordeaux, to provide an authentic French aristocratic aspect to the mansion's interior.¹⁵²

The landscaping also imitated historic European design. Hills were leveled to create broad terraces. Statues and a Temple of Love were inserted. Barns and pasture for dairy cows were arranged to guarantee a degree of self-sustenance for the estate. When completed, the *Carolands* needed 40 employees, 20 for the grounds and 20 for the house.

The initiation of World War I slowed progress on the *Chateau's* construction. Nagging maintenance problems developed for the large edifice. Sadly, the unhappy Carolan couple only lived there together for two years. Today the *Chateau* is still a private residence, owned by Charles and Ann Johnson.

While a good part of this second wave of mansion building occurred in the Mid-County, great estates were also being created in South County. In 1911, San Francisco philanthropist Mortimer Fleishhacker began work on his English-style, *Green Gables*. *Green Gables* still stands south of the Phleger Estate and is one of the few of these elegant places that is owned by the original family.

In 1922, Herbert Law, creator of specialized medicines for women, built his 13,000-square foot, 40-room Florentine-style villa on some 600 acres on the hills above Portola Valley. Law's *Lauriston* included 22 miles of bridle paths and hothouses for growing herbs related to his work. He had 12,000 trees planted. The house's elegant furnishings and fine art became the talk of the Peninsula's upper crust.

Remarkably, even through the Great Depression of the 1930s, mansion building continued. In 1931, Celia Tobin Clark finished her *House on the Hill*. This three-story house of 47 rooms with six family suites, seven dressing-room/bathrooms, six half

bathrooms, 11 fireplaces and a wine vault for 1,360 bottles (in the days of Prohibition!), still sits just below the College of San Mateo.

That same year, William W. Crocker, at that time President of Crocker Bank, finished his rebuilding of *Sky Farm*. The first mansion burned to the ground in 1928. And so, Crocker enlisted architect Arthur Brown, Jr. to replace it with “a palace.” Brown delivered a 53-room Italian Renaissance-style structure built of reinforced concrete. It featured an indoor swimming grotto, squash court, wine cellar and vault. Constructed on top a Hillsborough hill in the midst of a 500-acre forest, it became renowned for its landscaping. *Sky Farm* required a staff of 24. It still exists as Nueva Learning Center.

In 1935, Walter E. Buck completed his estate in today’s east-Woodside. The project started in 1929 under the supervision of architect Albert Farr. The design exhibits some of the architectural features of *Hampton Court* in Middlesex County, England, the royal family’s residence from the 1700s. Builders George Looz and F.C. Stolte of Oakland, whose work included *Hearst Castle*, constructed the Tudor-style brick and stucco-cut stone mansion. This 17,500 square foot, 52-room home featured Gothic arches, 296 windows and walnut paneling and staircases. The Buck Estate also consisted of gazebos, walkways and stone fountains on its 13 acres.

This study for the GGNRA does not call for the listing of every estate. It is sufficient to say that those mentioned in this brief account are but a sampling, and we are reviewing this stage of suburban growth on the Peninsula because the Phlegers fit into the picture of the San Francisco elite making the Peninsula their suburban retreat. It is useful for the reader to also understand how the evolving transportation networks of San Mateo County allowed new classes of people to enjoy working in the City and living in the country.

After the railroad, the next advance made in transportation was the establishment of a streetcar line down the Peninsula. The Southern Pacific was expensive for the middle-class commuter, and it did not run very many passenger trains into San Francisco from the Peninsula. In fact, by the 1890s, the profit-motivated railroad saw little reward in servicing the people of San Mateo County. There was much more money in long distance freight traffic through the farming districts and from longer passenger routes that ran between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Beginning in 1890, electric streetcar companies in San Francisco began investigating business opportunities for linking the City with the country. That year, the San Francisco and San Mateo Railroad planned a route to the cemeteries in Colma along Mission Road. By 1892, tracks reached Holy Cross Cemetery and were being extended to Baden in future South San Francisco. In 1897, the renamed San Francisco & San Mateo Electric Railway began taking steps to build a line to San Mateo. Construction

began in 1901, and, by the end of 1902, streetcars were serving a variety of communities from San Mateo north to the City. Towns along the line such as San Mateo and Burlingame benefited by allowing a new type of commuter, a middle class one, the opportunity to live a suburban lifestyle.

The 1906 San Francisco Earthquake caused many city dwellers to move down the Peninsula. Towns like Daly City and San Bruno rose out of dairy ranch lands. The new commuters of such communities had not much in common with their upper-class San Mateo County neighbors, except that the new people were most anxious to emulate the healthy experience of living on the less congested Peninsula. If not for the streetcar, their everyday travel to the City would have been impossible. During its peak of activity, the inexpensive streetcars ran every 10 to 15 minutes during commute hours in both directions.¹⁵³ In 1907, streetcar patrons were treated to a boost as the old, drafty trolleys were replaced by 56-passenger cars locals called the “Big Subs”.¹⁵⁴

Streetcar service proved popular enough that spur lines were established. In 1904, the South San Francisco Railroad & Power Company ran a track down Grand Avenue to the waterfront enabling workers a fast way to get to the Western Meat Company, Fuller Paint and other large employers. In 1913, the Mills-Easton family began operation of a streetcar from Broadway in Burlingame to Hillside in order to encourage residential sales in the hills owned by them, west of the tracks.

While the new classes of people increasingly called the Peninsula home, the streetcar suffered from competition with the automobile and ceased to serve San Mateo County in 1949. Nevertheless, the impact of the streetcar at the beginning of the twentieth century was dramatic. In 1900 the population of the County was 12,000. In part because of reliable street-car service, in 1910, 20,600 people lived here.

Not everyone was happy with this growth. Members of the Burlingame Country Club watched as the streetcar line reached the little community surrounding the Burlingame Train Station, encouraging a town-like survey. Just south of the Club, the members saw promoters of San Mateo Park create a middle-class suburb, advertising the “easy walking distance of the trolley line.”

However, not even the members of the Burlingame Country Club could have predicted the ramifications for the Peninsula of the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake. The southward migration hastened down the northern half of the Bayside of San Mateo County (where there were streetcar tracks). Because of the elite image Burlingame conjured up, many refugees from the destroyed City chose to end up there. The new people had heard for years about the high society Burlingame set -- their polo, their parties, their money and estates. Why not join them?

Burlingame promoters quickly went to work, and while sales of real estate was brisk nearly everywhere on the Bayside, no place had more activity than Burlingame. By 1910, 1585 people lived there, and, just four years later, there was 2,849. The town of San Mateo took notice of the growth to the north and annexed a number of new neighborhoods. Soon the town leaders fixed their eyes on Burlingame itself, but the people here, wishing not to be gobbled up by their southern neighbor, beat the San Mateans to the punch and incorporated the town of Burlingame in 1908.

Meanwhile the Burlingame Country Club set took notice of the development of these nearby middle-class neighborhoods, with their little bungalows, commercial improvements, sidewalks and all-too-many children. They saw San Mateo annex San Mateo Park in 1909, while Burlingame grew northward by swallowing up the community of Easton. Now both towns seemed to be setting their sights on lands to the west -- the Club and the estates of its members. The Burlingame set would be regulated by a local government of which they would be a minority. They would be taxed by people out to destroy the rural atmosphere they had come to Burlingame to find in the first place; hills would be leveled, trees cut down, creeks filled and horse trails would give way to business thoroughfares. This intolerable threat could only be allayed by the incorporation of the Burlingame set's own community. On April 25, 1910, 60 residents voted in favor, and one voted against, the formation of the new town of Hillsborough.¹⁵⁵

Thirteen years later, a similar thing happened in the South County. Although without a streetcar line, by 1923 the automobile was helping to make Menlo Park a middle-class suburban community. Civic boosters wished to incorporate and include the estates occupying a district known as Fair Oaks. Using Hillsborough as their model, the upper crust of Fair Oaks organized and moved to incorporate their own community. A total of 130 came out to vote, with 114 favoring the creation of the new town of Atherton, named for Mary Elena Phleger's grandfather, Faxon D. Atherton. This came as a blow to the Menlo Park organizers, who did not get around to incorporating Menlo Park until four years later.¹⁵⁶

Nevertheless the rate of incorporations during the period from the Earthquake until the Great Depression was brisk. Between 1856 and 1908, only two towns had been incorporated in San Mateo County -- Redwood City (1867) and San Mateo (1894). Notably, between 1908 and 1927 there were ten communities to do so -- South San Francisco (1908), Burlingame (1908), Hillsborough (1910), Daly City (1911), San Bruno (1914), Atherton (1923), Colma (1924), San Carlos (1925), Menlo Park (1927) and Belmont (1927).¹⁵⁷ By 1920, 36,800 people lived in San Mateo County, a 79% augmentation from the decade before. Between 1920 and 1930, the County's population expanded by another 110%, to 77,400. Even during the Depression years of the 1930s, although the rate of increase slowed to 44%, by 1940, 112,000 people lived in San Mateo County.¹⁵⁸

While the streetcar made the difference in the early part of this middle-class suburban wave, certainly, before 1940, the automobile was playing a significant role. Of course, the popularity and affordability of the automobile eventually had more of an impact on how the suburban communities of the Bayside developed than any other factor. Moreover, San Mateo County's connection with automobile history has been important to the development of California.

For example, in 1902, the first automobile meet in the state's history ran through the Peninsula. The 34 horseless carriages began their well-publicized journey in San Francisco and ended up at Crystal Springs Dam for a picnic and tour.

A more momentous step took place in 1912, when work began on a five mile stretch of the Old Mission highway, El Camino Real, from San Bruno to Burlingame, that represented the initiation of the California State Highway System. Back in 1909, the state's legislature had authorized the first California Highway bond act. The state's voters approved \$18 million for it in 1910. Contract Number 1 was the San Mateo County project. Certainly the coming of the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition to San Francisco and the desire to show off the modern aspects of California to the visitors influenced this choice for construction. Also the County's willingness to buck the political pressure of the Southern Pacific Railroad was noted in Sacramento. Since 1911, Peninsula elected officials, at the urging of the *San Mateo Times*, had been clamoring for better roads for automobiles.¹⁵⁹ A year after work began on the state's project, in 1913, San Mateo County voters approved a \$1,250,000 bond issue to match state money to create more roads, including the Bayshore and Junipero Serra Highways. The automobile era had arrived.

As stated previously in this study, the onset of World War II and the postwar boom created an unprecedented build-up of the suburban landscape on the Bayside. The new era's development was enabled by the automobile plus the skills of big-time builders (like Henry Doelger, Carl and Fred Gellert, David Bohannon, T. Jack Foster and Andy Oddsted), a thriving economy, friendly to growth government and the insatiable desire of people to live the suburban lifestyle, first made popular by the elite of the railroad era.¹⁶⁰

While some communities on the Peninsula like Hillsborough, Atherton, Woodside and Portola Valley continue to attempt preservation of the old estates, most are now gone. A very few of the old mansions, such as the granddaddy of them all -- *Carolands* -- exist as single family residences. *New Place* became a clubhouse. Private schools have found use for some. One, *Filoli*, has become a public asset as a national historic landmark. Its story is very much linked with the nearby Phleger Estate.

One year after the devastating 1906 San Francisco Earthquake had severely damaged

the Spring Valley Water Company, William Bourn (the builder of *Filoli*) bought it out in total. With the property and improvements he also had obtained the stigma of owning the water supply of the City of San Francisco as a monopoly. For San Mateo County residents the Company represented a huge land holder of properties that could have been developed for other purposes. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Company had continued engineer Herman Schussler's policy of buying up watershed lands to protect its man-made lakes. Dairy men, farmers and winemakers were bought out or otherwise forced out. Even an entire town, Searsville, was taken.

The men most associated with the Company were big-time capitalists such as William Ralston and William Sharon. They, beyond a doubt, were profit motivated, and, at times this meant deferred maintenance. By 1900, San Francisco remained the only major city in the United States whose water supply was still privately owned.

That year the people of San Francisco took a huge step and created a new charter that would enable them to purchase the Spring Valley Water Company. Furthermore the City's visionaries began thinking of more than just current requirements. They wanted to satisfy the needs for future generations with the building of a delivery system that could take water from the Hetch Hetchy Valley in the Sierra Nevada all the way to San Francisco and other California communities.

The 1906 San Francisco Earthquake gave people yet more incentive for wanting change. While the Crystal Springs Dam and other large Spring Valley improvements held, many pipes in the City ruptured. Deferred maintenance policies of the Company were blamed by many as a leading cause of the destruction of San Francisco because of the lack of water to fight the fires that followed the quake.

William Ralston had wanted to sell the Company to the City back in 1875. Now, finally thinking the time was right for the great opportunity, William Bourn stepped in and bought Spring Valley.

Bourn was born in San Francisco in 1857. He inherited the failing Empire Gold Mine at Grass Valley and revived its profitability. During the 1890s, he invested in several local gas companies which he sold off to the emerging Pacific Gas and Electric Company. With those profits he purchased Spring Valley.¹⁶¹

He could not have known it, but it would take 23 years to negotiate selling the Water Company to the City. Along the way he dealt with investors, attorneys, engineers, technicians, politicians and eventually the voters of San Francisco. While waiting for the deal to transpire, Bourn decided to spend \$90,000 to acquire 700 acres of lands south of his company's Upper Crystal Springs watershed property to create an estate.

In 1915, he hired architect Willis Polk (of *Carolands* and *Uplands* fame) to design his home.¹⁶² The plans called for the creation of an Irish country house modeled after the family's old home in Grass Valley. Bourn insisted that the roof tile be applied crookedly to provide the mansion with a rustic character.

Bourn called his estate *Filoli*. The name combined what Bourn considered the three most important words in the English language: "Fight, Love, Live." By September of 1917, the Bourn family was residing there.¹⁶³

The sale of the Spring Valley Water Company finally occurred on March 30, 1930. Bourn's take ended up at \$41 million. Sadly, he had little chance to spend it. He was by that time in poor health and died in 1934. He is buried at *Filoli*, along with his wife, son and daughter.

However, before the deal was made with the City of San Francisco, he allowed for his Company's Vice President, Samuel P. Eastman, to create his own estate, just south of *Filoli*. Eastman contracted Gardner A. Dailey to build the house which was completed in 1927. This property is known today as the Phleger Estate.

THE PHLEGERS AND THEIR MOUNTAIN MEADOW

And so, ten years after the Bourns moved into *Filoli*, an estate and home that came to be known as *Mountain Meadow* (and later, simply the Phleger Estate) was completed on Spring Valley Water Company property for Samuel P. Eastman. Up the hill on the old Whipple Mill site, the house was far more remote than *Filoli*. At the end of a winding road, it sat near acres of second growth redwoods and ferns. Its architect, Gardner A. Dailey, had just left the Willis Polk firm. Polk was, of course, the designer of *Filoli*. In fact, *Mountain Meadow* was Dailey's first job on his own.¹⁶⁴ The 8,000-square foot house, with a tiled mission revival style roof, was situated so that beautiful views could be obtained of both redwoods and oak woodlands.

In 1937, Herman and Mary Elena Phleger bought their first 115 acres of this watershed property, that they referred to as "the home place."¹⁶⁵ Later, they acquired 1,200 more, which gave them a total of 1,315 acres. Their nearest neighbors were the Roth family, the new owners of *Filoli*, a mile away. Previously, the Phlegers lived for six years in a flat on Broadway in San Francisco, and then lived on Jackson from 1928 until moving in 1937.

The Phlegers lived at *Mountain Meadow* for the rest of their lives. Herman became a commuter, although the couple continued to hold an apartment in the City during winter months. During World War II, because of gasoline rationing, they maintained an apartment in the City year round. During his years in Washington, D.C., they

leased a home there, but kept *Mountain Meadow* as their permanent residence.

As a Peninsula commuter, Phleger left work promptly at 4 p.m., in order to catch the 4:45 Southern Pacific to Redwood City. In this way he followed the suburban path of so many of San Francisco's elite, since the days of William Ralston.

In 1977, Herman said about *Mountain Meadow*: "This is the kind of house that you don't see much of anymore."¹⁶⁶ By that time the property included the house on a meadow, formal gardens, a swimming pool, an apple orchard, hedges of holly and a hot house. Herman seemed most anxious to share the beautiful estate. In 1992, Jean Phleger, the wife of his son Atherton, was quoted as saying: "He especially loved to have guests and always made them feel welcome."¹⁶⁷ He also allowed fellow equestrians use of the property's scenic Raymundo Trail which runs through the estate.¹⁶⁸

Certainly the country aspects of his home (and especially the redwoods) encouraged Herman to continue a lifelong interest in conservation. He was a founder of the Save the Redwoods League. This organization first met in 1914. Joseph D. Grant, an original member of the Burlingame Country Club (and its third President), along with three others¹⁶⁹ gathered at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco to create the League. Phleger was an early member of its board,¹⁷⁰ serving as a director for 20 years, and remained interested in the group's activities for all his days. Later, environmental leaders seeking to preserve his estate would note this early interest as a sign that he and his family would be sympathetic to their cause.¹⁷¹

Unlike his wife, Herman had a modest family lineage. He was born in Sacramento on September 5, 1890, to Charles W. Phleger and Mary McCory Phleger. Charles was born in Ohio. Mary was born in New Orleans of Irish parents. Herman's grandmother once remarked that County Mayo, where she was from, was so poor that "a chicken couldn't scratch a living."¹⁷²

Charles died when Herman was but two years old. With four children to support, Mary went to work as a teacher in a Sacramento grammar school. Eventually she would put all four of her children through the University of California. Herman actually had her as a teacher and was impressed that she spent much time speaking of "the horrors of drink." Her salary was never more than \$90 a month. She finally retired in the early 1920s.

In order to help the family, as a young man, Herman worked in the canneries at Sacramento at 120 ¢ an hour for ten hours a day, six days a week. He later revealed about the work: "it never hurt me a bit."¹⁷³

At Sacramento High School he played football and practiced on the lawns at the state capital building. The coach was “a kindly druggist. . . who received no salary.”¹⁷⁴

After high school, Herman decided that he wanted to be either an engineer or a lawyer. In order to have a career in those professions, he would need to go to a university. He and his brother, who graduated with him, decided on the University of California at Berkeley because that is where their sister had enrolled three years previously. He recalled, that in those days, there were no entrance examinations. A student was admitted automatically if he passed his high school courses with acceptable grades. Both boys joined the Phi Delta Theta fraternity. He lived his college days on a budget of \$50 a month, which he mostly covered with summer jobs and part-time work. For extracurricular activity, Herman joined the English and John Marshall Law Clubs. He also served in the student senate and on the school debate team. Of course, with his brother, he made the football team (actually they played rugby in those days). Among his Berkeley friends, he counted Earl Warren, who would become Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

By his senior year, Herman had determined the law would be his choice of career. At that time one could enter the law school, Boalt Hall, as a senior, so he did so. By this fourth year in Berkeley, he was working for the Alumni Association and had moved into an apartment house occupied by other law students that was referred to as “shyster’s retreat.”¹⁷⁵ He graduated with the class of 1912.

After two years at Boalt, Herman felt too distracted by his considerable outside activities and decided to take his last year of law school at Harvard. The young man had never been east of Reno before. At Harvard, he did well, achieving an “A” average. However, he found out that Harvard Law had a rule that a law degree would only be furnished to students who had spent all three years at Harvard. Therefore, even though he had the “A” grades, Phleger, this most distinguished California attorney, never really did receive a law degree. In 1977, he revealed:

*I never su! erred so far as I am aware from the fact that I don’t have a law degree. I found that when my name appeared in the announcement of courses at Boalt Hall when I was teaching, they put B.S. after my name, which was an undergraduate degree, because I had no professional degree.*¹⁷⁶

After law school, Herman went on a trip to Europe in 1914. Upon returning, he passed the bar exam in Sacramento. On the advice of Governor Hiram Johnson’s father, Grove Johnson, he decided to try to get a job in San Francisco, rather than Sacramento. He landed a position with Morrison, Dunne & Brobeck at \$56 a month and stayed 11 years with them. Ironically, his first rented house in San Francisco, which he shared with friends, was on Macondray Street, named for his future wife’s grandfather.

After the United States entered World War I in April of 1917, Herman enlisted in the Naval Reserve. He was taken in as an officer, an ensign, and reported for training in San Diego. From there he gained admission to Annapolis. He graduated with the second class of the Navy's new "ninety-day wonder"¹⁷⁷ program, which placed as many officers as possible in command positions as quickly as possible. He was then assigned to destroyer *U.S.S. Beale* based at Queenstown, Ireland. The *Beale's* duty was escorting troop ships from America, guarding against the threat of German submarine attack. The *Beale* also participated in merchant ship convey assignments, during which Phleger witnessed the torpedoing and sinking of vessels. At war's end in 1918, he resigned from the Navy with the rank of Lieutenant (J.G.).

He returned to San Francisco to live with his friends on Macondray and went back to work for Morrison, Dunne & Brobeck. He received partnership status at the beginning of 1920. Mr. Morrison, "friend and benefactor,"¹⁷⁸ died in 1921.

That same year he married Mary Elena Macondray and moved out of his Macondray rental house. They spent their honeymoon at the Hawaiian Islands, sailing over on the Matson ship *S.S. Maui*.

At the end of 1924, Morrison, Dunne & Broderick dissolved, and two firms organized out of it. The 36-year-old Phleger joined with Dunne, Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison. Dunne left the firm in 1925. In 1927, Brobeck passed away. And so, Maurice Harrison and Herman Phleger became sole partners. At the time the firm employed six associates and 11 other staff members. By 1977, the firm had 50 partners, 70 associates, 21 paralegals, 75 secretaries and 34 additional staff members.¹⁷⁹

Most of Phleger's early cases involved important clients like the Pacific Gas & Electric Company. During the 1920s, he began making a name for himself assisting employers in disagreements with labor unions. In the 1930s, he represented the Waterfront Employers Association against Harry Bridges' longshoremen's union. At issue here was a long standing disagreement between workers and employers about who had authority to hire longshoremen on the docks of San Francisco. After the violence resulting from the famous general strike and "Bloody Thursday" (on July 5, 1934), he represented the employers before the National Longshoremen's Board, organized by the federal government to investigate the matter. During those highly charged days, Phleger, himself, went nowhere without his own billy club.

At the beginning of the proceedings, Phleger's first witness was Harry Bridges, who he was convinced was a Communist. Communists had apparently been active in the general strike. Phleger decided to get right to the point:

I paused quite awhile before starting my examination. It was very quiet and I walked up as close as I could to the witness chair and I took my hand and pointed at Bridges. He looked up surprised and my first question was "Are you a member of the Communist Party?" Bridges flushed, stammered, got red in the face and didn't answer.¹⁸⁰

The upshot of the strike was that the resolve of the shipping companies crumbled, and the unions won out. Later in his career, Phleger would encounter Bridges again. This time the labor leader was organizing the sugar cane field workers in Hawaii. Phleger worked against him. Once again, the unions ended up with most of what they wanted.

One of the ramifications of the longshoremen episode was Phleger becoming friendly with the owners of the steamship companies, including William P. Roth, president of Matson Navigation Company. Roth had actually hired Phleger back in 1927 to help with the acquisition of a steamship company from the Spreckels family. Three years after the strike, the Phlegers would become neighbors with the Roths, who owned *Filoli*.

During World War II, Phleger represented the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Company on labor matters. On a national level, Phleger was a spokesman for industrial employers in Washington. He was often at odds with George Meany, who represented the unions as a member of New York's plumber's union. Phleger remembered: "He and I used to shout at each other during our arguments."¹⁸¹

After the war, Phleger's firm continued to assist big businesses in their fights with labor. This included representing Di Giorgio of Kern County, in 1947, against the National Farm Labor Union, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor.

In public service, Phleger had a great interest in higher education. He served on the Mills College Board of Trustees from 1927 to 1939. He was a Stanford University Trustee between 1944 and 1964. Afterwards, he was elected as a trustee emeritus at Stanford, a position only four other trustees held up until that time.

Phleger's first experience in assisting the United States government in areas of foreign affairs occurred in 1945, when he became Associate Director of the Legal Division for the United States Military Government in Germany. It started with his relationship with John J. McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War. McCloy and Phleger played tennis together at the Burlingame Country Club (where Phleger was a member), while the United Nations convened in San Francisco for the first time. After McCloy returned to Washington, he telegraphed and wrote letters to Phleger asking if he would go to Germany to help with the American occupation. Phleger agreed to serve for a period of six months.

Germany, and Berlin where he spent most his time, had experienced devastating damage during the War. The country was split into four parts, Russian, French, British and, of course, American. He worked for General Dwight D. Eisenhower, assisting on legal matters in the America district and throughout the other parts of Germany as well. His particular job was to break up the old banking trusts established by Adolph Hitler. He drafted legislation, modeled after the United States Sherman Anti-Trust Act. The other three governments had to agree with the new laws on banking, and to Phleger's credit, they did.

While in Germany he visited Hitler's bunker, was entertained by famous Soviet General G.K. Zhukov and witnessed a portion of Nazi war trials at Nuremberg. His account of the legal proceedings, "Nuremberg: A Fair Trial," was published in the April 1946 issue of *Atlantic Monthly*.¹⁸²

Upon returning to the United States, Phleger jumped back into his law practice. He also became a director on a number of corporate boards including the American Trust Company, Union Oil, Matson Navigation, Fiberboard Products and Newhall Land and Farming Company (Phleger would eventually serve on 25 corporate boards). He was additionally the executor of the Di Giorgio estate. In the realm of volunteer leadership, in addition to his interest in education and the Save the Redwoods League, he was Chairman of the Board of San Francisco's Childrens' Hospital for 25 years (1925-1950).

After General Eisenhower was elected President in 1952, Phleger was asked, if he'd meet with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in Washington about a position in the new administration, legal advisor for the Department of State. After he returned home, he discussed the offer with his wife and then accepted the position. In this capacity, Phleger had important roles to play during the Cold War era. He attended the Inter-American Conference at Caracas, Venezuela in 1954 and the Indochina and Korean Conference at Geneva, Switzerland that same year. Also in 1954, he was in Manila and saw the creation of NATO's eastern counterpart, SEATO, whose purpose was to keep Communism out of Southeast Asia. He played a role in the 1956 Suez Crisis, after Egypt seized the canal.

In 1957, Phleger retired from the State Department and returned to his San Francisco practice. Certainly world affairs were still on his mind, especially in October, when the Soviet Union launched its Sputnik, the first human creation to achieve orbit in outer space. He recalled "...standing out on the road at Woodside with Mrs. Phleger watching Sputnik streak across the sky."¹⁸³

Not very long afterwards, President Eisenhower appointed Phleger as a representative of the United States on the Permanent Court of Arbitration under the Hague Conven-

tions. He ended up serving two terms of six years each, from 1957 to 1963 and, as a Richard Nixon appointee, from 1969 to 1975. In 1958, President Eisenhower also asked him to help speak for the United States at the Thirteenth General Assembly of the United Nations.

In 1959, the Department of State requested that he represent the United States at the Antarctica Conference. Phleger actually presided over the meetings. Because of Antarctica's strategic importance, it was an Eisenhower Administration priority that the Conference result in an agreement prohibiting any military utilization there, by any country. After a treaty was drafted, major opposition arose in the United States Senate to its ratification as American law. Those against it felt that particulars within the agreement that prohibited military flight over the frozen continent would harm our defensive abilities. Secretary of State Christian Herter asked Phleger if he would go to Washington and work there to see to the ratification. In what proved to be a controversial hearing, Phleger testified before the Senate "at length." Finally, the treaty passed: "by not too great a margin."¹⁸⁴

Other international conferences Phleger participated in included the European-American Assembly on Outer Space in 1962. President John F. Kennedy, himself, appointed him to the Committee to Strengthen the Security of the Free World, which was principally involved with foreign aid issues. Kennedy again called on him in 1962 to sit on the Arms Control and Disarmament Advisory Committee, which he did until 1968.

When not travelling around the world representing his country, or minding his law practice, or serving on corporate and volunteer boards, Phleger enjoyed the society life of the Bay Area. He joined the exclusive Pacific Union Club in 1919 and was its President in 1953. He became a member of the Burlingame Country Club in 1927. He entered into the Bohemian Club in 1932.

Phleger retired as a partner from Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison in 1976, but continued to practice as counsel at the firm afterwards. He died at the age of 94 in 1984. U.S. District Court Judge Robert H. Schnacke said of him that this "Renaissance lawyer and Renaissance man" may well have been "the best lawyer that California or the western states ever produced."¹⁸⁵

Those close to him at the office saw how he inspired his staff to become almost driven toward achievement. He invited them to *Mountain Meadow* on occasion and was known to enjoy a good cocktail. Phleger was not much of a small talker but, up until two months before his death, still came into the office. It is reported that even the day he died he was having serious conversation with friends on the subject of international banking.

His three children, their spouses and 14 grandchildren remembered him as a man who truly loved his family. They found him “a great raconteur -- amusing, funny and entertaining...” with “...exaggeration...a major part” of one of his good stories. While a member of high society, in later life he enjoyed having a steak at Sizzler or a hamburger at McDonald’s. His family also remembered him as a “complete humanitarian...interested in everything...” Important to this story for the National Parks, he remained always “a strong conservationist.”¹⁸⁶

About his wife, Mary Elena, to whom he was married for 63 years, outsiders can only guess about the kind of bond they had. When interviewed by the Bancroft Library about how the couple met, Phleger responded:

*I don't remember the exact occasion. After Mrs. Phleger's debut there were a number of dances and balls to which I was invited, and I probably met her at one of these occasions.*¹⁸⁷

The untold story here can only be imagined -- the high-bred Peninsula debutante (see previous section) meeting the athlete, Navy veteran, and up-and-coming San Francisco attorney, complete with his poor Irish family roots. It had to have been quite the romance.

They were married at the Episcopal Church in Menlo Park. As he recalled it, the debutante Donohoe girls did the decorations. Mary Elena’s good friend, Mary Emma Flood, could not attend; she was out of the country, but Mary Elena did become god-mother to Mary Emma’s daughter.

Certainly Herman Phleger’s natural abilities were most important to his professional successes and assignment to significant national duties. Nevertheless, marrying “well” advanced him socially. For example, he could look client, friend and neighbor, William P. Roth (who had also married “well”) in the eye as an equal. Certainly the way in which the Roths handled the contribution of their *Filoli* to the National Trust for Historic Preservation had to have affected the thinking of the Phlegers and their children about their estate.

On May 27, 1914, William P. Roth married Lurline Matson at St. John’s Presbyterian Church in San Francisco. She was the daughter of William Matson who had founded the Matson Steamship Company.

William P. Roth was born in Honolulu and graduated from Stanford University. As a young man, Hawaiians knew him as a champion tennis player. When he met Lurline he was working as a sugar merchant and also for a bank. After the wedding he went to work for his father-in-law, whose primary business was running ships between Cali-

ifornia and Hawaii. When William Matson died in 1917, Roth assumed control of the company. In 1927, he was officially installed as its president.

The Roths had three children -- a son and twin daughters. In December of 1936, the couple purchased *Filoli* from the estate of William Bourn, who had built the mansion there. They paid \$225,000. The 43-room country house included great works of art and beautiful furnishings.

William P. Roth died in 1963. Just before, in 1962, Lurline and her son, William Matson Roth, purchased Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco. They were afraid the old buildings there would be torn down. Instead they converted the red-brick old factory into a fashionable retail mall. The square has been mentioned as the first major adaptive re-use project in the United States and is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

As the years passed, Lurline wrestled with what to do with *Filoli*. In 1975 she allowed it to become listed on the National Register of Historic Places (No. 75000479) and, at the same time, gave the mansion and 39 acres of surrounding gardens and grounds to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. A little later another 86 acres were given to the Trust, and, in 1982, the last 529 acres were gifted to the non-profit Filoli Center.

The humanitarian and conservation-minded Phlegers must have been impressed by the magnanimous action of their long-time friends and neighbors.

THE PHLEGER ESTATE AND ITS PRESERVATION

One needs only to look at the map to determine why environmentalists are interested in the Phleger Estate. To the east are hills now covered with suburban communities. As the Bay Area continues to grow and attract new people, the pressure for development will not relent. However, north of the Phleger Estate, open space is protected by Filoli Center and then the San Francisco Water Department. To the west over the Skyline, are Purisima Creek Open Space and El Corte de Madera Open Space areas. To the south is San Mateo County's Huddart Park. Phleger is actually a vital link in a habitat corridor that runs from San Bruno to the Santa Clara County line which encompasses some 56 square miles of open space -- all just east of the Peninsula's busy Bayside cities.

ENVIRONMENTALISM IN SAN MATEO COUNTY (CONTEXTUAL)

Concern with the environment has assumed national importance. As early as the middle part of the nineteenth century, American intellectuals such as Henry David Thoreau, John Burroughs and Frederick Olmsted were voicing concern about conservation of natural resources in the United States. Artists such as Frederick Edwin

Church joined the chorus by presenting America's wilderness as beautiful and worthy of protection. As a response to this building interest, the United States Congress established the Department of Interior in 1849 which, in part, was assigned to better oversee the exploration and development of the West.

By the end of that century, powerful political forces were engaged in examining the issue. Bringing some matters to a head were John Muir and his Sierra Club, organized in 1892. Muir's group dedicated itself to preserving America's surviving wilderness areas. The Club received a substantial boost when Theodore Roosevelt became President of the United States in 1901. Roosevelt made conservation of wilderness a central part of his domestic policy and advocated enthusiastically in its favor.

Muir was able to lure Roosevelt to California in 1903. The two toured various places including Yosemite. The Sierra Club scored some victories in the ensuing years, such as having Muir Woods in Marin County declared a National Monument in 1908. However, not all efforts were successful. Muir suffered a devastating defeat with Congress's passage of the Raker Act in 1913, which allowed the City of San Francisco to flood Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park in order to create a water supply. Muir died soon afterwards, some would say of a broken heart.

The first part of the twentieth century was largely preoccupied by world wars and depression, but by the 1950s, westerners, in particular, were becoming aware that growth was occurring so quickly that much of what made the West special in the first place (like its wide open spaces) was being threatened. A cause and effect sequence manifested itself. Growth in the 1950s led to awareness, then political action in the 1960s and 1970s, and then sophisticated private and public solutions beginning in the 1980s.

Landmark legislation from Congress that marked the political action of the new era included the Water Quality Act of 1965 and Air Quality Act of 1967. The first Earth Day took place on April 22, 1970. This educational, public observance was designed to galvanize action on all levels. As was the case throughout the United States, a number of local environmental groups got their start in San Mateo County with this new awareness day. On a national level, Congress remained active in the 1970s. In 1972, it passed the Marine Mammal Protection Act, in 1973, the Endangered Species Act and in 1974, the Safe Drinking Water Act. President Nixon formed the Environmental Protection Agency in 1974.

On the state level, concern about the environment and particularly the redwoods can be traced back to 1852 when Assemblyman Henry A. Crabb of San Joaquin County proposed public ownership of the redwood forests. He failed, and it took until the new century, but real action to save the redwoods did finally manifest itself. In 1900,

Andrew Hill, a talented artist gathered together a group of educators writers -- men and women -- in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The upshot was the creation of the Sem-pervirens Club whose mission became lobbying to preserve redwood country. Its first success was to have Big Basin made a state park in 1902. This became California's first coastal redwood park.

The creation of state parks in the Bay region proved crucial to saving a variety of endangered plants and animals. Probably no park was more important in preservation of marine life than San Mateo County's Año Nuevo, the home of the rare elephant seal. Año Nuevo became part of the state park system in 1958.¹⁸⁸

Reflecting national priorities, the state acted in the 1970s. In 1972, California voters passed Proposition 20 -- the Coastal Initiative, which froze development along the state's coast and set stringent codes for the future. Then in 1976, the state legislature authorized the California Coastal Act which created the Coastal Commission and a Coastal Zone to better govern development. For San Mateo County's coastline, this meant a protected area along the ocean from several hundred feet to five miles inland.

As with the state of California, much of the early focus on conservation in San Mateo County began with the redwoods. In 1924, Memorial Park on Pescadero Creek, east of the community of Pescadero, opened to the public. County leaders mixed the saving of the trees with honoring the 52 San Mateo County residents who lost their lives during World War I.

Closer to the interest of this study, Huddart Park, the Phleger Estate's southern neighbor, was acquired by the County in 1944 and in 1948 was made a park. In the post-war period other County parks, situated in open spaces, followed. In 1956, the County purchased 108 acres to create Junipero Serra Park in the hills between Millbrae and San Bruno. It opened as a park in 1960. In 1958, the County acquired the property that would become Sam McDonald Park near La Honda. Also in 1958, the County began buying property near Pacifica that became San Pedro Park.¹⁸⁹

Local sensitivity about pollution goes back to at least 1948, when local newspapers began editorializing about Bay Area smog. Meanwhile, the Bay had become a sewer. The state enacted several laws during the 1950s, and, by 1959, some \$130 million had to be spent on a treatment system for the Peninsula. Nevertheless, San Mateo County continued to be listed as one of the worst offenders in the continued pollution of the Bay. In 1963, San Mateo County was threatened by a lawsuit over the issue and joined the South Bay TriCounty Sewage Commission to get a better handle on the situation.

By the 1960s, Peninsula residents were acquiring an awareness that unlimited growth would diminish quality of life for them unless some sort of regional planning was put

in place.¹⁹⁰ Hearing that master plans for the state suggested that San Mateo County would have a population of 800,000 by 1990 alarmed them.

A primary focus of the 1960s became the filling of the San Francisco Bay for further residential and industrial utilization. One of the first revolts occurred at Brisbane where locals objected to the Sunset Scavenger Corporation's plans to dump San Francisco garbage on 250 acres of marshland near their town. Residents learned that for 25 years, Sunset intended to dispose of the City's daily 1,600 tons of solid waste -- just blocks away from their community. San Francisco's Mayor John Shelley explained: "You can't let the garbage lie in the streets." Locals responded by railing against "filler barons" and formed a committee to lead their fight -- "Garbage A-Go-Go."¹⁹¹

The larger Save San Francisco Bay Association formed in 1962, with the more general purpose of stopping fill all around the Bay.¹⁹² Out of the controversy came the creation of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission which placed a moratorium on fill projects in 1964.

Some Peninsulans in South San Mateo County became concerned about the rural hills to their west. In 1959, residents learned of Stanford University's plans to develop 245 acres for an industrial complex. Locals formed a campaign to oppose it, entitled "Factories out of the Foothills."¹⁹³ They lost a referendum on the matter, but it prompted Stanford professor Wallace Stegner to write his "Wilderness Letter," a widely read piece which championed the protection of open spaces.¹⁹⁴ Also evolving from the "Factories out of the Foothills" campaign was the Committee for Green Foothills, which became an effective force against later incursions.

Certainly locals realized that the tide was turning in 1965, when the Save-Our-Skyline Committee and future Congressman Pete McCloskey forced the Pacific Gas and Electric Company to place unsightly power lines underground in the Woodside area after a fight that was resolved in federal court. Another victory during the decade occurred in 1969. Environmentalists attacked a plan by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to dam Pescadero Creek. The Corps was forced to abandon the project.¹⁹⁵

County park enthusiasts were pleased in 1961. Butano State Park was dedicated on September 16. Decades before Frederick Law Olmsted had recommended buying up 12,000 acres in this area north of Big Basin to preserve ancient redwoods. By 1961, only 1,900 acres were left for creating the park, the rest had been exploited by loggers.

As told in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* portion of this study, the County designated the tide-pools at Moss Beach a reserve in 1969. It was named James V. Fitzgerald Marine Reserve after the County Supervisor who led the preservation effort.

Into the next decade, another local victory was achieved within the San Mateo City limits. In 1971, the Save Sugarloaf Committee organized to halt the leveling and development of a hill west of town. They succeeded in stopping the project, and the makeup of the City Council changed dramatically thereafter.¹⁹⁶

In 1972, the County made a farsighted move by establishing the Mid-peninsula Regional Open Space District. This governmental agency went to work buying and managing lands for future recreational or preservation purposes. Progress on open space issues during the 1970s was certainly enhanced by the changing nature of the County Board of Supervisors. By 1974, a majority of them recognized themselves as environmentalists.

One of the County's major moves during the decade was purchasing San Bruno Mountain as a park in 1978. The \$6.2 million acquisition was made after years of battling between environmentalists and the Crocker Land Company.¹⁹⁷ Despite their successes, by the beginning of the 1980s, local activists felt that instead of moving forward, they tended to be constantly reacting to proposed development. Their triumphs seemed temporary, until the next scheme came along.¹⁹⁸ Farther reaching actions were deemed appropriate.

Change along these lines came in 1980 for the Coastside, when the County adopted an environmentally sensitive coastal plan. This was bolstered in 1986, when County voters passed Measure A by a 63% majority. Its function was to further protect the County's rural Coastside from development.¹⁹⁹ The 1980s were also a time during which the County increased its commitment to parks. In 1980 the 467-acre Edgewood Park on the western fringe of Redwood City was acquired. All park lovers were thrilled by the state's opening of its McNee property at Montara Mountain in 1984.

Into the 1990s, the first major controversy involved stopping garbage company BFI from creating dumps at Aponolio Canyon on the Coastside in 1990. Another victory of the decade, this one in 1996, was the championing of the tunnel alternative over the bypass project at Montara Mountain (see *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section of this study).

Despite the continued confrontations, the 1990s generated a new spirit of cooperation among developers, environmentalists and landowners. The work of government and private organizations involved in purchasing outright those properties thought to have potential for controversy assisted with this new spirit. These agencies, moreover, wished to be good neighbors. Among the new partners was the San Mateo County Farm Bureau, whose membership supported the idea that agricultural lands could be purchased by the open space concerns yet still be used to grow crops.²⁰⁰

Assisting with this teamwork approach was the Mid-peninsula Open Space District which was, as mentioned, created in 1972, by an electoral initiative. In 1976, voters approved of dramatically expanding the District by adding the southern portion of the County to the District's geographic range of activity. Again, in 2004, the District grew, this time in the direction of the Coastsides. Now the western portion of the County, from the Pacifica city limits to the Santa Cruz County line, was within its area of operations.

In addition the advent of the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) in 1977 helped immensely with the District's work. POST was organized to assist the District by raising private money to buy land and then resell the property at favorable prices to the District. As the years went by, POST's role expanded as it took on new partners and strategies.²⁰¹

SAVING THE PHLEGER ESTATE

The first correspondence placed in the files of POST concerned the Phleger Estate and how best to approach its owners about preservation of that property.²⁰² In fact from the inception of the organization, the Phleger Estate was of great interest. POST's system of prioritizing properties deserving action was (is) based on some 12 different criteria, such as quality of natural assets, visibility, presence of a watershed, recreational potential, etc. From the get-go, on a scale of one to ten, with one being of most potential, the Phleger Estate received a one.²⁰³

POST's first great success came in 1981. Windy Hill sits above Portola Valley. Ryland Kelley and Corte Madera Associates gifted it to POST which then sold it to the Mid-Peninsula Open Space District for \$1.5 million, about half its actual value. This money then became part of a fund to acquire other lands.

When Herman Phleger died in 1984, POST was still on its way to becoming a force on the land acquisition scene. By 1990, with a paid staff of just five, it found itself barely capable of raising the kinds of funds necessary to carry out a deal for purchasing the Phleger Estate. Before Phleger's death it did not much matter. During his lifetime, he was not ready to relinquish his property. When asked about a potential contribution of *Mountain Meadow*, he told Congressman Phil Burton: "No one's painting my property green but me."²⁰⁴

However, after he died, Mary Elena indicated interest in a way to preserve the property's natural assets. POST's director, Audrey Rust, went looking for partners. Initial contact was made with the Open Space District, the Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land. The first estimates on the value of the Phleger Estate surfaced at \$30 million. As the months wore on, it appeared more certain that POST was going to have

to be the lead agency in the acquisition process. The organization went ahead and assured the Phleger family that they could work something out. According to Rust:

*It was our priority. And our board from the get-go has always said: "If we go out of business and we go broke saving a piece of property, isn't that better than if we stay in business and don't save the land that needs to be saved?"*²⁰⁵

And so, in 1990, Mary Elena agreed to begin the process of negotiating a deal. Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison represented her family, of course. Rust recalls the intimidating nature of the following meetings:

*Oh my God, this is like Shirley Temple pulling together the play that takes place in the barn. . . because really, we were a little organization and we were going to say we could put together this money, and we weren't going to pay \$30 million for it, no matter what.*²⁰⁶

Besides the attorneys, members of the Phleger family attended the sessions with POST representatives. Months of talks "over every detail" ensued. However, POST had confidence that things would work out because it was the only entity willing to both preserve the land and pay for it. Finally, near the end of the year, all seemed ready for signing the papers when, on December 5, Mary Elena suddenly died from a massive stroke.²⁰⁷

Nonetheless, the negotiations went forward with the Phlegers' children, and a week later, an agreement was signed. *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter Bill Workman wrote: "In what may be one of the most ambitious conservation projects by a private land trust in the nation, the Peninsula Open Space Trust announced an agreement yesterday to buy and preserve the Phleger Estate. . ."²⁰⁸ Workman explained that the Trust had pledged to raise \$14.5 million by June, 1991, as a down payment. It would also pursue legislation to have the Estate included within the GGNRA. He quoted Audrey Rust as saying that from a funding point of view ". . .this is the largest conservation project ever undertaken in the United States."

Now POST went into fundraising mode. One of the first calls made by Rust was to Intel founder and philanthropist Gordon Moore and his wife Betty. The couple toured the property. Among the challenges in the campaign was to sell the house to a private party. Neither the Trust nor the National Park Service wanted it, and money derived from its sale could help with the fundraising. Rust was surprised when the Moores stepped up and said they'd buy it and make it their home; the agreement included about 24 acres of what would become a conservation easement -- all for \$6 million.²⁰⁹

The Save the Redwoods League, Herman Phleger's old group, then chimed in. They

agreed to buy 203 acres of the property for \$2.5 million, which it would donate to the National Park Service when the contract with the GGNRA was signed.

With help from other donors, the June deadline was met. The family then loaned \$10.5 million to POST for the balance owed, which was due in August of 1994. POST staked its entire \$3.5 million reserve to the project.

In the meantime, federal representatives were receiving hundreds of letters from local and state officials requesting assistance to support the acquisition. For Congress one of the big factors was the house. It did not want to help buy it. With the Moores' purchase the way was cleared. In 1992, it voted in favor of including the property in the GGNRA. In both 1993 and 1994, it agreed to appropriate \$5.25 million each year to help the fundraising. The total amount contributed to POST and then paid to the family was \$21 million. Considering the actual value of the property was far higher, the Phlegers ended up making a sizeable contribution. Their children received substantial tax credits.

On December 23, 1994, San Mateo Times staff writer, Marshall Wilson, reported: "Hikers and nature lovers can enjoy more than 1,200 acres of hills and canyons now that the Phleger Estate officially has been added to the National Park System."²¹⁰ Wilson quoted Audrey Rust as saying: "I feel this has been my life." GGNRA Superintendent Brian O'Neil added:

The project represents a great example of how a public/private partnership can work. Under Peninsula Open Space Trust's leadership, a number of government agencies worked with non-profit organizations to save a remarkable piece of land for public use.

On April 29, 1995, the Phleger Estate was dedicated as part of the GGNRA. What a great partner POST had found. The GGNRA was born in 1972 as a national park. According to the United States Department of the Interior, its mission was to preserve for the public, areas within the San Francisco Bay Area, possessing "outstanding natural, historic, scenic and recreational values." What better place to fulfill this mission than on the Phleger Estate?

The great success of this effort gave momentum to POST. In 1997 it purchased Miramontes Ridge and a year later it raised \$15 million from private, state and federal sources to buy Bair Island, east of Redwood City. In 2001 it was instrumental in putting together the Rancho Corral de Tierra deal (which became a part of the GGNRA in 2005). Between 2001 and 2005, it raised \$200 million to preserve 20,000 acres on the San Mateo County coast.

The result of the work of POST, the GGNRA and many other private and public entities is that San Mateo County today, possesses some of the largest tracts of protected lands in California. This is quite remarkable considering it is situated in the midst of a large urban region, and even more noteworthy because it is a smaller county in space but has a robust population of 700,000.

As related earlier, the Coastside, historically, has been preserved because for decades it was isolated. When finally eyed for development, a new environmental consciousness stopped the builders. On the busy Bayside, far less was available to protect for open space advocates.

The Phleger Estate was one of the few (and best) properties to target. Its pristine presence stemmed from the history of the place as a suburban retreat, reminiscent of the Peninsula's railroad era estates of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries -- a retreat of the kind Mary Elena's grandparents, the Athertons and Macondrays, would approve. Therefore the historic interpretation of the Estate with its colorful rustic characters, and its logging, farming and winemaking stories ought to also have a place for understanding the Estate as an estate of a suburban culture fading from our collective memories.

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- %See Appendix XII for a description of life in a lumber camp 140 years ago.
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- %San Mateo County historian Frank M. Stanger described these mills: "On the whole, whether lumber or shingles were the product, there was nothing spectacular or photogenic about the machines or the apparatus of these mills. The buildings were mere sheds to protect the expensive machinery from the sun and rain, and they all looked about alike.
- "The tall smokestack with its plume of smoke above the surrounding trees was, perhaps, an exception. Beneath it, under the roof, was the boiler, which might be either upright or the horizontal type, with its pile of wood for fuel. Near by was the engine itself, usually a one-cylinder affair with a flywheel, sometimes geared directly to the shaft that turned the saw, while others were set apart, with power transmitted by means of a belt.
- "If the site permitted the building of a dam, there was usually a mill pond; by far the easiest way to store and sort logs was to dump them first into a pond. A floating log was much more easily moved up to the mill than one that had to be rolled and jockeyed into position on the ground.
- "Yet, all together, however commonplace the parts may seem, the total scene was a complex and busy affair. The coming logs, the whir of machinery and the singing of the saw, the sorting and stacking of lumber, and the coming and going of teams with wagons - - all this set in a lonely canyon among stumps and a few remaining trees; it had to be seen, heard, and felt to be fully appreciated." Frank M. Stanger, *Sawmills in the Redwoods: Logging on the San Francisco Peninsula 1849-1967*, San Mateo County Historical Association, San Mateo, CA, 1967, p. 143.
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MILAGRA RIDGE

The National Park Service's Milagra Ridge sits on a 249-acre parcel of land on the northern flank of Sweeney Ridge.¹ The entryway to this portion of the GGNRA is at Sharp Park Road and College Drive in Pacifica. At 1,200 feet it possesses views of the Pacific Ocean, the Farallon Islands, Point Reyes, San Pedro Mountain, Montara Mountain, Mussel Rock, Mori Point, San Pedro Point and the Pacifica city shoreline.²

EARLY PEOPLE

Before the Spanish arrived, the Ridge was probably grassland, as the Aramai periodically burned the hillsides in this area.³ They did so, as other Ohlones did, to encourage grasses as food for game such as deer that were valuable to the people. They also collected grass seed for consumption. Although no "formal archeological surveys have been conducted,"⁴ there is little evidence to suggest that Milagra was the site of an Indian village.

During Spanish times, an agricultural outpost was established in the San Pedro Valley (see Sweeney Ridge portion of this study). The hills to the outpost's east were used for grazing cattle. At first the soldiers at the *Presidio* and the missionaries shared the pasturage. The military used an "R" as a brand for *Rancho del Rey* (King's Ranch) and the fathers used the F brand for *Franciscano* (Franciscan).⁵ However, about 1791, the open range had become crowded, and the priests convinced Spanish officials that only one herd was necessary. It did not take long before the soldiers began complaining about being overcharged for cattle by the missionaries. *Presidio* commandant Jose Arguello approached Governor Diego de Borica over the issue, and in 1797, the Governor sided with the soldiers and created *Rancho Buri Buri* as pasturage for the army.⁶ Although Buri Buri is east of Milagra (Buri Buri included the south part of San Bruno Mountain, South San Francisco, San Bruno, Millbrae and North Burlingame), because this territory was open range, it is likely that the soldiers' herds grazed on the Ridge, possibly along side of those belonging to the Church.

Between 1812 and 1821, a dramatic decrease of the Franciscans' herds of cattle on the Peninsula occurred: from 10,740 head to just 3,700.⁷ However, after that date, the numbers of beeves went up again. Haggling between the soldiers and the Franciscans over pasture land continued until the secularization process manifested itself in the mid-1830s.⁸

With secularization, *Rancho Buri Buri* was awarded to Jose Sanchez in 1835. Milagra

Ridge was situated on the *Rancho San Pedro* and was given to Jose's son Francisco Sanchez in 1839. For a dozen or more years it is likely that the herds from both *ranchos* used Milagra for feeding.

Milagra is also said to be the site of the fabled "Sanchez ditch." The story goes that this trench was installed by Francisco Sanchez to keep out squatters after the Gold Rush began. It is true that Sanchez had fewer problems with squatters than his neighbors, but that was probably because of the more inaccessible nature of his property plus his reputation as a fighting man after the Battle of Santa Clara (see Sweeney Ridge portion of this study for more about Francisco Sanchez). It is hard to imagine how any ditch or trench could have kept out squatters unless it was meant to be a simple marker and not a barrier. The team for this study was unable to find evidence that the ditch existed.

After Francisco Sanchez's death in 1862, his estate gradually sold off the rancho properties. Milagra Ridge remained in agricultural use. The Sneath family used it for grazing their dairy cattle, and farmers grew crops there until World War II (again see the Sweeney Ridge portion of this study).

How Milagra Ridge got its name is a murky subject. Back in 1866, a Spanish-language lease for land in the gulch to the west of the Ridge was named *potrero del Milagro* (miracle field). The Coast survey of 1868 describes a Milagra Valley.⁹ The "Official" San Mateo County map of that same year shows a "W" shaped parcel in the area, labeled Milagro of 223.74 acres.¹⁰ Local historians have suspected that a Milagro family must have lived here, but neither the 1870 census nor the 1879 Great Register of San Mateo County reveal anybody of that name.

The United States Geological Survey continued to show Milagra Valley in 1892, but in another location (closer to today's Sharp Park Road).¹¹ After 1900, the Fahey Ranch was in this location, and what had originally been known as Milagra Valley took the name Fahey's Gulch for awhile. Finally, in 1957, the commander at the Nike missile base called the hill east of the valley Milagra Ridge, and the name has stuck.

COAST DEFENSIVE AND MILAGRA RIDGE THROUGH WORLD WAR II

DEFENSE OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY (CONTEXTUAL)

From the time when Spanish explorer Pedro Fages saw the entrance to the Bay from its eastern shore in 1770, it became increasingly clear that the Golden Gate was a strategically important place in *Alta California*. In 1772, Fages, with Franciscan Juan Crespi, in a failed attempt to get around the Bay, made the further discoveries of the Suisun Bay and the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. This gave yet more significance to guarding the Bay since it was now coming to be understood that this was the key for

navigating and controlling the interior of *Alta* California. In 1775, Juan Ayala, aboard the *San Carlos*, proved the Golden Gate could be sailed through. Juan Bautista de Anza sited the mission and presidio at San Francisco the next year, 1776, and a military presence stood guard over the Golden Gate for two centuries thereafter.

Milagra Ridge's place in this story comes at its very end. As weapons became more sophisticated through the decades, their range increased dramatically, and therefore so did the geographical area that needed to be covered by seacoast defenses. As the United States entered World War II, preparations included anti-aircraft guns and radars at Milagra Ridge. Heavy armament for engaging ships at sea and landing forces were also planned. During the Cold War, the weaponry at this place featured a Nike guided missile launching site as defense against aerial attack.

The story begins at the southern edge of the Golden Gate, where the world-renowned bridge touches down on San Francisco today. Building of a presidio and a mission together were of utmost importance to the Spanish. This was, at the time, Spain's northernmost outpost on the North American continent. The San Francisco *Presidio* represented Spain's physical commitment to maintaining a permanent military presence. It protected its claim of lands north of Mexico and marked its hegemony of the San Francisco Bay and, indeed, *Alta* California on the whole.¹²

However, at first the *Presidio* consisted of mere housing for a garrison and walls to protect the soldiers. British and Russian interest in the area made it certain that a fortified installation was needed at the tip of the Peninsula, at the Golden Gate's narrowest point. Governor Jose Arrillaga ordered the work to begin. As told in the Phleger Estate portion of this study, redwood from down in the Woodside area was used to help with the construction. The creation of the land battery, *Castillo de San Joaquin* at *La Punta de la Cantil Blanco*, commenced in 1793 and was completed in 1794. The bluff, where it sat, was cut away after the American occupation of California to make way for Fort Point.

In its plan of 1850, the United States military decided to place batteries close to the water at Fort Point and Alcatraz. A cross fire would be achieved by placing similar works at Point San Jose and on Angel Island.

The work at Fort Point, including leveling of *La Punta de Cantil Blanco*, was completed about 1853.¹³ Bricks for the project were made on site. Granite had to be procured from places as close by as Point Reyes and as far away as China. The multi-tiered, casemate fort with 90 guns was largely completed by 1860. The only such structure constructed on the west coast of the United States, its very existence spoke to the continued concern of military leaders about the need to secure the Golden Gate. Fort Point is today part of the GGNRA.

As the Civil War began, the United States Army started planning how to defend the Bay Area. A strategy evolved centered on holding a line of defense from San Bruno Mountain to Lake Merced. This basic scheme remained the cornerstone of army preparations for an attack on the San Francisco Bay through to the World War II era.

An immediate step to strengthen the Bay's defenses was improved fortification of Alcatraz and placement of temporary structures at other sites. By 1864, Union leaders were not only worried about possible attack by Confederate raiding ships, like the *C.S.S. Shenandoah*, but about increased British activity in western Canada and French intervention in Mexico. War with both European powers seemed possible, considering the United States' perceived preoccupation with fighting its Civil War. By the War's end, the Army had mounted huge 15-inch Rodmen smoothbore guns at Alcatraz. These weapons had proven effective against the South's best armored fighting vessels.

In 1870, a new plan surfaced to make use of other lessons learned during the Civil War. Earthwork batteries and concrete gun emplacements replaced masonry works. Parapets were thickened, and silhouettes were lowered. On the bluffs of the *Presidio*, two new batteries were installed to supplement the now obsolete Fort Point. The new guns were spaced wider apart so that a direct hit could not knockout two at once. Battery ranges increased to 4,200 to 5,000 yards.¹⁴

In 1882, a Gun Foundry Board again studied technical advances as they related to sea-coast defense. It inspired President Grover Cleveland to organize the Board on Fortifications or Other Defenses in 1885. Known as the Endicott Board, after its chairman, Secretary of War William C. Endicott, it first convened in 1886.

The Endicott Board made recommendations for fortifications at 22 seaports along the coasts of the United States. Over a significant length of time, its efforts resulted in so much work that its name, Endicott, became synonymous with an entire era of defense strategy.

From its initial meetings the Endicott Board ranked San Francisco Bay as most important for acquiring new construction only behind New York. The New York Board of Engineers planned the new San Francisco project in 1890. Over the next 15 years, it called for an expansion of the outer defenses of the Bay reflecting new capabilities in coastal artillery firepower. Pieces could now reach targets ten and even 12 miles out at sea. Naval guns had similar ability, of course. Defense strategy called for engaging potential enemies as far away from the Bay as possible. And so, batteries were planned for Point Lobos, Lake Merced and across the Bay at Point Bonita.

The Endicott batteries were constructed of concrete and buried behind earthen

parapets. The guns were placed in individual locations or sometimes in pairs. They were also more widely spread than ever before. Enclosed command positions were built into structures. Magazines were installed below the surrounding earth. They lacked overhead protection, as air attack was not yet a threat. For the San Francisco Bay project, engineer Charles Suter designed the improvements and oversaw their construction.

The first work on the Endicott improvements began on the western portion of the *Presidio* in 1891 with the creation of Battery Marcus Miller which possessed three 10-inch rifled guns on disappearing carriages. A mortar system was begun nearby in 1893. In 1894 an experimental battery of three 15-inch pneumatic guns, capable of hurling dynamite, was constructed. One of only two such installations ever put in place in the United States, the new weapons were declared failures by 1904. In 1895, Battery Godfrey at the *Presidio* became the first to have a 12-inch gun platform in the United States. Its breech-loading rifle was the first of its kind on the West Coast. Two other batteries of this type followed soon after. In 1896, the Board of Regulations of Seacoast Artillery Fire advanced the capabilities of the defenders of the Bay by introducing a new unified fire control system, allowing improved accuracy of weaponry.

The installation of the Endicott system around the Bay was a manifestation of a new feeling within the United States. With the western frontier gone, Americans began pondering the possibilities of becoming an imperial power with overseas objectives in the Pacific a primary consideration. The declaration of war with Spain, in 1898, increased interest in seacoast defense and all manner of warfare.

The new century brought further advancement. In 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt assigned the Taft Board, named for Secretary of War William Howard Taft, to renovate the now dated Endicott systems. Improvements in this era included deployment of searchlights, more use of electricity, telephone communications and yet further steps forward in the aiming of weapons with a modernized system featuring new devices for enabling rapid mathematical calculations.

The 1900s also brought about change in the organization of seacoast defense. The Army assumed the entire mission of protecting naval bases by this time. The realization of how sophisticated seacoast defense was becoming inspired the Army to establish the Coast Artillery Corps in 1907 as a separate arm.

In the years that followed, the Taft system guarding the Golden Gate began coming online. It saw to the installation of more than 25 fire control stations by 1908. The effectiveness of mine warfare impressed the Taft Board. Laying minefields outside the Golden Gate became a priority.

While Henry P. Bowie of the *El Cerrito* estate at old *Rancho San Mateo* (see Phleger Estate portion of this study) was a devotee of Japanese culture and society -- so much so that he organized the Japan Society of America in 1905 to encourage more friendly intercourse between the United States and Japan¹⁵ -- tensions were growing between the two Pacific powers which kept seacoast defense important. Not only were both countries recognizing a rivalry for hegemony for the Pacific Ocean, but racist attitudes on the West Coast, and particular at San Francisco, flared periodically into international incidents further exacerbating the situation. Therefore Taft-era defense programming around the Bay continued with added urgency.

World War I brought more strategic change. The new battleships brought into service during the War by the British, and then by others, featured 15-inch rifled guns that could lie o! San Pedro Point and shell San Francisco into dust. With their 21,000 yard range, they could do so without fear of return fire from the Golden Gate's defense system.

Meanwhile, air warfare had become a factor. In 1921, hangars for observation balloons were built at Forts Funston, Winfield Scott and Barry. More importantly, that same year, Crissy Field, an Army Air coast defense station, was completed and became the earliest of its kind in the West.

The Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 did several things that affected the Bay Area's defense system. While placing a limit on construction of capital ships, such as battleships and battle cruisers, it allowed for converting such vessels into aircraft carriers. Thus while surface fleets might decrease in size, the threat from the air increased. Projects to build American capital ships were scrapped as a result of the treaty. However their 16-inch naval rifles were already forged. These weapons, that could hit targets 44,600 yards away, became available for seacoast defense. Since there was a moratorium on further fortifications on most of the islands in the Pacific, some of these guns could come to the Bay. In the ensuing years only the Panama Canal and Hawaii were regarded with higher priority. The 16-inch gun became central to defensive strategies here.

During the 1930s, the Army updated its designs for 16-inch batteries by incorporating overhead cover to protect them against air attack. Plans were also developed for modern batteries for smaller 8-inch and 6-inch guns. As world tensions rose, construction began in 1936 on mammoth Battery Davis at Fort Funston near Lake Merced. With its two 16-inch guns fully protected from overhead bombardment, it became a prototype for future heavy seacoast defense works. After the completion of a similar battery at Fort Cronkhite (in Marin County) in 1940, San Francisco Bay possessed the most strongly fortified seacoast defense network in the United States. Covering an area from San Pedro Point in the south to Wildcat Ridge in the north, the 16-inch guns of

the Golden Gate could hit back at any surface vessel afloat. No ship's guns could bear on the Bay without threat of significant retaliatory fire.

However, with war clouds gathering again, further projects seemed necessary. Defense of the San Francisco Bay remained the highest priority on the Pacific Coast of the continental United States. In a plan known as the 1937 Project for San Francisco Harbor Defenses, Fort Funston was provided with firing platforms so that artillery could protect its blind spots. Three-inch anti-aircraft guns were mounted at Fort Funston, Winfield Scott and Barry and eventually at other locations including Fort Cronkite. The 1937 plan also called for greater use of searchlights. In order to manage the greatly increased flow of information, "groupment command posts" were placed at Fort Barry and Fort Funston. Many of these projects were started in 1940 and were completed in time for America's entry into World War II.

Also proposed in the 1937 plan were two new batteries of pairs of 6-inch guns with overhead cover: one at Fort Miley in San Francisco and the second at Milagra Ridge in the south. Both were eventually completed, as were an expanded system of observation stations that included installations at Devil's Slide and Pillar Point.¹⁶

The Army purchased both the promontory at Devil's Slide (9.61 acres) from Hibernia Bank and the promontory at Pillar Point (13.7 acres also referred to as Gray Whale Cove Promontory) to create fire control stations. Fire control stations were necessary in order to increase the accuracy of the modern long-range artillery pieces being installed. The pillbox-like stations were furnished with radar equipment and high-powered telescopes to take bearings on targets. They possessed telephone connections to the plotting rooms at their assigned gun batteries.

By the end of Sunday, December 7, 1941, the day during which the Japanese attacked American forces at Pearl Harbor, the seacoast fortifications protecting San Francisco Bay were fully manned and functional. Furthermore mobile artillery had been moved into planned positions and two infantry battalions had been deployed south and north of the Golden Gate.

The next day, all around the Bay, additional steps were taken. In San Mateo County, previously designed precautions included placement of sentries at the Crystal Springs Dam, the ship building works at South San Francisco and San Francisco Municipal Airport. County Sheriff James J. McGrath ordered fishing boats to stay moored at Pillar Point to prevent espionage or sabotage.¹⁷

As the days wore on, more measures took place. Minefields were placed around the Golden Gate. By war's end, some 481 mines had been laid. "Anti-motor torpedo

boat” batteries, mounting machine guns and 3-inch guns, were installed on the San Francisco and Marin County shorelines.

On the Bayside of San Mateo County, Coyote Point Park became the Merchant Marine Cadet Academy. The Cow Palace became an Army Storage installation. Tanforan Racetrack became an assembly center for Japanese American internees. San Francisco Airport was turned over to the Army for supply missions. The Army built Dibble General Hospital in Menlo Park.

On the Coastsides, sudden response included enforced blackouts in the residential areas. Additionally soldiers and Coast Guard personnel began patrolling the beaches almost immediately. In fact the old McCloskey Castle (see Mori Point section of this study) served as a station for an Army platoon. Just south of the Castle, a detention camp was established at Sharp Park (see Mori Point section).

According to Stephen A. Haller, Park Historian for the GGNRA, while much of the evidence of the defense complex of World War II has been obliterated over time (such as that at Pillar Point for example) and for the most part do not retain sufficient integrity to qualify for the National Register of Historic Places, “. . .the dramatic fire control complex at Devil’s Slide is plainly visible to drivers on Highway 1 to this day,”¹⁸ and does have historic value.

For this study, Haller elaborates:¹⁹

Devil’s Slide Military Reservation is located on State Highway 1 between the towns of Pacifica and Half Moon Bay, California, approximately 17 miles southwest of the Golden Gate Bridge. The geographic center of the reservation is at approximately 37° 34’ 28.16” N and 122° 31’ 9.39” W. The land was acquired in stages beginning in 1939 by the U.S. Army for construction of Fire Control stations assigned to the Harbor Defenses of San Francisco.

Beginning in June 1939 the United States acquired 9.61 fee acres and .72 easement acres on a rocky promontory south of Pacifica for the construction of fire control stations and associated structures. The land was disposed of by the U.S. Army following the war and was apparently transferred to the U.S. Navy. San Mateo County Assessor’s records indicate that in 1983 Mr. Alfred J. Wiede of Stockholm, Sweden, purchased the property from the Department of the Navy. The State of California is believed to be present owner of the property.

The reservation contains three fire control stations (two of them in a combined, two-level structure), a transmitter building for an SCR 296 radar set, and a generator room/power plant that provided AC current to the fire control facili-

ties. The power plant is located adjacent to State Highway 1, but the fire control stations and the transmitter building are located several hundred feet higher atop a rocky promontory that can only be accessed by climbing a flight of several hundred stairs. It is a spectacular location. Over the years the site has suffered from neglect and as a result has been badly vandalized with spray can graffiti on nearly every surface. No fixtures remain inside any of the structures. However, the site's location and setting are unchanged and give an overwhelming feeling of time, place and purpose.

The site contains examples of two different World War II-era fire control stations designs, an underground radar operating room, and a generator hut. A 1950s steel radar platform installed by the U.S. Navy is located directly atop the 1940s radar operating room. The concrete generator hut is a rare structure that contained two different sized generators: a 3 KVA 120 v generator that provided power to the fire control stations and a 25 KVA generator that powered the SCR 296 radar set. There are no similar structures anywhere within the former Harbor Defenses of San Francisco.

Sometime in the 1950s, the U.S. Navy replaced the original tower with a still-standing steel platform used when they assumed control of the minefields protecting the harbor. This is a rare example of two military agencies using the same structure for the same purpose, while adapting it to their changing needs. The several hundred foot concrete staircase leading up to the stations is also evidence of the unique construction techniques developed by the Coast Artillery to reach their fire control facilities.

Despite the graffiti vandalism to the structures, Devil's Slide still maintains a strong feeling of authenticity to the World War II era. This is due to the reservation's nearly unaltered location and setting, and to the sweeping views of the defensive sea area of the Harbor Defenses. The climb up the stairs to the stations is especially evocative of wartime military life on this isolated outcrop. The area is closely associated with the important events of World War II and the military's defense of the West Coast. It is a key feature associated with the Harbor Defenses of San Francisco. Devil's Slide Military Reservation retains sufficient integrity to merit inclusion in a National Register or National Landmark Historic District.

The following individual structures contribute to the potential historic property:

Fire Control Station B S Construction #129-Contributing Building: Constructed 1943. Consists of a single-room range finding and observation station measuring 13'4" x 11'8" with a 6'10" ceiling. It sits at an elevation of 392' above sea level. Structure is a standard World War II-era steel dome design with counterbalanced

steel visor over the viewing aperture. Primary access is via an L-shaped rear entrance corridor and a steel door. Secondary access is through a square manhole hatch in the roof and steel ladder. Structure was assigned to the never-completed Battery Construction #129 at Fort Barry, California.

Fire Control Station (combined) B S Townsley & B S Davis-Contributing Building: *Constructed 1941. Consists of a two-story fire control station with the upper station set slightly back from the lower. Both stations have standard World War II-era steel dome design with counterbalanced steel visors over observing instruments. Access to both stations is through square manholes in their roofs and steel ladders. Elevation of the upper station is 415' above sea level. It contains a single range finding and observation room measuring 13'4" x 11'8" with a 6'10" ceiling. Lower station contains an identical-sized range finding and observation room, and a 'back room' with interior of 12'4" x 13'9" with an 8' ceiling for crew quarters and a battery rack. The first floor was assigned to Battery Townsley at Fort Cronkhite, California, and the second story was assigned to Battery Davis at Fort Funston, San Francisco, California.*

SCR 296 radar set #1 Transmitter Building & Tower Base-Contributing Building: *Constructed in 1944. Consists of an underground concrete operating room (also called a Transmitter Building) measuring 26'6" x 15' with an 8' ceiling. Interior originally held operating equipment for an SCR 296 Model RAD 9-183. Room is accessed by a flight of stairs, a short hallway, and a steel door. An escape hatch leads up from the operating room an open second story that originally supported the radar antenna with a wooden enclosure built to resemble a water tank. The original tower is gone, and in its place is a steel tower erected by the U.S. Navy c1955.*

Generator Hut/ Power Plant - Contributing Building: *Constructed 1944. Consists of a two-room concrete shelter for two standby generators, measuring 32'6" x 9" overall with an 8' ceiling. Interior is accessed via a 17' concrete entrance corridor. Building originally contained a 3 KVA 120 v generator that provided power to the fire control stations and a 25 KVA generator that powered the SCR 296 radar set. This is the only structure of this design (i.e., two generators for different missions) built within the Harbor Defenses.*

Further down the coast, at Moss Beach, stood an observation tower. The Navy had an anti-aircraft training center at Montara. At Pillar Point (see *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section for more about the wartime activities at Montara Point and Pillar Point) there were Army improvements, including a transmitter building, powerhouse, radar tower, a fortified searchlight position, anti-aircraft machine guns and, as mentioned above, two fire control stations. These two stations were built in 1943. One, of 131 square

feet, served Fort Berry. The other, of 162 square feet, was meant to provide information for Milagra Ridge. Just east of Pillar Point was the Army's airfield with its single 5,200 foot runway, and just east of it, at El Granada, the 56th Coast Artillery of the U.S. Army maintained four 155mm mobile guns.²⁰

As the war advanced, so did technology and an understanding about what worked and what did not. By 1945, the Army had decided that only 12 of the most modern 16-inch and 6-inch batteries would be necessary after the War. This included the guns destined for Milagra Ridge.

MILAGRA RIDGE AND ITS 6-INCH GUNS

According to Park Historian Stephen Haller:²¹

Milagra Ridge Military Reservation was the site of the southernmost coastal defense fortification built by the U.S. Army to defend the entrance to San Francisco Bay.

During World War II, a 6-inch caliber gun emplacement was located there along with several "fire control" observation stations and an early target ranging radar. The gun battery was disarmed in 1950, and later, during the Cold War, the summit of Milagra Ridge was used as a launch site for a Nike anti-aircraft missile battery. The missile site was deactivated in 1974.

Following the end of WWII, some of the land was transferred to private ownership while other portions eventually became part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Today, the only surviving military features are the deserted Battery 243, two fire control stations (one moved from its original location), parts of the WWII radar site, and the buried Nike storage magazines.

As early as 1937, U.S. Army planners envisioned a long-range battery in the Pacifica area that would protect the southern approaches to San Francisco Bay. It wasn't until 1942, however, that the government acquired a total of 330.1 acres along Milagra Ridge for use as a coastal defense site. The original reservation consisted of 327.97 fee acres, 0.58 license acres, and 1.46 easement acres.

The primary purpose of the new Military Reservation was to be the site of a long-range gun battery mounting a pair of 6-inch caliber rifles enclosed by cast-steel shields. This fortification, called Battery Construction #244, was commenced in March 1943 and was transferred to the Coast Artillery Corps in September 1944. The battery's two guns were emplaced on either side of an underground traverse containing magazines, a power plant, plotting room, and crew quarters. The

guns were officially designated T2M1 guns mounted on M4 long-range barbette carriages.

Although structurally complete in 1944, the battery did not actually receive its gun barrels until 1948, when it was test fired a few times. Like many WWII-era batteries, the fortification never received a formal name. Only two years later, the guns were removed from Battery #244 giving it the distinction of being the last element of the Harbor Defenses of San Francisco to be disarmed. (Milagra Military Reservation was also proposed as the site of a 16-inch caliber battery similar to Battery Davis at Fort Funston in San Francisco. Designated Battery Construction #130, no work was ever begun on this fortification.)

In addition to Battery #244, Milagra Ridge was also the site of several fire control stations used by the Coast Artillery for taking optical sightings on targets at sea. The resulting angles of observation were used to triangulate ranges to the target. Four separate stations were once located within the reservation: the Battery Commander's (BC) Station atop Battery #244, and stations for Battery Townsley at Fort Cronkhite, Battery Davis at Fort Funston, and Battery Construction #129 at Fort Barry. Of these fire control stations, only BC Battery #244 remains in place.

The final WWII defensive feature element was a Signal Corps radar site used for directing the gunfire of Battery Wallace at Fort Barry in Marin County. Designated SCR-296 Set No. 9 in the Harbor Defenses of San Francisco, it consisted of a radar antenna atop a steel tower, an aboveground power plant, and an underground operating room.

Today, the only features at Milagra Ridge considered to retain sufficient integrity to be contributing elements to the proposed *San Francisco Harbor Defenses National Historic Landmark District* are these:

Battery Construction #244, completed in 1944 and disarmed in 1950

Battery Commander's Station (BC B1S1), Battery #244, completed in 1944

Tower pylons and operating room for SCR-296 No. 9, completed in 1944

See Appendix XIX in this study for plans from 1943 that show the elevations of how the gun emplacements at Milagra appeared. Appendix XX illustrates how Milagra looked from the air that year. Appendix XXI diagrams the massive underground improvements that supported the guns. While sealed off to protect the public today,

these below surface improvements are the most tangible evidence of the existence of the armed forces at Milagra during World War II.

Thus the end of an era transpired on Milagra Ridge. Since the 1700s, the concept of artillery guarding the Golden Gate, in one form or another, had guided military strategists. Their energy and resources were dedicated to defend a critical harbor within an immensely important part of North America. However, lessons learned at great cost during World War II called for different priorities. Seacoast artillery could not endure the new threat of air attack. Amphibious warfare had evolved to the point that landings around fixed seacoast defenses were possible. Finally, the atomic bomb required a complete overhaul of all past theories on warfare, resulting in little need for conventional seacoast defense.

Indeed while the significance of Milagra is great, the actual above ground structural World War II reminders are sparse, making it difficult to picture the place when it was active. Of course Milagra had a second life as a defensive position during the Cold War.

MILAGRA RIDGE AND THE COLD WAR

The euphoria of victory after World War II did not last long. A “Cold War” between the United States and the Soviet Union soon manifested itself. Within five years another shooting conflict, the Korean War, strained relations between the super-powers yet more. Defense was again on the minds of Americans, and once more the Bay Area was felt to be of crucial importance and required protection. Conventional air defense was in place, but the threat of airborne nuclear attack required more sophisticated preparations. The United States Army Air Defense Command (ARADCOM) eventually took over the role of the Army’s old Coast Artillery branch and was given charge of maintaining the new weapons and deploying them if challenged. The advanced systems centered around the Nike anti-aircraft missile. In 1953, Milagra Ridge was designated as a site for launching the missiles in case of attack.

In the face of nuclear devastation, ARADCOM’s concept for defense was to prove readiness with an anti-aircraft system so effective that an enemy would see that an assault was not worth the risk. However, if this deterrent failed, the goal became to deny to the enemy the ability to destroy key industrial and defensive centers. ARADCOM was itself made a component (1957) of the North American Air Defense Command charged with the overall defense of North America.²²

ARADCOM’s chief weapon was the Nike missile. After World War II, the Army went to Bell Telephone Laboratories and asked them to plan an anti-aircraft guided missile. Bell joined with Douglas Aircraft in creating the new Nike system. The Army then

contracted with Western Electric to manufacture Nikes in adequate quantity. Some 6,000 suppliers helped Western Electric create the 1.5 million parts necessary to create each Nike missile.

The Nike was actually meant to be the second line of defense. In case of an aerial attack, fighter squadrons would be first to engage the enemy. If any bombers slipped through, the Nike system would respond. Long range radar would pick up the approach; more radars would then target the plane. The Nike would then be fired. A last radar would follow the missile's flight and guide it, 3.5 times faster than the speed of sound, to the enemy. In stages ARADCOM called on the Army National Guard to man the Nike units. ARADCOM's immediate predecessor, the Army Anti-aircraft Command, established on July 1, 1950, just four days after the start of the Korean War, had 19 of its 38 battalions manned to good effect by the National Guard. These early units were armed with conventional 90 and 120 mm guns.²³ In 1953, ARADCOM initiated a program to phase out the old World War II type defenses and replace them with what was touted as the first successful, surface-to-air missile, the Ajax, the initial Nike system.

The Ajax (MIM-3A) had a gross weight of 2,259 pounds and was 32.5 feet long. It was armed with conventional warheads and had a range of 30.7 miles. It could gain 60,000 feet in altitude. Its speed was mach 2.3. Each cost the Army about \$19,000.²⁴

Milagra was one of nearly a dozen Nike sites surrounding the Bay Area to become permanent launch facilities. (They were San Pablo Ridge, Rocky Ridge, Lake Chabot and Coyote Hills in the East Bay; Milagra Ridge, Fort Winfield Scott and Fort Funston, south of the Golden Gate; and Fort Cronkite, Fort Barry, Angel Island and San Rafael in the north.) The units were to receive target information from the Army air defense command post at the radar installment at the Mill Valley Air Force Station on Mount Tamalpais in Marin County.²⁵

As Milagra was the launch site, the control or radar site was a 3.2 acre station on Sweeney Ridge.²⁶ See the Sweeney Ridge portion of this study for a description of the activities there. Together, Milagra and Sweeney were designated Site SF 51, C, L and A (SF 51 C - - C - - for control at Sweeney Ridge; SF 51 L - - L - - for launch at Milagra Ridge; SF 51 A - - A - - for administration at Milagra Ridge). All Nike sites had C, L and A components. By 1961, the Nike sites in the San Francisco Defense Area composed the sixth ARADCOM Region.²⁷

Planning for Milagra began in 1953.²⁸ Construction commenced with an expansive excavation to provide underground storage for the missiles.²⁹ Typically all the sites included a large paved area, powerful elevators to lift the missiles to the surface, o+ ces

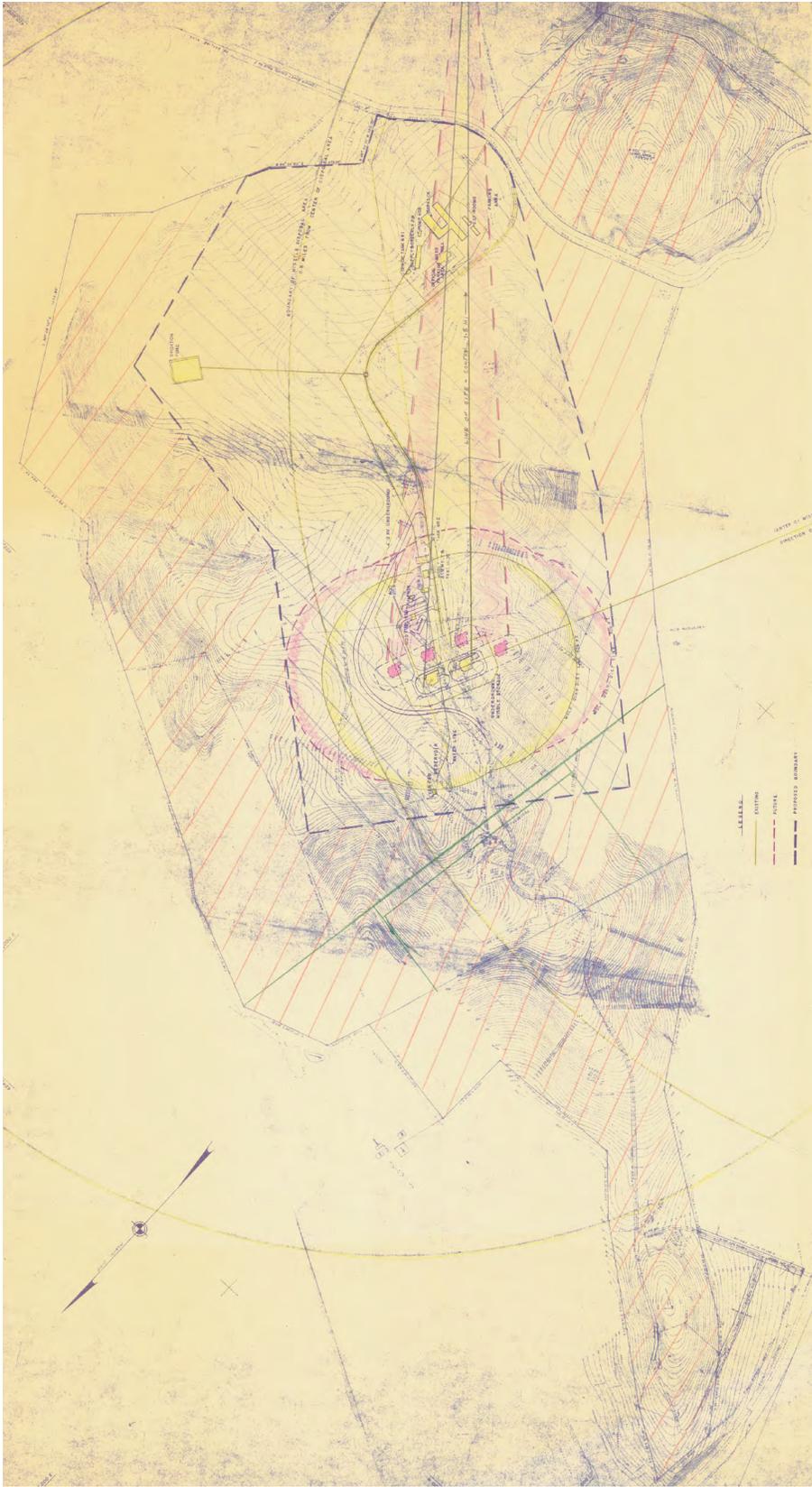


Fig. 6.2: A 1957 map of the defense installation at Milagra Ridge. Yellow signifies existing structures, and pink signifies proposed future additions. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives.

and barracks. These areas were fenced with barbed wire and patrolled by troops with guard dogs. SF 51 became operational in 1956.³⁰

The launch area at SF 51 was dug out southeast of the World War II, 6-inch gun works, within the present National Park. The administrative headquarters building and support structures were a half mile southeast of this, a site currently occupied by a condominium complex at Sharp Park Road and College Drive, on the north side of the intersection.

The Army Corps of Engineers' map of 1957 to the left shows the underground missile chambers (or magazines) completed, along with the ready room, missile assembly and test building and generator building on the launch site. At the administrative site the barracks, day rooms, mess hall and o+ ces were in place. Dog kennels, southwest of the launchers were not constructed yet, but in the plans. Also shown were four more underground missile



Fig. 6.3: Photograph of Milagra Ridge.



Fig. 6.4: Photograph of the headquarters area at Milagra Ridge.

chambers that were never actually added.

The pair of underground magazines used to store the missiles included elevators, loading radars and control rooms (typical of a Nike site). When the missiles were to be set for practice launchings, doors would open up and the missiles would be brought to the surface for launching. Of course no missile was ever actually launched from SF 51-L. The photo to the left of Milagra shows no evidence of a missile on site. All were stored below ground. Note that by the time this photo was taken, the dog kennels (in the foreground) had been installed. A second photo includes the headquarters area. Note that the motor pool and tennis courts at the top had been added.

David Bridgman, who served SF 51, as did his father Richard H. Bridgman (1928-2009), recently indicated that SF 51 had about 100 men assigned to it. At the launch site there were three shifts of 12 to 15 men each round the clock. The control site had

a similar schedule and number of men. The administration office also had 12 to 15 working but just one shift a day.³¹

A property inventory of the site reveals some other details indicative of the activities and personnel at Milagra when it was an active launch site.³² Considering the basic needs of its all male personnel, the Barracks had 10 showers, nine urinals and one lavatory, while the ready room had two showers, one urinal and one lavatory.

As plans progressed to arm the Nike sites with nuclear capable Hercules missiles in 1958, the sentry dog security program materialized. ARADCOM initiated training of dogs in November of that year. By 1961, some 500 teams had been trained. The purpose was to guard the sites against sabotage, theft, arson and trespassing. German shepherds were the preferred breed. Handlers and dogs trained as teams. Each Nike site employed at least four teams. While the dogs were not trained “to kill or injure” they could “stop an intruder in his tracks.” In order that the dog and his handler work as a highly developed team, only the dog’s handler could “exercise control over him.”³³

In 1958, Milagra’s Company A, 740th Antiaircraft Missile Battalion received the new Nike-Hercules missiles. According to ARADCOM the Nike Hercules (MIM-14B) was the first “combat-ready surface-to-air missile with an atomic capability to enter the active air defenses of the United States.”³⁴ Following the Ajax, the new weapon was considered “second generation” of the “Army’s Nike family.” Generally speaking the nuclear capability of the new system allowed for much greater defensive ability: “What Nike Ajax can do against single targets, Nike Hercules can accomplish against entire formations of aircraft. . .” explained ARADCOM.

The Hercules weighed nearly five times more than the Ajax at 10,711 pounds. It was seven feet longer at 39.5 feet. It could obtain an altitude of 150,000 feet, more than 100% higher than Ajax. At mach 3.65, it was 37% faster. It could hit targets 85 to 100 miles away, three times the range. At \$55,200 per missile, it was nearly three times more expensive.³⁵ Douglas Aircraft Company originally developed and produced the Hercules. Later prime contractors were Western Electric Company and Mitsubishi.

According to ARADCOM, the mission of the Hercules Group in the San Francisco Bay Region was “. . .to maintain its nuclear capable. . . firing batteries in a constant state of combat readiness to protect the vital industrial, population, and military centers within the San Francisco - Travis Air Force Base area.”³⁶ In 1959, the regular Army, just after it completed its conversion from Ajax to Hercules, began to be relieved by the California National Guard personnel in the San Francisco Region. This included responsibility for SF 51. After its crews were trained at Fort Bliss, the National Guard completed its replacement of Army Personnel at SF 51 in June of 1963.³⁷ Full National Guard replacement within the San Francisco Region was completed in April of 1964.

Through various reorganizations, SF 51’s unit identification had the following designations:³⁸

Battery C/ 740th AAABn	Sept. 1956 -- Sept. 1958
Battery C, 4th Missile Battalion, 61st Artillery	Sept. 1958 -- July 1959
Battery D, 2nd Missile Battalion, 51st Artillery	July 1959 -- June 1963
Battery A, 1st Missile Battalion, 250th Artillery	June 1963 -- April 1974

By 1961, the surplus nature of some of the property at Milagra was acknowledged by locals. That year San Mateo County and the City of Pacifica proposed that the old World War II bunkers and magazine be converted into a combined emergency County civil defense headquarters and a Pacifica police station. The Pacifica City Council eventually quashed the idea, citing limited access to the bunkers. However, in May of 1962, 73 acres of Milagra were disposed of and eventually were converted into residential development. In 1970, Pacifica leased underground space and sub-leased some of the square footage to the County for records storage. In January of 1971, some Oceana High School students hacksawed their way into the storage area and burned records and stole emergency civil defense equipment. Again, in March of 1972, arsonists broke in with hammer and chisel and set fires with highway flares. The fires smoldered for a full day before being discovered.³⁹ After this second incident, local officials stopped utilizing the bunkers.

SF 51 had its greatest moments in the latter part of its history (1972-1973), when its crews achieved record breaking scores during practice competitions. Even earlier, SF 51 tested highly. In 1966, it was awarded the “newly instituted” ARADCOM award “for excellence in combat proficiency,” and repeated this distinctive level of readiness in 1969, 1970 and 1971.⁴⁰ In fact in 1970, it was ranked the best battery in the command, and in 1971, the finest in California. However it was in 1972 that SF 51 became perfect at its business when it scored 100% during a competition at McGregor Missile Range in New Mexico. Its terrific performance involved a launch using a new system. The 44 men involved served under Captain Michael V. Ivano! and were given a “free shot”⁴¹ (they were allowed to launch a second Hercules missile) as an award. Among those serving under Ivano! were Chief Warrant Officer Richard H. Bridgman (who received the honor of initiating the second shot) and Chief Warrant Officer William L. Hauger. As if that were not enough, the next year, 1973, SF-51 went “back to back”⁴² by scoring 100% again at McGregor in this “short notice” annual practice. No other firing battery in the history of ARADCOM ever equaled this record. A trophy honoring this feat is on display at the California Military Museum in Sacramento.

The emergence of the Inter Continental Ballistic Missile by the superpowers, with their tremendous range, heights and speeds, made the Nikes obsolete. In 1972 another 36 acres were declared excess at Milagra and transferred to the Department of Interior with the intention of allowing locals the opportunity to create a public park. While the federal government still held 220 acres, in May of 1974, these 36 acres were given to the City of Pacifica.

On February 4 of that same year, Secretary of Defense, James R. Schlesinger, announced a “planned reduction of Army Air Defense NIKE HERCULES missile batteries in the Continental United States.”⁴³ By this time 27 of the 48 batteries were operated by the National Guard. Among these on the initial list for decommission was SF

51. Only four batteries in Florida were retained. The Milagra and Sweeney unit was decommissioned in March. On June 20 a “Bon Voyage” party took place for the Sixth Region (San Francisco Region) Nike personnel. Among those making presentations were Colonel C.A. Miller, Commanding Officer, 13th Artillery Group and Brigadier General R.M. Mullens, Commanding General, 6th Region. Captain C. Patania, Jr. was listed as the Commander for Battery A, 1st Missile Battalion, 250th Artillery (SF 51).⁴⁴

All that had been the Nike installation, which mostly existed east of the World War II bunkers, was destroyed. The buildings were demolished, the elevators and missile storage areas were buried. Even the asphalt was removed. After thirty-five years of service, Milagra no longer had a military function.

National Park Historian Stephen Haller sums up Milagra’s appearance today:

The integrity of Milagra Ridge Military Reservation has been severely impacted since the end of its historic period in 1974 when the Nike site closed down. The original reservation has been reduced in size by approximately 22%; two of the three fire control stations are gone and the third has been moved; . . . Today, the only remaining structures of Nike SF 51 L are the two magazine elevator doors and the personnel hatches. The elevator doors themselves have been capped with concrete slabs about 8” thick. . . The Reservation’s setting has also been severely impacted by encroaching residential developments...

The structures at Milagra’s Administration area were destroyed in 1983 to make room for the still present condominium complex. As described in the Sweeney Ridge portion of this study, much more is left of SF 51’s control site. Fortunately for anyone who wishes to see what one of the missile launch sites looked like and, actually, how they operated, they can visit the GGNRA’s Fort Barry. It has a restored launching complex, felt to be the best historical presentation of such a weapons system in the United States.

Whether at Milagra Ridge or Fort Barry, or other Nike sites, the historic meaning of these places speaks to the concern of Americans during the Cold War over nuclear attack. Readiness became a part of life, and the Nike sites, so close to residential neighborhoods throughout the Bay Area, were a constant reminder that the ultimate in devastating warfare was a possibility.

Defense during the Cold War was an absolute priority, and the Nike missile system was an integral part of the overall strategy. The Nikes were deployed in greater numbers and were located in more areas (300 sites) than any other missile system. The Nike system was the most expensive ever placed on alert and stayed operable longer than any other (between 1954 and 1974 in the Bay Area and 1954 through 1979 nationally).

From a local perspective, the Bay Area's Nikes represented the end of the line for fixed defenses for the Golden Gate and San Francisco Bay.⁴⁵ For nearly two hundred years, guarding them, and the people residing here, had represented a significant concern and manifested itself as an integral part of the human experience of living in this region.

MILAGRA RIDGE TO THE GGNRA

With Milagra's decommissioning in 1974, the City of Pacifica began using its 36 acres as a park. Then on August 12, 1975, the County of San Mateo's Board of Supervisors voted in favor of acquiring 238 acres of the Ridge, declared surplus by the United States General Services Administration, for purposes of creating a "public park or recreation area."⁴⁶ In September of 1978, the federal government executed a quit claim deed to the County for 229 acres of Milagra without cost as a 100% "public benefit grant."⁴⁷

Thus the Ridge became a popular place for locals to hike and run dogs. Unfortunately, the old bunkers became dangerous play areas for youngsters. San Mateo County Parks and Recreation had proposed that hiking and biking trails would be built and even a youth hostel be located at Milagra. However, 1978 was the year of California's Proposition 13 that limited spending by state and local government. The plans were mostly placed on hold. The County was obligated to render biannual reports to the Division of Grants Assistance for the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. In his October 14, 1980 letter, County Parks and Recreation Director Duane Mattison had to remark on the lack of progress and mentioned the ramifications of Proposition 13 on the finances of the County.⁴⁸

In the meantime, the GGNRA's 1980 General Management Plan, put priority status on preserving fortifications as historic resources "...to be managed and used primarily for the purpose of facilitating public enjoyment, understanding, and appreciation of their historic values..."⁴⁹ While the document pertained to the Park Service's Marin County properties, the philosophy was well suited to other places, such as Milagra Ridge, if they became part of the GGNRA.

By the spring of 1985, the County had realized it needed to let go of Milagra. On June 7, the *San Mateo Times* reported that the Parks and Recreation Commission would recommend to the Board of Supervisors turning the property over to the GGNRA. The article revealed that the Supervisors had for years discussed the advisability of such a move, along with transference of 120 additional acres at Sweeney Ridge⁵⁰ (not already within the GGNRA - - see the Sweeney Ridge portion of this study).

By July of 1987, County officials and the GGNRA were close to agreement. An article

in the *Pacific Tribune* declared “World War II Relics Surrender to Vandals,”⁵¹ as beleaguered County ranges made way for the new park presence.

In part because of its historical values, and the great views that can be gained from it, on September 15, 1987, the GGNRA acquired Milagra Ridge from the County.

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CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SWEENEY RIDGE

THE ROLE OF PORTOLÀ

The “Historical Significance of the Discovery of San Francisco Bay” chapter of the Sweeney Ridge section of this study makes the case that Gaspar de Portolà’s discovery of the San Francisco Bay was one of the most important events of California and, indeed, western history. The find became a central consideration among the Spanish as they began colonization of *Alta* California. It marked the beginning of the end for the hegemony of the native Californians, who had been here, inhabiting the land without interference, for thousands of years.

When one considers the meaningful efforts the National Park Service has expended on the Anza Trail, it becomes a question - - why hasn’t Portolà received this kind of attention? Portolà was first to enter *Alta* California by land. His expedition resulted in the initiation of the Spanish settlement here. Anza’s exploration was certainly as amazing, considering the hardships of his overland journeys. His trail blazing tried to link *Alta* California with New Spain. In his second expedition, he took with him the original settlers destined for San Francisco. However, within five years his Anza Trail was closed by the Yuma Indians. Portolà not only already discovered the San Francisco Bay but had additionally helped the Franciscans establish the San Diego and Monterey missions. It seems that his legacy should be as much understood as Anza’s.

At Sweeney Ridge the National Park Service possesses the very spot at which the momentous discovery was made. While surrounded by urban growth, the Ridge remains open space and available for a variety of interpretive projects.

It is the recommendation of this study that resources be directed to understanding the role of Portolà. The significance of his activities should be appreciated in a manner commensurate with that of Anza’s. (Appendix I contains a short reading list for those interested in learning more about Portolà and his expedition.) Accordingly, the primary historical focus of interpretation for Sweeney Ridge should be Gaspar de Portolà’s discovery of San Francisco Bay and the consequent change of culture from Ohlone to European.

ARAMAI VILLAGE, SPANISH OUTPOST, MEXICAN LAND GRANT

The Aramai, a local Ohlone tribe, considered Sweeney Ridge to be their homeland. During the Spanish and Mexican eras of California history, Sweeney Ridge was used for livestock grazing. The Franciscan missionaries and later Mexican land grant recipi-

ent Francisco Sanchez centered their operations at San Pedro Creek at the site of the Aramai village of Pruristac. Today this location is a San Mateo County park operated by the San Mateo County Historical Association. All three eras of early California history, native, Spanish and Mexican are interpreted at the site.

This study gives detail on the story of the Aramai of Pruristac and how they fared under Spanish domination. It details the importance of the Franciscan mission outpost to the success of *Mission San Francisco de Assís*. It gives evidence of the importance of Francisco Sanchez during Mexican times. Sanchez's adobe house is located at the county park. The opinion of this study is that Sanchez's role has been undervalued as part of California History. Nevertheless, he was a recognized leader during the Mexican and early American eras. He was a commandant of the *Presidio* and an *alcalde* of *Yerba Buena*. He led the *Californios* against American Marines at the Battle of Santa Clara. During American times he was a County Supervisor and was noted as one of the richest men on the San Francisco Peninsula until his death in 1867.

Three major GGNRA park locations (Sweeney Ridge, Mori Point and Milagra Ridge) in San Mateo County are within Sanchez's original *Rancho San Pedro*. The San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Division and the San Mateo County Historical Association have indicated their willingness to partner with the GGNRA on interpretation ventures at the five acre Sanchez Adobe Historic Site. The story of Pruristac, the Mission outpost and *Rancho San Pedro*, which have been intricately involved with the three properties belonging to National Park Service, could be explored in a way to give them importance to the international visitors who will come to the GGNRA's San Mateo County holdings.

It is the recommendation of this study that the GGNRA explore a potential three-way interpretation partnership using the Sanchez Adobe Historic Site for a variety of exhibits, programs and other projects to assist the public in understanding the history of the GGNRA's San Mateo County lands and their importance to larger themes of American western history.

It is also recommended that 1. surveys for prehistoric archeological features, based on park sensitivity models, be undertaken and 2. further interpretive materials on Ohlones be developed for public educational purposes.

JERSEY FARM, COAST GUARD RADIO STATION, NIKE RADAR INSTALLATION, FLYING TIGER CRASH SITE AND OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

At one point the Sneaths claimed their Jersey Farm, a dairy operation which extended from today's San Bruno over Sweeney Ridge to Pacifica, was the largest of its kind in the world, with 1000 milk cows and over 100 workers. Its "Ranch No.3" included

buildings on the GGNRA's Sweeney Ridge. Concrete footings are said to be existent on National Park land about 100 yards northeast of the Portolá Gate.

It is the recommendation of this study that more research be accomplished on Jersey Farm and the Sneath family. Among the questions to answer is finding out if, indeed, the Sneath's operation was the largest in the world, as claimed in the late 19th century. The study team was unable to locate the footings for the buildings mentioned above. It is recommended that the existence of the footings be confirmed through a site-specific survey. It is also recommended that Jersey Farm be included in the overall interpretive effort for Sweeney Ridge.

Only one of the four Coast Guard buildings remain on Sweeney Ridge. The survivor is the southern most of the structures, known as Transmitter Building No. 1. Building pads for the other three buildings are still visible, as are footings for some of the antennae masts. The Coast Guard purchased this property in 1941, and, by 1943, construction was mostly accomplished. The station had a tremendous transmission range and functioned continuously until 1973.

It is the recommendation of this study that more research about the changing purposes, operations and command structure of the Coast Guard Station be accomplished. It is also recommended that the remaining building and antennae footings not be destroyed, but be allowed to exist as remnants of a significant past. Finally, it is recommended that the Coast Guard experience be interpreted as part of the overall effort for Sweeney Ridge.

This study is far more conversant with the history of the Nike radar installation that existed south of the Coast Guard's buildings. However, it has come up in the course of this work that the Army had radar facilities in that area before the Nike project was begun in 1954. It is recommended that this story be researched and interpreted if appropriate. It is also recommended that the remaining buildings at the Nike radar installation not be destroyed and instead used to help visitors understand the history of Sweeney Ridge. This study is cognizant that a similar grouping of buildings in a much better state of repair exist on GGNRA lands in Marin County. Therefore restoration is not proposed. However, to repeat, the buildings ought to remain as relics of the past. Finally it is recommended that the Nike radar site be made part of the interpretive plan for Sweeney Ridge with special emphasis on its relationship with the launch site at Milagra Ridge.

The wreck of Flying Tiger Flight 282 has been well documented in the Sweeney Ridge section and in Appendix XVIII of this study. Sadly, as shown, souvenir hunters have found out about the disaster and have been picking through the debris. It is recom-

mended that every effort be made to record this site and to prevent this souvenir hunting. Interpretation should be light, at best, with little or no indication where the crash site exists.

Appendix XII, "Other Historical Points of Interest looking east from Sweeney Ridge" was originally included in the main body of this study. However the study's team felt it was not related enough to GGNRA holdings. Therefore, it has been presented as an appendix. It is recommended that this appendix be used as an interpretive tool. Its contextual information will be handy for GGNRA staff and docents as they take the public up the trails on tours that overlook the San Francisco Bay.

INTERPRETIVE PLANS

Two monuments have been placed at the discovery site, and an interpretive panel exists at the trail head at the end of Sneath Lane. This study recommends installation of more markers and interpretive panels to not just explain Portolá's experience, but the other historic themes as discussed above. The problems associated with outdoor displays, from vandalism to weather related events, are understood. This study will repeat itself in saying that Sweeney Ridge has a most significant history. Secure places to interpret this history are not available. Note that a partnership with the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Division and the San Mateo County Historical Association to accomplish much of the interpretation at the Sanchez Adobe Historic Site is recommended elsewhere in this study. The site is protected, already holds exhibits and artifacts related to Sweeney Ridge's history and has room (5 acres) for improvements. Additionally, the San Mateo County Historical Association, with its museum in Redwood City, can be considered a resource of historic materials to help tell Sweeney Ridge's story. Three-dimensional objects, maps, photographs and additional pieces will help with creation of brochures, films and other projects. Cosponsored hikes, reenactments, lectures and special veterans recognition days could be a part of an overall effort.

Of course accessibility is necessary for public enjoyment and enrichment. The study team recognizes that public access and parking is available to Sweeney Ridge on the San Bruno side (east side) of the hill. However, adequate trail markings and parking is not on the Pacifica side (west side). Since the route of Portolá on his mission of discovery began on the Pacifica side, it is recommended that an enhanced entry into the park and better parking accommodations be considered on the Pacifica side. As future public excursions may begin at the Sanchez Adobe in Pacifica, this will become more important, especially as the Adobe site is improved and more of the Portolá story is told from there.

THE BAQUINO TRAIL AND SHELLDANCE BROMELAID & ORCHID NURSERY

As discussed in the study, the Baquino Trail was a Boy Scout project and should not be interpreted as the actual path of Portolá as he ascended Sweeney Ridge. It is likely he used an Indian trail to find his way. Parts of that trail could be incorporated in Baquino. However, it would be misleading to have the public believe they were retracing the exact steps of Portolá on his climb to the discovery site.

Section II. O. of this study deals with Shelldance Bromelaid & Orchid Nursery which exists on the Sweeney Ridge portion of the GGNRA. Construction of the green house buildings occurred in the 1950s. Shelldance's founder, Herb Hager, was a pioneer in the floriculture business, and the structures he built were state-of-the-art. It is recommended that a resource assessment be conducted concerning these buildings and their possible eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places prior to significant re-use of the sites being undertaken.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SWEENEY RIDGE

1. The National Park Service should consider committing resources to the understanding of Portolá and his expedition commensurate with the efforts made for Anza and his trail blazing accomplishments. Accordingly, the primary historical focus of interpretation at Sweeney Ridge should be Portolá's discovery of the Bay and the change of culture from Ohlone to European. The park should consult with Native Ohlones when their history is addressed.
2. Given that three major GGNRA locations in San Mateo County are within Francisco Sanchez's *Rancho San Pedro*, and that the Sanchez Adobe Historic Site was the location of the Indian village of Pruristac and the San Francisco mission outpost, that the GGNRA consider a partnership with San Mateo County and the San Mateo County Historical Association to interpret its Sweeney Ridge, Mori Point and Milagra Ridge holdings at the Sanchez Adobe Historic Site.
3. Surveys investigating prehistoric features should be undertaken.
4. Further interpretive materials on Ohlones should be developed.
5. The GGNRA ought to accomplish more research on the Jersey Farm and the Sneath Family.
6. The footings for the Jersey Farm buildings on Sweeney Ridge ought to be confirmed as existing.

7. The Jersey Farm ought to be included in the overall interpretation effort for Sweeney Ridge.
8. More research should be undertaken on the Coast Guard Station including its changing purposes, operations and command structures between 1941 and 1973.
9. The remaining Coast Guard building and the station's antennae footings should not be destroyed but be allowed to stand as remnants of a significant past.
10. The Coast Guard's experience should have presence in the overall interpretive effort.
11. A study regarding the Army's operation of radar facilities on Sweeney Ridge before the Nike installation (1954) ought to be undertaken.
12. The remaining buildings of the Nike radar installation should not be removed but instead preserved in some form as relics of the past to help visitors understand the history of Sweeney Ridge.
13. The Nike radar installation ought to be made part of the overall interpretive plan for Sweeney Ridge and referenced in interpretation at Milagra Ridge.
14. On the wreck of Flying Tiger Flight 282: it is recommended that every effort be made to survey and record remains from the site, and to limit the souvenir hunting associated with it.
15. Interpretation of Flight 282 should be light, at best, with little or no identification of the site of the crash.
16. This study's Appendix VII, "Other Historical Points of Interest looking east from Sweeney Ridge" ought to be utilized as part of the study for contextual and interpretive purposes, although most of it pertains to locations outside of National Park boundaries.
17. More interpretive signs and panels need to be developed for Sweeney Ridge to help visitors understand not just Portolá's experience, but the other historic themes of this section of the GGNRA.
18. Partnering with the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Division and the San Mateo County Historical Association could result in rich interpretive

opportunities at the Sanchez Adobe Historic Site. It is recommended that joint projects be investigated in order to produce new exhibits, publications and programs.

19. Better access and parking accommodations ought to be considered for the Pacifica side of the Ridge since the original route of Portolá began there, and that public excursions may begin at the Sanchez Adobe in the future.

20. The *Baquino* Trail ought not be interpreted as tracing the exact path of Portolá.

21. A historic resource assessment ought to be undertaken regarding the greenhouses at Sheldance Bromfield & Orchid Nursery.

RANCHO CORRAL DE TIERRA (AND THE MONTARA LIGHTHOUSE STATION)

FRANCISCO GUERRERO Y PALOMARES

During the course of this study, not many architectural reminders were found that could significantly assist the public understand the rich history of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. In fact *Rancho Corral de Tierra* does not meet the criteria threshold for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Nevertheless, there are certain old structures and landscape vales that should be managed to preserve the feeling and setting of the place and better tell the story of Coastside agriculture.

It is also important to recognize *Rancho Corral de Tierra's* original grantee, Francisco Guerrero y Palomares, as an important figure in Mexican and early American times. He was an *alcalde* at Yerba Buena and then a sub-prefect for the region. After the United States takeover, he remained a prominent individual who advised the new regime on issues of land ownership until his death at the hands of an unknown assassin in 1851. As in the case of Francisco Sanchez, it is the observation of this study that Guerrero's role in California history has not been acknowledged adequately. It is therefore recommended that the GGNRA encourage continued research on him, and that his experience, as California *ranchero*, be the principal theme in the overall interpretive plan for *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Although Franciscan missionaries named the area and used it for cattle raising, Guerrero was the first to have prominent identification with this land. The park's name is taken from his land grant. At this place the GGNRA has the opportunity to capture the history of a California *ranchero* on a major portion of the rancho itself. While Guerrero's personal story is compelling, information presented in this study should be used to help place Guerrero's experience in context to the history of Mexican and early American California.

This study also recognizes that unsolved murders played into the final chapter for both Guerrero, of the northern portion of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, and Tiburcio Vaquez, of the southern portion of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. While Vasquez was killed some 12 years after Guerrero (in 1863), local historians have speculated that because both victims were witnesses in the Santillan land fraud case, a conspiracy of some sort may have been at work. Thus it is recommended that the GGNRA encourage further research into the murders and if they did in fact relate to the Santillan episode.

Guerrero received *Rancho Corral de Tierra* in 1839. About seven years later he built an adobe house which stood until 1911. Fortunately, before it was demolished, Harry C. Peterson, curator at the Stanford University Museum, made a photographic record of the structure and also captured its floor plans and other details. This research is included in Appendix XXVI of this study. From written descriptions and maps, it has been determined that this house stood at Denniston Creek in the vicinity of a cluster of buildings now occupied by Cabrillo Farms. It is recommended that an archaeological investigation be undertaken to find the foundations of the house. Hopefully other artifacts will be unearthed as well. It is further recommended that once the location of the house is determined that the Park Service interpret the site in a manner consistent with protection of a sensitive archeological site. When appropriate protection of the site can be achieved, a permanent outline of it should be created so the public can understand the size of the adobe and how it was situated. Finally, interpretive signs and panels ought to be installed to explain the history of the house and the Guerrero family that occupied it.

NEED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While undertaking this study, it came to the attention of its team that through the years the Guerrero portion of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* went through numerous property changes. Land usage altered from cattle raising, to wheat production, to dairy farming, to artichoke growing, to floriculture to horse boarding. This is reflective of the variety of people who occupied portions of the land, now part of the GGNRA, from *Californios*, to early American farmers, to Italian and Japanese immigrants. It is recommended that in order to better understand how use of the land changed and who made the transformations possible, that researching ownership transition be undertaken for the National Park's holdings, from the time the land was first divided in 1867 until the present. This will not only assist with better historical interpretation of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, but will clear up current problems that arise from legal issues concerning the National Park's land and/or nearby properties. In addition to documenting ownership changes, this research should also review evidence of improvements, types of agricultural endeavors, the location of tenant ranches and other areas of historic importance.

This study realizes that Franciscan missionaries first used the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* land for cattle raising and gave it its name. It is recommended that additional research

be accomplished to try to determine which of the padres were involved in the cattle operations, how long ago and which one of them gave this place its name.

Early in the process of creating this study, a photograph of the “Farmhouse of Francisco Guerrero” (later “a hotel in Montara”) was found by a team member. It had been seen on local historian June Morrall’s 2006 website. Since that time Ms. Morrall has passed away, and the website no longer shows the photo. However, in Morrall’s book *Half Moon Bay Memories* (1978), the photo of the house is shown as belonging to Guerrero’s son Victoriano, now destroyed, but once standing within Montara. It is recommended that the image not be used as the icon of this project, as has been the previous practice.

Within this study the name John Patroni or “Boss” Patroni emerges as a central character of the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* story. It is recommended that the GGNRA encourage further research on Patroni, with particular emphasis on his relations with Italian immigrants.

Within this study, Irish immigrant John Kyne is mentioned as a farmer at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. He was the father of California author Peter B. Kyne. It is recommended that it be determined if John Kyne’s farm was on current GGNRA land and where it was. Also of interest would be to find out if Peter wrote about his boyhood years, and if descriptions of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* can be obtained from his writings.

THE OLD BARN

It is the contention of this study that the old barn at the *Ember Ridge Equestrian Center* was built by Henry Cowell between 1883 and 1884. In fact, Cowell had considerable holdings throughout *Rancho Corral de Tierra* on and off present National Park lands. It is recommended that research be accomplished on Cowell’s interests in the area. Cowell was a significant figure in the history of central California. His substantial presence in the area could materially improve the understanding of the history of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* and the San Mateo County Coastside.

While Appendix XXVII explains that the old barn is not eligible for the National Register, the structure does have enough historic value to be included in appropriate state and local surveys. This study recommends that the old barn not be allowed to deteriorate to the point where it will need to be demolished for human safety considerations. Stabilization projects, when necessary, ought to be performed with archaeological testing as warranted. While the barn is now being used by the current proprietors of the equestrian center, a more appropriate adaptive re-use should be explored, perhaps along the lines of how the California State Parks have reused the Dickerman Barn at Point Año Nuevo as an interpretive or visitor center. Other older structures at Ember Ridge ought to be evaluated for potential adaptation as well.

JAPANESE AT RANCHO CORRAL DE TIERRA

The story of the Takahashis, whose flower farm occupied at least a portion of National Park lands at *Renegade Ranch*, presents the GGNRA with a variety of questions. Since the land the Takahashis occupied was never held in their name, what were the boundaries of their property? What were the improvements there? What was Mr. Takahashi's role in the California straw flower industry? Was he its founder? Who kept his lands for him so that he could return to his farm after World War II? It is the recommendation of this study that the GGNRA conduct further research in order to better flesh-out this story.

Along these lines, it is also recommended that any existing structures built by Takahashi on or adjacent to GGNRA holdings be identified as such. If on private property, these structures ought to be brought to the attention to the San Mateo County Historical Resources Advisory Board which may move to declare them local landmarks. If on the adjacent Caltrans right-of-way, perhaps they could be added to the GGNRA at some point in the future.

The ruins of the Sato place behind the Cabrillo Farms buildings on Denniston Creek ought not be cleared away until a historical review is made of what is left. An archaeological investigation may be appropriate for all of Japanese-American farm locations depending upon what a preliminary survey might show.

In contextual information presented in this study, the importance of the Japanese of San Mateo County to its pre-World War II agricultural industry is presented. It is recommended that the GGNRA encourage the San Mateo County Historical Association and/or other partners to research the impact of Japanese interment on the agribusiness of the County.

NEARBY SITES

As described in this study, as early as 1860, a shore whaling station existed at Pillar Point, west of National Park land at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Pillar Point may be added to the GGNRA. It is recommended that if this possibility becomes reality, that the National Park Service undertake an archaeological investigation of this site in order to determine more about the whaling operations here. At the same time, it is recommended that additional research be accomplished to tell about whaling at Pillar Point.

Also at Pillar Point is the Maverick's big wave surfing area. If the Point becomes National Park land, historical information provided in this study should be employed to help tell the history of the sport at this location. The same recommendation goes for old Highway 1 at Devil's Slide, if it becomes part of the GGNRA.

MONTARA LIGHTHOUSE STATION

This study contains a copy of a 1912 map entitled “Pt. Montara Lighthouse Reservation.” On it, south of the light station and just west of the county road, it shows the “Radio Compass Station.” This Station also appears on subsequent maps. It is the recommendation of this study that research be conducted to determine the purpose of this station. Who operated it? Did it relate to the Coast Guard’s later creation of a radio station on Sweeney Ridge?

The National Register nomination for the Montara Lighthouse Station lists World War II improvements and two 1961 quarters for personnel as “non-contributing” to the historic values of the site. In 2011, the 1961 quarters will be 50 years old. It is recommended that the GGNRA reassess the World War II improvements and 1961 structures, as to their historic value.

The Lighthouse Station’s history ought to also be studied in context to the adjacent and much larger, Anti-Aircraft Training Center of World War II. Many remnants of structures are on the neighboring Montara Sanitary District property to the south and on land east of Highway 1. Some of the ruins are visible from the Lighthouse site. The Park Service should work with the District to attempt to identify, preserve and interpret these features.

GGNRA staff ought to be aware that the San Mateo County History Museum possesses the 1928 Fresnel lens for the Montara Lighthouse. It also has within its archives photographs and other materials related to its history. It is recommended that park staff be in touch with the Museum in order to use such items for research and interpretive projects.

FOUR CLUSTERS THEORY

In 1867, *Rancho Corral de Tierra* was divided into four sections (as described in the “Agriculture” chapter of the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* section of this study). An early question posed to the study team asked whether the four current clusters of buildings (at Ocean View Farms to the north, Renegade Ranch in the center, Ember Ridge with its big barn, also in the center, and Cabrillo Farms to the south) correspond to the historic partitioning. The answer is mostly no. No historic structures have yet been located on Josefa Denniston’s northern most property containing today’s Ocean View Farms. On Victoriano Guerrero’s land, just to the south, no historic structures have been found. On Augustin Guerrero’s property exist today’s Renegade Ranch, where the Takahashis lived closeby, and Ember Ridge, site of the big barn. Takahashi came along long after 1867. Whether Cowell built his barn in the 1880s where other improvements had been made before is not known at this point. On Josefa Denniston’s southern property, the original Guerrero adobe stood where Cabrillo Farms has its buildings near Denniston Creek. Thus, except for this last mentioned property, the

three building clusters north of it probably do not correspond to improvements made after the property was divided in 1867.

INTERPRETIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that interpretive partnerships be forged with the GGNRA's tenants and local organizations. Of particular value would be to reach out to the Cabrillo Farms people, who are engaged in growing artichokes. This crop is over 100 years old on the San Mateo Coast, and has an interesting history, involving Italian immigrants at its beginnings. School tours during which children can learn how artichokes and other crops were grown and how they are grown today is an example of one topic among many that could be of interest.

Other partnerships that might assist interpretive projects include the oft mentioned San Mateo County Historical Association, the operators of the Montara Lighthouse station youth hostel and the organizers of the annual Maverick's big wave surfing competition.

The study team envisions a rich opportunity for historical interpretation of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Few structures exist to tell the story, but panoramic vistas can stir the imagination. Signs and panels describing the original natives, Franciscans, vaqueros, whalers, fishermen, farmers, flower growers, bootleggers and surfers, at strategic points, can tell a good story, supported by printed and audio-visual materials. A trail system is suggested that could be a sort of walk-through-time, from the site of the original Guerrero Adobe to the blu! s overlooking the Maverick's Wave. This will make an ordinary hike immensely more meaningful.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RANCHO CORRAL DE TIERRA

1. An archaeological investigation ought to be made to uncover the foundations of the original Guerrero adobe house at the Cabrillo Farms building cluster near Denniston Creek. Once the adobe foundations are found the Park Service should interpret the site in a manner consistent with protection of a sensitive archeological site. When appropriate protection can be achieved, a permanent outline of the house ought to be created and interpretive signs and panels be installed.
2. While it is not eligible for the National Register, the study recommends stabilizing the old barn at *Ember Ridge* as a legacy of the past and consider appropriate and feasible adaptive re-use of the structure.

3. The GGNRA ought to encourage continued research on Francisco Guerrero, and that a combination of his life experience and the lifeways of people during California Mexican period be the principal historic theme in the overall interpretive plan for *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. Furthermore, as Guerrero's murder, along with that of Tiburcio Vasquez (the owner of the southern portion of *Rancho Corral de Tierra*), was mysteriously linked with the Santillan land fraud case, the GGNRA should encourage research on this particular aspect of Guerrero's legacy.
4. Because of the great extent of property change and land use transitions, the GGNRA should undertake a research project that would trace ownership and land use changes from 1867 until the present. Title searches and boundary investigations should be coordinated with Cultural Resources in order to maximize benefits to resource management and interpretation as well as to property management and law enforcement. This information can also be used to develop the requirements for archeological surveys in the area.
5. The photograph previously used in this study which was identified as the "Francisco Guerrero Farmhouse" is not, and ought not be used as the cover image for this study.
6. The GGNRA ought to encourage further research into the life of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* landowner John Patroni.
7. As John Kyne, a farmer in the *Rancho Corral de Tierra* area, was California author Peter B. Kyne's father, personal remembrances of this place may be available. A search ought to be undertaken to determine if such descriptions exist.
8. This study suggests the old barn at Ember Ridge was built by Santa Cruz businessman Henry Cowell. The GGNRA ought to encourage further research into Cowell's activities at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*.
9. The GGNRA ought to encourage further research on Mr. Takahashi (who lived near *Renegade Ranch*) and his impact on the flower growing business in California.
10. Structures once belonging to Takahashi, adjacent to GGNRA land, ought to be identified, and their acquisition considered in the future.
11. The ruins of the Sato place ought to be surveyed by archeologists, before their removal.

12. The GGNRA ought to encourage research concerning the effect of World War II Japanese internment on the agricultural business of San Mateo County.

13. If Pillar Point is acquired by the GGNRA, an archaeological investigation ought to take place in order that more be learned about the whaling station once present there.

14. Additional research ought to be accomplished to support the above recommendation.

15. Pertinent materials can be found at San Mateo County History Museum on surfing at Pillar Point (Maverick's) and on the history of Devil's Slide. Use of them will be helpful when interpretive projects arise, if these properties are acquired by the GGNRA.

16. The GGNRA ought to encourage research on the "Radio Compass Station," which was once a part of the Montara Lighthouse Station.

17. World War II and 1960s buildings at the Montara Lighthouse Station are currently not considered historical. This judgment ought to be reviewed, and the National Register nomination updated, as appropriate, since the structures are approaching fifty years of age.

18. The Park Service should work with the Montara Sanitary District to attempt to identify, preserve and interpret structures on its property that date back to the World War II anti-aircraft center.

19. GGNRA staff ought to be aware that the San Mateo County History Museum possesses the Fresnel lens for the Montara Lighthouse and other related materials. These items could be utilized in joint interpretive ventures.

20. The four present clusters of buildings on the GGNRA's *Rancho Corral de Tierra* should not be considered as historically related to the division of the rancho into four pieces in 1867.

21. Interpretive partnerships for *Rancho Corral de Tierra* ought to be forged with the San Mateo County Historical Association, local farmers, management at the Montara hostel and the organizers of the annual Maverick's surfing competition.

22. A trail system emphasizing the changing use of the land of *Rancho Corral de Tierra* plus colorful episodes of its past should be a part of the overall interpretive plan.

MORI POINT

TIMIGTAC

The Aramai Village of Timigtac is thought to have been located at Mori Point. Years of quarry operations and farming have greatly disturbed the land here. However, it is recommended to the GGNRA that it be mindful that archaeological remains of Timigtac may be in the area and that projects requiring excavation be closely monitored. Please note that the family of Johathan Cordero is the only known surviving with Ohlone lineage to the San Francisco Peninsula.

FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS

In relation to the above, the Park Service should perform additional research associated with the native sites that may have been part of Timigtac.

It is recommended that further research be accomplished on the various ownership changes at the quarry at Mori Point in order that a clearer picture about the place's history be formed.

It is recommended that further research be accomplished concerning the Mori family and title changes at Mori Point caused by them through the years. An archeological survey of the site of the old road house ought to be undertaken. Moreover, it is recommended that additional investigation be focused on the Mori family itself. Are there any members of it that can be interviewed? Do they have materials of the past that can be reviewed? What reminders of the past might be in the possession of others who would be willing to share them?

INTERPRETIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the historical interpretation for Mori Point focus on the limestone quarry there, the Ocean Shore Railroad which cut through it and the bootlegging operations of the prohibition era.

Links between the Sanchez Adobe and Mori Point are plentiful. Of course Mori Point once belonged to Francisco Sanchez as part of his *Rancho San Pedro*. During prohibition days, the Mori family ran the Adobe as a speakeasy. Therefore it is recommended that joint interpretive opportunities be explored between the GGNRA and the San Mateo County Historical Association which operates the Sanchez Adobe Historic Site for the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Division.

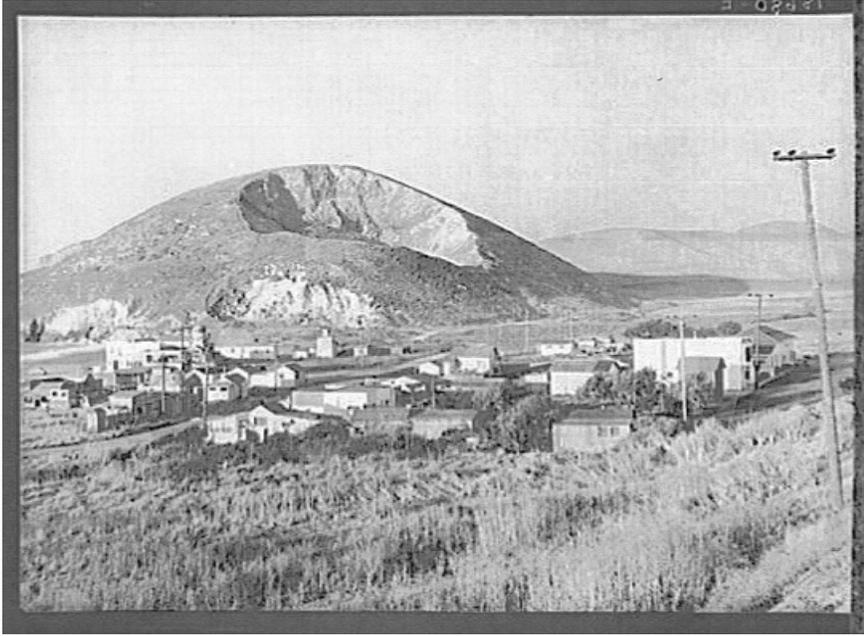


Fig. 7.1: Dorothea Lange's 1938 photograph of a "fishing village" in the vicinity of Mori Point. Library of Congress.

In November of 1938, famed Depression era photographer Dorothea Lange was in the Mori Point area on federal assignment. She took photos of the Point, the quarry and what was termed a fishing village. It is recommended that a search be made through the Library of Congress for purposes of finding them and using them for a possible stand alone exhibit (and/or publication) that could focus on Mori Point, Dorothea Lange and the 1930s in California.

It is recommended that the trail system at Mori Point include signs and panels explaining the history of the place. Particular emphasis ought to focus on the quarry, the Ocean Shore Railroad and the bootlegging activities of the prohibition era.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MORI POINT

1. Future projects requiring excavation at Mori Point need to be sensitive to the possibilities of encountering remains of the Aramai village of Timigtac. Consultation with Native Ohlones should be carried out when developing interpretation, and if any archeological remains are found. Note that the family of Johathan Cordero is the only known surviving with Ohlone lineage to the San Francisco Peninsula.
2. Additional research of native sites at Mori Point ought to be performed to determine if they may have been part of Timigtac.
3. Further research needs to be accomplished to document the various ownership changes concerning the quarry.
4. Further research needs to be accomplished concerning the Mori family and title changes brought about by them at the Point. Also recommended is a search for members of the family and/or people within the Coastside community that can help shed light on the Moris and their legacy.

5. An archeological survey of the site of the old road house ought to be undertaken.
6. Historical interpretation of Mori Point should focus on the limestone quarry, the Ocean Shore Railroad and bootlegging operations of the prohibition era.
7. A partnership with the operators of the Sanchez Adobe Historic Site ought to be brought about to combine interpretive efforts, as Mori Point and the Sanchez Adobe have many historical connections.
8. An interpretive project centered around photographer Dorothea Lange's visit to the Mori Point area in 1938 ought to be undertaken.
9. Signs and panels ought to be installed at Mori Point to tell about its colorful history.

PHLEGER ESTATE

FURTHER RESEARCH

Once again a title search of sorts is recommended (including mapping), this time for the Phleger Estate between the year of 1850 (when John Greer married Maria Luisa Copinger of *Rancho Cañada Raymundo*) and 1935 (when the Phlegers bought the property). Ownership changes on its eastern fringe are particularly confusing. Only with such research will it be determined which of the Woodside wineries were at one time or another on the estate.

HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Evidence of logging activities exists on the Phleger Estate. Indeed souvenir hunters have been finding broken saws, blown-up boilers and bits of clothing, cookware, etc. for decades. Certainly visible aspects of the lumbering activities ought to be preserved including roads, bridges and other features. The logging industry on the San Francisco Peninsula was significant. The two mills belonging to Whipple and the one of Greer were part of that activity. However they were not the first, the last nor the largest of the 15 or so operations. Archeological investigations and surveys should be scaled to correspond to the historic significance of the sites and the potential impacts of park undertakings that may affect them.

INTERPRETIVE THEMES

It is recommended that historical interpretation of the Phleger Estate focus on the logging industry and the Phlegers themselves. Old growth forests from San Mateo County were sacrificed in the 19th century to build San Francisco and its surrounding

areas. This type of resource exploitation by the great city to the north is a recurrent theme of San Mateo County history. Another recurrent theme is the suburbanization of the Peninsula of which the Phlegers were a part. They were of the original class of people who wished to work in the City but live in the country. Mary Elena Phleger was of an old-time, established California family. Herman, of German-Irish heritage, was a self-made successful San Francisco attorney.

Phleger's career placed him at the center of important San Francisco, California, U.S. and international events. He confronted union activist Harry Bridges as an anti-labor attorney; he served on numerous charitable boards and voluntary commissions. Perhaps his greatest achievement was the crafting of the Antarctica agreement of 1959, which essentially made that continent free of military utilization by any country.

Finally, the Phlegers awareness of the environmental values of their property was symbolic of the new involvement among people of the Peninsula (and Americans), about saving their open spaces for future generations.

INTERPRETIVE PROJECTS

It is recommended that use be made of the old logging roads, bridges, etc. within the trail system for the Phleger Estate with appropriate signs and panels to allow the public an understanding of the lumber operations in the San Mateo County redwoods.

It is recommended that the GGNRA again partner with the San Mateo County Historical Association. The Association has gathered plentiful information on the logging industry. GGNRA brochures, exhibits and programs will benefit from use of the Association's archives. As it does the Sanchez Adobe, the Association operates the Woodside Store for the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Division. The store is not far from the Phleger Estate and is closely linked historically. Both were originally on part of *Rancho Cañada de Raymundo* and both had considerable involvement in the logging industry. Currently the Store has children's programs that interpret the logging industry. Exhibits are present there too. The Woodside Store ought to be considered as a site for collaborative programs and exhibits.

Public access to the Phleger Estate is difficult at best. Legal parking exists on Cañada Road, far from the trail head. A walk through a residential neighborhood without sidewalks or markings is necessary to get there. It is recommended that this situation be examined by the GGNRA.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PHLEGER ESTATE

1. Research to trace ownership changes (between 1850 and 1935) on the eastern portion of the Phleger Estate will be desirable when interpreting land use transitions within the park.
2. Excepting circumstances that would lead to important findings, extensive archaeological work on historic sites at the Phleger Estate is not recommended.
3. . Historical interpretation at the Phleger Estate ought focus on the logging industry of the 19th century and the Phlegers as pioneering suburbanites and historical individuals of the 20th century.
4. The logging roads, bridges and other relics of the Phleger Estate's history ought to be incorporated in the interpretive plan for the park with appropriate use of signs and panels.
5. Partnership with the San Mateo County Historical Association is again recommended. Use of its collections housed in its museum would be beneficial for exhibits and publications. Interpretive programs might be undertaken jointly at the Woodside Store.
6. A plan for public parking needs to be developed for the Phleger Estate.

MILAGRA RIDGE

INTERPRETIVE THEMES

It is recommended that the major interpretive theme for Milagra Ridge be its World War II coast defense works and its Cold War Nike missile launching installation. Its two 6-inch gun emplacements embody the last of the conventional weapons committed to defense of San Francisco Bay against surface vessels. Its Nike missile launch site was representative of a new defense system directed against nuclear attack from the air. Focus ought to be given to the relationship of Milagra Ridge as the Nike launch site and Sweeney Ridge as the Nike radar site. Subthemes ought to include Spanish occupation and the mission outpost in the San Pedro Valley, Milagra Ridge as part of Francisco Sanchez's *Rancho San Pedro* and farming during American times.

FURTHER RESEARCH

While engaged in its work, the research team discovered that photos of the World War II era 6-inch guns at Milagra may exist. These images ought to be found for display purposes. Photographs of Milagra Ridge during its Nike period show artichoke fields



Fig. 7.2: Photograph of a 6-inch gun, thought to be at Milagra Ridge. Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Park Archives.

covering land all the way up to the fences of the launch site. The furrows from this farming activity still exist. It is recommended that further research be undertaken to find out who the farmers were, what kind of relationship they had with the Army and when this artichoke growing began and when it ended.

INTERPRETIVE PROJECTS

It is recommended that appropriate signs and panels be installed at Milagra to interpret its rich history.

It is recommended that construction maps of the underground facilities of the World War II era, in the possession of the San Mateo County History Museum, be employed for interpretive purposes. Images of these plans could be used on panels within the park and potentially in publications and other types of endeavors. It is the study team's opinion that the public will be surprised by the extent of this underground construction.

Walking tours and special Veterans' Day programs should be considered as potential interpretive projects.

The team recommends allowing some limited access into the World War II underground facilities. Such access could be limited to certain special occasions, or be employed as a special development tool for those trying to raise money for GGNRA projects.

Limited parking restricts the public's access to this National Park land. The team recommends an expanded parking area for Milagra Ridge.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MILAGRA RIDGE

1. The major interpretive theme for Milagra Ridge ought to be its World War II and Cold War defense installations. Attention ought to focus on the relationship of Milagra as the Nike launch site and Sweeney Ridge as its Nike radar site.
2. Subthemes ought to include native Californians, Spanish colonization, Milagra Ridge as part of *Rancho San Pedro* and farming during American times.
3. Photographs of the 6 inch guns at Milagra may exist and should be found for interpretive purposes.

4. The story of artichoke growing alongside the Nike launch site ought to be documented.
5. Appropriate interpretive signs and panels ought to be installed at Milagra Ridge to tell its history.
6. Maps of its underground facilities ought to be used to help explain World War II era seacoast defense construction.
7. Programs at Milagra Ridge ought to include walking tours, Veteran's Day programs and limited access to the World War II underground facilities.
8. The parking area needs to be expanded.

OPPORTUNITIES

The research team for this study hopes its readers will find what they need in this work. From the beginning we expected some contextual relationship between the site specific histories of the park lands and local history. However, we were surprised how much this history of the holdings of the GGNRA mingled with much greater interpretive themes. The stories became so rich at times that the team had to hold itself back and focus on the basic tasks at hand. As time ran down, various paths for research had to be left to future studies. Most noticeable was the need for understanding property changes at *Rancho Corral de Tierra*. While some of this was accomplished for the land around the old barn at Ember Ridge and in some other spots, most of the land was not thoroughly examined as to ownership changes over the years. It is likely that many important stories involving American, Irish, Italian and Japanese farmers will be told after close examination of title records is accomplished. The team recommends further study in order to describe the native California archeology at the five San Mateo County portions of the GGNRA. Meanwhile specific information on San Pedro Point and a few other properties of interest to the GGNRA were not included. The study team recommends the creation of an index for this study when it is published.

The team feels its greatest task has been accomplished. It has taken the history of these five major GGNRA San Mateo County properties and has placed them in context to larger interpretive themes. As discussed in the preface, each of the five seem to call out for representing different aspects of the California and American experience. Together they speak to the significant native presence on the Peninsula, a crucial discovery made by Spanish explorers, Spanish colonial efforts, Mexican land grants and two significant grantees (Francisco Guerrero and Francisco Sanchez), exploitation of natural resources and the relationship between the Peninsula and San Francisco, agricultural

enterprises to help feed the people of the city, suburbanization of the Peninsula, the impact of World War II and the Cold War on the landscape of Coastside San Mateo County, maritime history and lighthouses, environmental awareness and the National Park Service. Even international affairs are included. One ought not take lightly Herman Phleger's role in preventing military utilization of Antarctica in 1959.

The team wishes to applaud those who on a local, state and national level encouraged the GGNRA to come to San Mateo County. Future acquisitions around Pillar Point and Devil's Slide will be of great public benefit if they occur. This study is hopeful that properties once occupied by the Takahashis at *Renegade Ranch*, that are just outside of the GGNRA's *Rancho Corral de Tierra*, will one day be part of the national park.

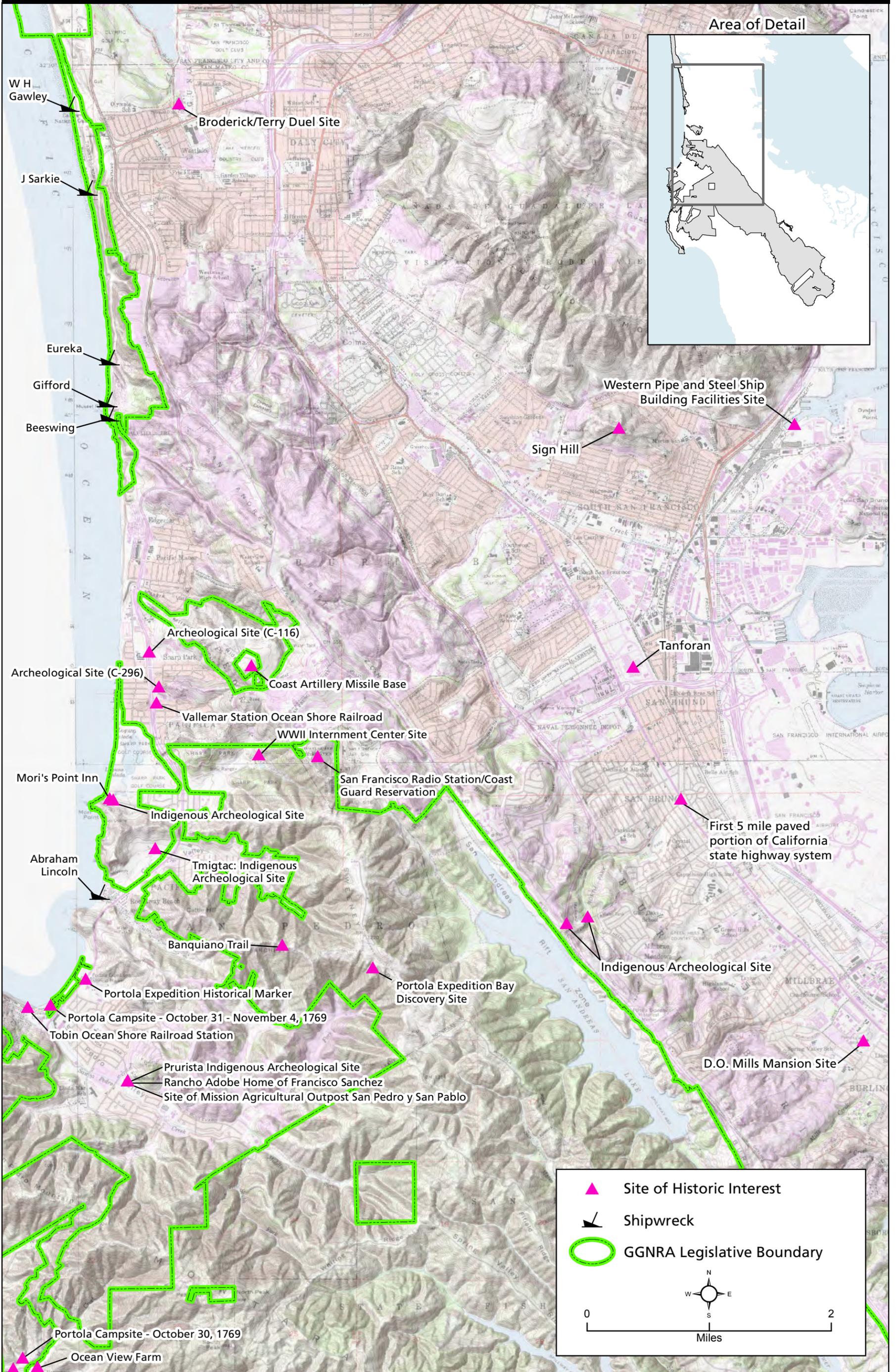
Finally, a recurrent recommendation in this study is to have the GGNRA and the San Mateo County Historical Association explore partnerships. Three of the GGNRA's five major holdings are on land once owned by Francisco Sanchez, whose adobe and five surrounding acres are a San Mateo County park operated by the Association. A multitude of joint interpretive projects are feasible. As suggested similar types of presentations are possible at the Association's Woodside Store which is close to the Phleger Estate. Finally the Association's museum in Redwood City possesses an abundance of materials that could be employed in exhibits, publications and other projects and programs. The potential of such collaborations could result in increasing the public's knowledge of not just local history but national history in a meaningful way.

HISTORIC PROPERTIES OF GOLDEN GATE NRA IN SAN MATEO COUNTY				
RESOURCE	MANAGEMENT STATUE	LISTED ON NATIONAL REGISTER	NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE
San Francisco Bay Discovery Site	Land managed by NPS	Yes	Yes	Exploration/Settlement
Seacoast Fortifications of San Francisco Bay; Milagra Ridge Devil's Slide	Land managed by NPS Presently owned by CalTrans	Eligible	Eligible	Military (District), Architecture, Engineering, Cultural Landscape, Historic Archeology
Point Montara Light Station	Presently owned and managed by U.S. Coast Guard	Yes	No	Architecture, Maritime History, Commerce, Transportation (District)
Rancho Corral de Tierra	Land managed by NPS	Potentially eligible	No	Agricultural history
Martini Creek Ohlone Sites	Land managed by NPS	Potentially eligible	No	Ohlone history, archeology, and heritage
Francisco Guerrero Adobe Site	Presently owned by POST	Potentially eligible	No	social history, Mexican California
Phleger Estate Logging Sites	Land managed by NPS	Potentially eligible	No	1850s redwood logging history
Shelldance Nursery	Land managed by NPS	Potentially eligible	No	Agricultural history, commerce
Shipwrecks of the Golden Gate	Under multiple jurisdictions	Potentially eligible	No	Maritime archeology

Sites of Historic Interest - North

San Mateo Historic Resource Study

National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
Golden Gate National Recreation Area

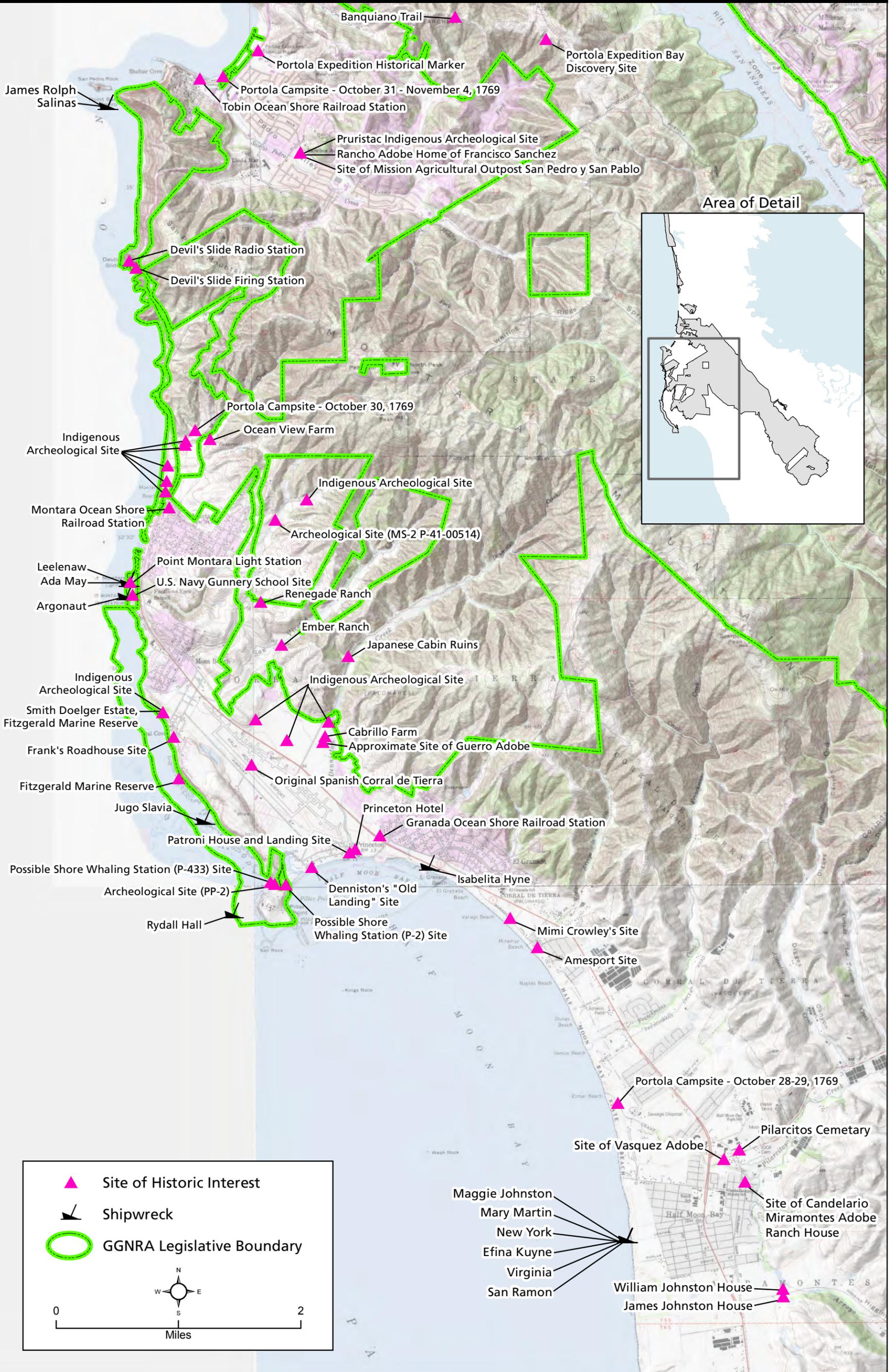


Sites of Historic Interest - Central

San Mateo Historic Resource Study

National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior

Golden Gate National Recreation Area

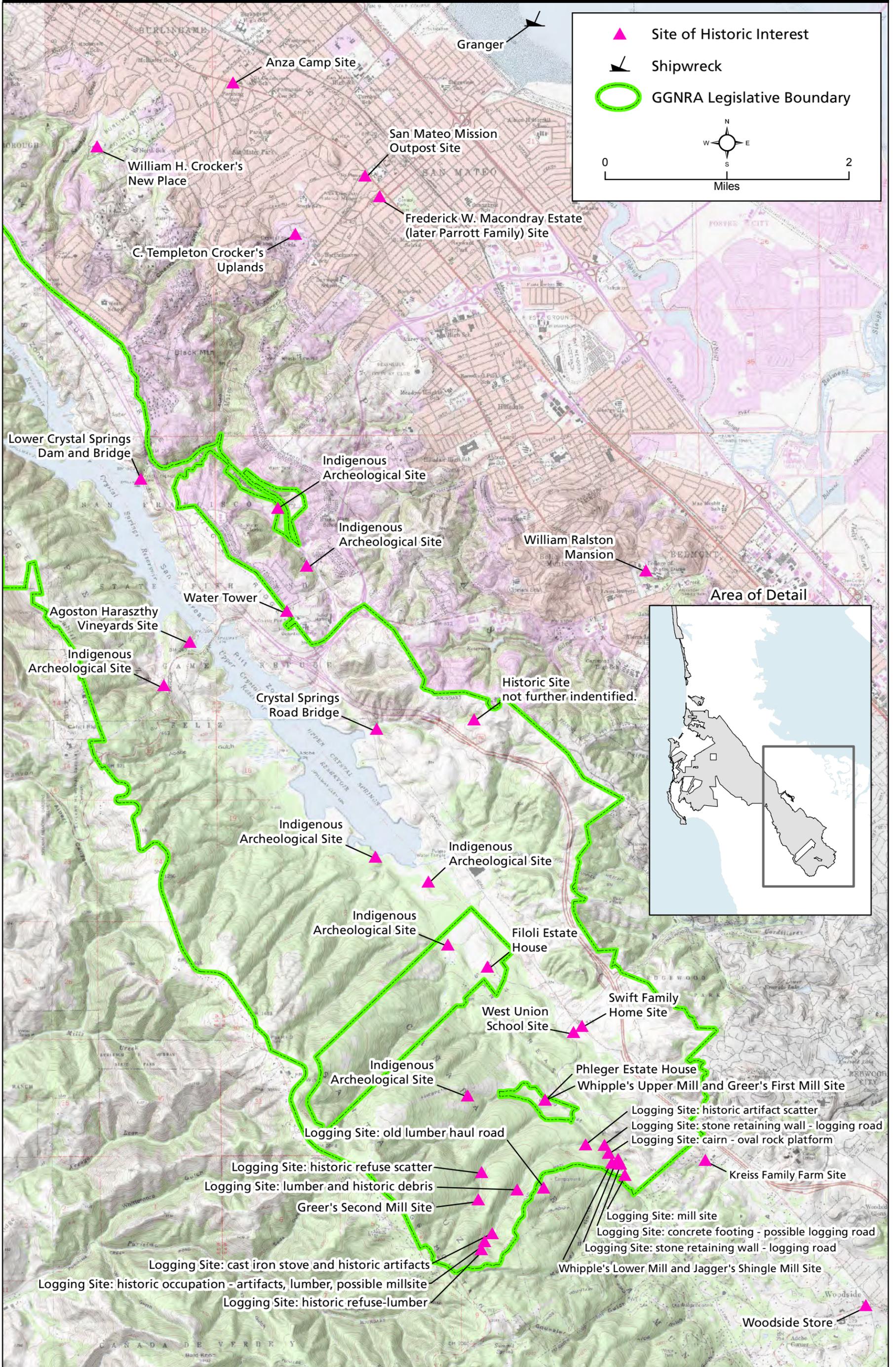


Sites of Historic Interest - South

San Mateo Historic Resource Study

National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior

Golden Gate National Recreation Area



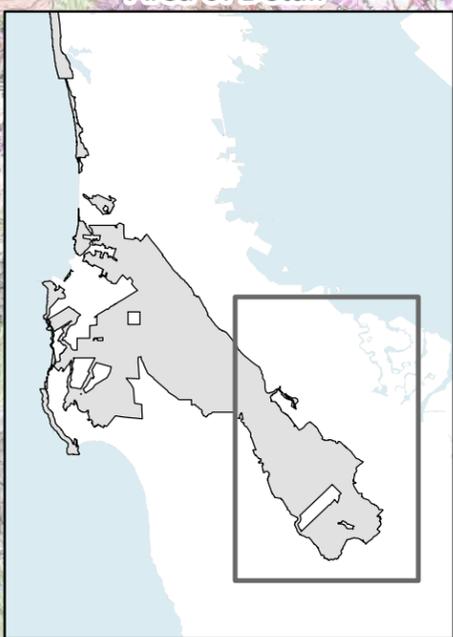
▲ Site of Historic Interest

↙ Shipwreck

○ GGNRA Legislative Boundary

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Acknowledgments

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Lee Davis of San Francisco State University organized the effort to provide much of the contextual research for the project. She thanks her two interns, Maureen Bourdin and Mari Zachery-Lyon for going the extra mile.

San Mateo County Historical Association President and author of this study, Mitch Postel, wishes to thank his three volunteer researchers, Therese Smith, David Morrison and Joan Levy for putting in countless hours to accomplish a substantial portion of the primary source research. In the backrooms of the Historical Association's museum, the GGNRA's archives at the Presidio, the Coast Guard's records center in Alameda, the Bancroft Library at Berkeley and at the San Mateo County Government Center and other repositories, at their own expense, these, unpaid scholars dug through mountains of paper to come away with the most important information to make the study an informative and a useful tool for the GGNRA. Where credited, these volunteers also wrote a few of the passages. Words of appreciation need also be communicated to Postel's colleagues Mark Still, Al Acena, Keith Bautista and Carmen Blair for the hours they spent reviewing the first draft. Assistants were hired to help provided valuable research time. They were Jerry Crowe, Rick Perez and Maureen Carey. The courtesies extended by the Coast Guard archives group in Alameda, San Mateo County employees in the Assessor's Department and the GGNRA's archives staff at the Presidio deserve recognition. Staff at the Hiller Aviation Museum in San Carlos also made time for the team and pointed it in the right direction on a couple of crucial points. Contributing information and important advice were local historians David Bridgman and Shirley Drye. Finally, staff at the Historical Association's museum in Redwood City provided substantial support, in particular Carol Peterson, who made her archives available, Misa Sakaguchi, who reached out to the Japanese community for some key testimonies and research materials, and mostly to Elizabeth Silva, who acted as Postel's assistant through the whole process and had to endure a great deal, including having to read hundreds of pages of his illegible handwriting.

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Lee Davis

Mitch Postel

2010

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