



LOS ENCINOS

PAST

AND

PRESENT

William Howard Taft
1966

AN APPRECIATION

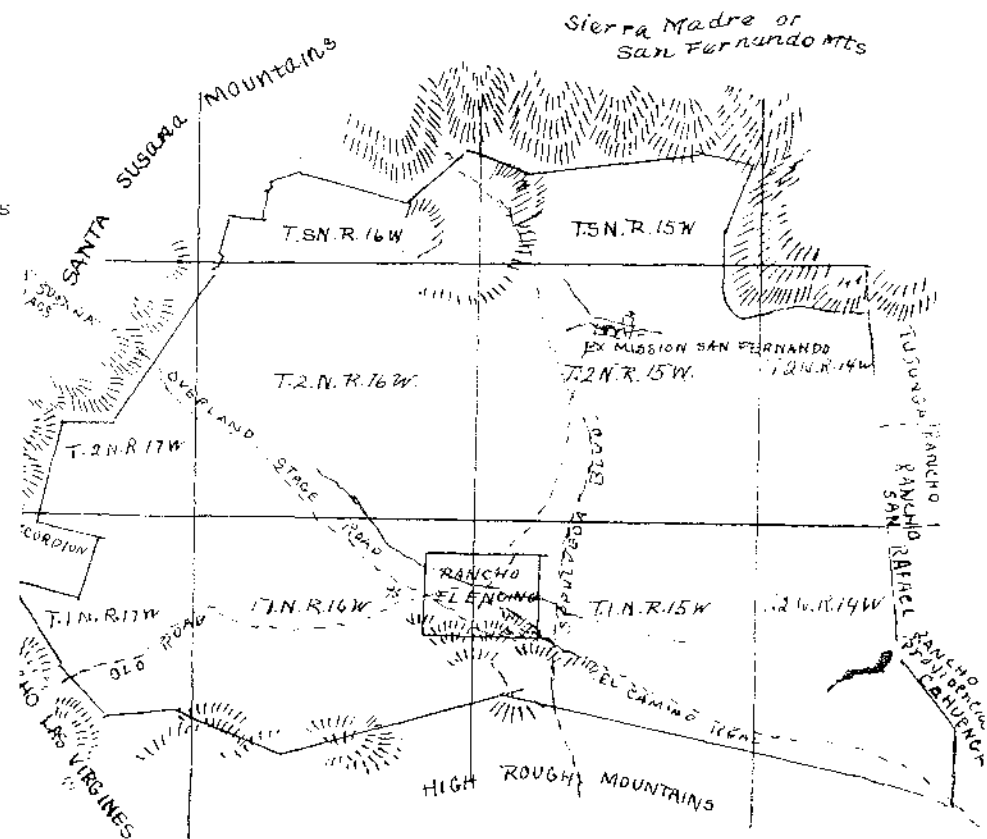
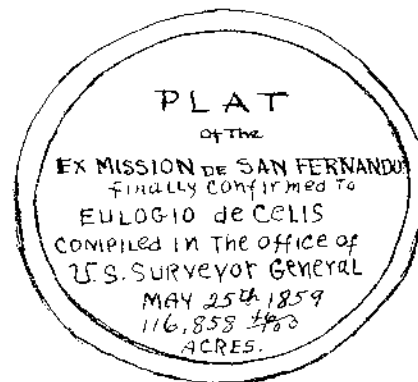
Maria Stewart, thank you. Thank you from those of us who know and have worked with you, and thank you from the people of Southern California whose lives your work has enriched.

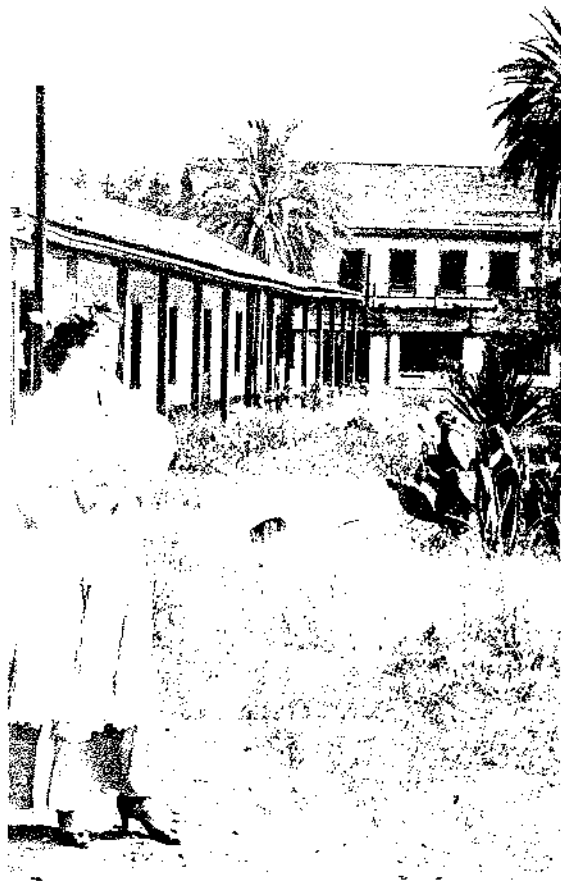
Behind every project there is always one person who had the imagination to envision the goal, the enthusiasm to inspire others, the courage to begin and the perseverance to complete the task. For Los Encinos State Historical Monument, Maria Stewart was that person.

Arriving in California in 1922 from Chicago, Mr. and Mrs. Stewart lived in Los Angeles until 1940, then chose Encino for their new home. They spent many hours exploring the San Fernando Valley and delving into its history. They soon recognized that the complex of buildings around the lake in Encino formed a unique panorama of the various cultures of the settlers of the Valley. They were shocked by the dilapidated state into which Los Encinos had fallen, and realized the urgent necessity of preserving it as a museum of local cultural history. Maria had found her *raison d'être*. Now, almost twenty years later, the Los Encinos State Historical Monument and this volume detailing its history stand witness to her tireless devotion.

Mrs. Stewart organized the Encino Historical Society to sponsor the endeavor officially. The members, who through the years have toiled long hours to support the project, realize their debt to her guidance and inspiration. The members asked me to phrase their appreciation. As a native Californian and married to a scion of the Amestoy family, which had the longest tenure of Los Encinos, I welcome the opportunity of expressing our gratitude, too. Thank you Maria Stewart.

Helen Monnette Amestoy
Los Angeles, March 1, 1965





Picture taken in 1945
Maria Stewart making plans to
preserve our town's heritage

LOS ENCINO'S

PAST

AND

PRESENT

BY

MARIA HELENA STEWART

Many, many citizens of Encino and surrounding towns insist on my writing a book about Encino. When I reply that I am not a writer, their answer is: "Well, you have researched and worked untiringly over a period of years to preserve and restore our San Fernando Valley heritage, we think you are the logical one to write a book.

So here goes:

In 1945, a huge sign appeared on Ventura Boulevard in the western part of Los Angeles County. "THIS HISTORICAL LANDMARK WILL BE SUBDIVIDED." A group of mothers coming from a P. T. A. meeting were aghast. All of us said then and there: "This cannot be done!"

"We will bulldoze them into the lake and fill it up," was the retort of the agent representing the owners when we met with him inquiring about what they intended to do to preserve our town's oldest buildings.

We then organized; we called ourselves the Encino Historical Committee. Our next move was to become incorporated, the object being to preserve and restore our town's heritage.

I was delegated to do the research on its past and then we sent a condensed history to our

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Assemblyman in Sacramento, California, asking for help, and within one month a Bill passed Legislature in our favor. . . It appropriated twenty-five thousand dollars on a matching basis for two years. By 1949 the State of California purchased about all of the lake, spring and buildings -- the very heart of Encino.

* * *

I wish to extend my gratitude to all persons and organizations lending their support, financially and otherwise.

To the descendants of the original families.

To Thomas Workman Temple for the de la Osa Genealogy.

To Idalia Maxwell for translations.

To Alice Kimpel for illustrations.

To Rev. Brother Veronius Henry, Archivist for Constanso's Diary.

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INDIANS

Before the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores, their galleons on the California coast, and even before the Don Gaspar de Portolá Expedition of A. D. 1769, there lived in Encino, California, aboriginal members of the Shoshone Nation. These Indians dwelt in conical-shaped huts made of grasses and reeds put together with mud after being placed tight by the application of leather thongs.

A very friendly lot, they were, among themselves, but proved mischievous when aroused by domineering "whites". It was the greatest joy of these aborigines to shoot burning arrow after arrow at the homes of the early settlers, watch them burn and which helped to further the production of tile for roofs.

Otherwise the fletches (arrows) were used to hunt bear, antelope and the liebre (jack rabbit) plus its milder cousin conejo or just plain rabbit.

Women worked while the men folk hunted. And when they returned, it was the woman's job to arrange for an exchange with the neighboring Indian for her husband's kill, because it was considered bad luck to eat what they killed on their own.

This superstition was followed up by

more hard work for the women: skinning, drying, preparing food, and the sewing of hides into covering against the elements.

During the summer, the women wore nothing other than skirts which were made from grasses or large leaves. Men wore a loin cloth, the better to go out hunting or to play games such as throwing spears through a rolling hoop (terkersia). Of course, the principal reward for these tiring pursuits consisted of the game mentioned, and a few wild nuts and berries on the way back.

Acorns were ground into a meal in the Aztec fashion of atole and pinole, and boiling water was afterwards poured into the woven baskets' contents to remove the bitterness of the rough flour. Bread was then baked from this mess.

The encino or evergreen oak, which gave its name to the location, was used for firewood. Around the huge campfires our first Encino citizens or vicinos would carve out crude pipes and flutes from bamboo or elderwood, and then go out into the starry night to imitate the hoot owls, coyotes and crickets.

SPANISH OCCUPATION

After the discovery of California on the Colorado River side by Fernando de Alarcon in 1520 - the Upper California as most Geographers knew of it - there was no colonization of the vast coastal area on the Pacific Ocean above the Antiqua California Peninsula until the Portolá explorations of 1769-70.

Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo and General Sebastian Viscano, during the years 1542-43 and 1602-03, had left beautiful names for this coastal area like San Miguel (San Diego de Acaldo, Santa Catalina de Alejandria Island with the isthmus of two harbors), Carpintera of the Santa Barbara Channel.

One hundred and sixty-six plus years later - after urgency meetings against the Russians', English and French Navies within these waters - the captains of the Manila-Acapulca galleons finally prevailed upon the Bourbon Spanish Monarch Charles III. to colonize Alta California. An experienced soldier, Don Gaspar de Portolá was chosen to explore and occupy it, and this Valley of Santa Catalina de Bononia de Los Encinos, so called for a poor Clair, St. Catherine of Bononia (1413-1463) or for the abundance of oaks at Encino, is the subject of this book.

As Commander-in-Chief of this expedition, and Governor of both Californias, he was delegated to find the port of Monterey, a very elusive bay which led them one hundred miles beyond to a much better haven, the Port of San Francisco (July to November, 1769), when a log by sea failed to match landmarks. According to Don Miguel de Constanso, engineer of the Portolá Expedition, it took three weeks for the Commandante with officers, the six men of the Catalonia Volunteers with a number of friendly natives carrying spades, pick axes, hatchets, crow-bars and other tools sapping their way up the coastal hills from San Diego.

At Los Encinos the going was easier. He paraphrased previously that the Rev. Frailes Junipero Serra, Juan Viscano and Fernando Perron had remained in San Diego. The former was obliged to suspend the march on account of a bad limb and weariness.

Fra. Juan Crespi and Fra. Juan Gomez, who were fellow gray Franciscans, accompanied the trek north. Father Serra believed that the appearance of the sailing ship San Antonio at San Diego when Portolá returned there in the spring of 1770 was the miracle that saved the whole risky venture. Constanso remarked in his diario about the ships during the first visit to San Diego: "The packet boats, San Carlos Principe (San Antonio)

took on the veteran troops and Lieutenant Don Pedro Fages, the engineer Don Miguel Constanso and surgeon Don Pedro Prat at San Blas. . . The San Antonio had the good luck to make the voyage in fifty-nine days, April 11, 1769, the San Carlos April 29th, and both crews were cut in half for efficiency by escorbuta -- the dreadful Scurvy sores.

"When the ships had departed, the San Antonio carrying messages back to Mexico, and the San Carlos heading north, Constanso continued to note the make-up of the land force: There were sappers to cut the brush and open trails. Drove of cattle, divided into four divisions, followed with their arrieros (Mulleers) and a good number of soldiers as escorts. In the rear guard - conveying the horses and mules in relays, was Captain Don Fernando Riveray Moncada."

Constanso gives a layman's viewpoint of "The Historic Diary. . . made in Northern California BY THE ORDER OF THE VICEROY THE MARQUES DE CROIX, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE NEW SPAIN VISITOR GENERAL DON JOSE DE GALVEZ, UNDER THE COMMAND OF THE TROUP LEADER GOVERNOR GASPAR DE PORTOLA, AND BY SEA UNDER DON VICENTE VILA, OF THE PACKET SAN CARLOS, ROYAL ARMADO, AND DON JUAN

PEREZ, SERVICES IN THE NAVIGATION OF THE PHILIPPYNES, OF THE SAN ANTONIO, ANOTHER PACKET." The engineer continued with the following entries down to the exit from San Fernando Valley into the Santa Clara River.

Departure from San Diego for July 14, 1769, and the Governor commanded that six soldiers and a Corporal go out exploring the terrain for the next two days and report back.

"Sat. July 15, at San Jacome de la Marco (Miramar -- Camp Callon Torry Pines area). The entire country was abundant in pasture and not rough. We went NW as the low hills and medium-sized valleys down to the ocean would permit it.

"Sun. July 16. We crossed two very pleasant valleys. The Indians pointed out a fountain of good water on the eastern side of our road through one of them. Thick underbrush, plus aliso (Alder trees) gave shade in thicker grass. (About the vicinity of San Elijo Lagoon for St. Alexis, July 17.)

"Thursday, July 20. We set out very early in the morning, and dropped into a canyon that led into the valley of San Juan Capistrano. (Ocean side to the 1798 foundation of San Louis Rey), on the northern side. We left it when we twisted off to the NE. a bit, bit too much for our NW. At San Margareta

there was a canyon with shade and pasture and a good abundant spring, even though a brackish one, left a pond near by. Natives of both sexes numbered seventy and before taking leave of all of them, we gave the women some glass beads. FROM SANTA MARGARETA, TWO LEAGUES. FROM SAN DIEGO FIFTEEN LEAGUES. (One league is about 2.6335 miles or 5000 varas ((yards)) in U. S. surveys.)

"Friday, July 21. Going NW from our real or (camp) we left Santa Margareta Canyon on a road over low hills. After two leagues we halted on the western side of Rosales Canyon, dubbed thusly for the wildly growing roses of Castile seen there.

"Sat. July 22. Leaving Los Rosales and following the same compass reading we jogged along over mounds and arroyos (rivers) to a spring three leagues away and then set up our camp next to a ranchera (hut) of a very happy and gentle people. . . TO THE CANYON OF THE BATISMO, THE FATHERS BAPTISED TWO DYING CHILDREN here at San Clemente's LOS CHRISTIANITOS CR. and the event has been celebrated yearly on the Orange County Line for a few decades. THREE LEAGUES. FROM SAN DIEGO TWENTY-SIX LEAGUES.

"Sun. July 23. From the Canyon of the baptism we went on to Santa Magdalena NNW,

where there was plenty of pasture, thickets of saucos (willows) and other trees, where a spring dammed up into a pool to provide many enea or reeds.

"Thursday, July 27. From the Aguaje (rapid currents) of Padre Gomez we took off early and crossed the plain to the NE and came upon another spring of good running water for this dry time of year. It would probably have sufficient volume in the rainy season. TO SANTIAGO, THREE LEAGUES. FROM SAN DIEGO THIRTY-TWO.

"Fri. July 28. From Santiago (probably San Diego Cr. flowing off the Majaeska and Santiago Peaks or Saddleback western foot hills, crossing and paralleling U. S. 101 to form Newport Bay), we went on to our next real (camp) which the scouts told us was a beautiful river of scooped out avenues from flood times judging from all the sand scattered about among the leafy willows. Its banks could be controlled and irrigated to a great expanse (The Santa Ana River has been so well used during this century that hardly any of its flow reaches the sea by Costa Mesa). We bivouacked upon the left side of the river, watching the Indians on the other side within their rancheras (huts), as they came out soon to welcome us kindly. Their cacique (Capitan) told us in sign language that we could live

with them, that they would provide for our living by shooting berrendos (antelope) and hares, and plant more seeds on these lands which they would share with us. Here we experienced one tremendous earthquake and four after-shocks on this day. The first tremor or movement happened at 1 p. m. and the last one at 4 p. m., and was less violent. A gentile, who seemed to be of priestly rank, shouted horribly to high heaven in fright, turning to all sides to entreat heavenward and conjuring the four winds and the weather. We named the sight Rio de los Tremblores.

"Sat. July 29. At 2 p. m. we left the river of earthquakes (it was the intention of the Spaniards to return here and found a Mission known as San Gabriel de los Tremblores, cattle brand T) and two leagues away we left the flat lands and coastal plain to enter the sierra because we feared a lack of springs there. Still there wasn't enough for the horses and we had to gather ours from ojetos or positos, mere pools near a rancheria in a narrow canyon. The Indians were having a Fiesta and dance for their neighbors from the Rio de los Tremblores. (This pass into the San Gabriel Valley could be through Placienta, Brea and La Habra along the NE Orange -- Los Angeles County line.)

"Sun. July 30, 1769. We left Ojitos where there was a repetition of slight earth-

quakes at 6 a. m. We crossed the flat part of the Valley going north and getting nearer to the sierra, we were forced into broken, high elevations until we could proceed down to a very spacious and delightful Valley, abundant in water; some of it ran in deep currents: others were held back by cieneegas (marches). This Valley was about three leagues wide, and much more in length, and it was named Valle de San Miguel (now eastern San Gabriel Valley at Walnut and La Puente, California. Setting up our camp next to a running ditch which was full of berros and cominos (watercress and cumin seed), we established a position of about four leagues from Ojetos (the Pools of Little Eyes of Water.) Another earth-quake was felt in the afternoon. TO SAN MIGUEL VALLEY, FOUR LEAGUES. FROM SAN DIEGO, THIRTY NINE.

"Mon. July 31. Leaving this camp at 7 a. m. we crossed the zanya (gulch) over which we had to throw a bridge (origin of La Puente) and went WNW 2 leagues through pajanalis and monte bajo (coarse weeds and underbrush), which slowed us down (El Monte), because we had to desmontar (clear) the brush at each step. We crossed an arroyo of running water which was still muddy, being able to camp only much further on within the same, near a boquete (gap) looking west and at a clearing with an unobstructed view. At 8 a. m.

we felt another strong earthquake. (The route from La Puente was probably San José Cr. to Walnut Cr. out of west Covina into San Gabriel River, and west toward Alhambra Ave. and Valley Blvd. gap into eastern Ave. and Rosa de Castillo Rancho up to Los Angeles River bottom.)

"Tues. August 1, 1769. We rested and the scouts went out today a little while to explore. At 10 a. m. the earth shook, and about 1 p. m. or later the tremors hit again. Some of the soldiers on horseback and some unmounted veterans got permission to hunt ante-lope, the barrendo -- a numerous herd like a mountain goat but with horns a little longer. On their return these soldiers claimed to have seen a comely river about sixteen or seventeen varas (yards) wide which flowed into a southernly gap around a hilly buttress which was in full view of the camp, 1 1/2 miles away.

"Wed. Aug. 2, 1769. After gathering up the tent of the real, our forces traveled west through an abra or gap between low hills, leaving the Valley and entering a Canada, a wider Valley with lots of alamos and alisos to shade the banks of this lovely river which came out of the NNW, doubling the point of the cerrito acantilado (steeply inclined hill) to free itself for a run to the south. Over to the NNE was to be seen another caja (box canyon), with a river bed that held in a spacious rambla which is now en seco (The Arroyo Seco at Dalton Ave. and north Figuero St., where the

Pasadena and Golden State Freeway now meet beyond the north Broadway Bridge); and this, with the river give clear indications of great avenidas (torrence) in rainy weather because there are so many tree trunks and debris on the banks of both streams. While detained here at a place named La Porciuncula (the festival of Our Lady of the Angels), we felt three consecutive tremors during the afternoon and evening. TO THE PORCIUNCULA RIVER, TWO LEAGUES. FROM SAN DIEGO 43 LEAGUES.

"Thursday, Aug. 3. Even though the Porciuncula (Los Angeles River) comes down rapidly from the canada where it empties into the llana (plain) we were able to wade across it and take WSW bearing over high rolling land. After three leagues of this, the water springs of the sycamores became a rendezvous for us. It forms a huge pool of water in a low marsh where extremely thick trees of this species grew in a zacatal (grassy meadow) reeking with fragrant yerbas (herbs) out of La Cienega Mun. Park Down Balboa Cr. to the U. C. L. A. rowing course at Playa Rey. The land around us on this day's journey (Wilshire Blvd.), were admirable in-so-far as they could produce many grains and fruits. On the way we saw gentiles harvesting in the flats outside of a rancheria. That afternoon we were held in awe by another series of quakes, and there were among us, who were persuaded that the serranias to the west contained big volcanos. Indications of

such were along our recent road from Porciuncula River to El Ojo de agua de los Alisos. Our scouts saw great bogs of tar like material sticking out of the Serrana and boiling out in bubbles (La Brea Tar Pits).

"Fri., Aug. 4. From the Ojo de Oguia we kept going along the sierra on a good path, level and full of pasture. A stopping place because of us Los Ojos de Agua del Berendo (for having captured one of these horned animals, which had received a broken leg the preceding afternoon from the fusilazo (musket shot) of a Cataluna Volunteer soldier when he could not get to it.) In a boyanca (hollow) near the marina, and surrounded by low-lying mounds stood this water hole and the rancheria of some affable Indians who approached our quarters with trays of acorns and bellotas (seeds and nuts). We reciprocated in handing them strings of glass beads, which they esteemed no end.

"Sat. Aug. 5, 1769. Scouts went on to reconnoiter over the way along the plava (beaches), soon returned with the noticia (news) about having come upon a steep cantil cut out sheer to the sea where the sierra ends to close absolutely el paso de la marina. We had to look for it in the range but we discovered the pass -- a rough and painful one without a doubt. So leaving Los Ajos del Berendo in the afternoon (now the San Diego Freeway or old Sepulveda Blvd., near Sunset Blvd., U. C. L. A.), we headed NW where serrania (ridge of mountains) seemed to open up into a canyon formed by carros acantilados (steep sides). At

the head of this canyon we took a ladera (slope) and climbed painfully to the cumbra (summit) from where we devised a Valley that was very ameno (amenable) and spacious (San Fernando Valley). Descending from it we were able to make a stop at an aguaje (pool) that turned out to be uno poso muy grande (one grand place) to rest, nearby was a very populas rancheria de gentiles (heathen) who were affable and not a bit wild, mansos. They offered us seeds on trays and canasta (baskets) made from juncos (rushes), but came upon our camp in such numbers, two hundred and five including men, women and children, that we counted, that if weapons were carried among them we could have reason to fear. All these natives had something to eat for us. We reciprocated with a lot of our abalorios (trinkets) and cintas (ribbons). We made three leagues on this journey into the Valley and we called it Santa Catalina. It is about three leagues wide and more than eight in length, totally surrounded by mountains. To the Valley of Santa Catalina de Bononia de los Encinos, THREE LEAGUES. FROM SAN DIEGO, FIFTY ONE LEAGUES.

"Sun. Aug. 6, 1769. On this day we rested and received visits from innumerable gentiles who came to see us from all directions. By them news was brought concerning sailings of our packet boats along the coast and in the Santa Barbara Channel and

and drawings upon the ground showed the same with its islands, even to the tracing of the ship routes. Also they told of invasions in other times of a bearded people who were dressed and armed like us and who came from the east. One Indian referred to a visit to the invader's land where he saw localities and casas grandes in settlements for each family. He added that a seven or eight day's northern journey would take us to a rio grande (big river) which ran between rough mountains and was unfordable (Kern River). Later we would see the ocean and it would interfere with our route that way. But we left verification of noticias (news) of these geographers to information we would gain with our own eyes.

"Mon. Aug. 7. Crossing the Valle de Santa Catalina (really the San Fernando Valley) we judged that it was three leagues wide, and our encampment was at the foot of the sierra which would have to be penetrated by us the following day: here there was an over-abundance of water for our personnel but very little for the animals and it came out of some juncos y enea (reeds and rushes). Through the SAME VALLEY OF LOS ENCINOS, 3 LEAGUES. FROM SAN DIEGO, 54 LEAGUES.

"Tues. Aug. 8. We entered the range (now north of Mission San Fernando) toward Newhall, Saugus and Castaic Jct. and the road was already prepared by the sappers who went out early in the morning. Through a narrow canyon

and over high hills of dry ground which caused discomfort to the animals we proceeded until we came into a wee valley where people in a rancheria there showed us the best way to go through the next pass. The poor Indians had provided refreshments for us hoping to induce us to come over to their village. This -- despite the fact that we showed every intention of traveling on -- but we had to condescend to them so as not to slight their good will. Guides were furnished us and they led us to a fresh spring of water -- also away from the road, and gifts of seeds and nuts helped us to refresh ourselves more. The terrain is pleasant and beautiful -- the plain being ringed in by mountains that are rough and treeless in contrast. Willows and cottonwoods abundant. Nearby was another large village and the inhabitants had no other shelter than light bowers in the form of a corral. For such reasons we gave the name Rancheria del Carral to the area.

Wed. Aug. 9, 1769. Before our eyes were immense ranges of mountains which we would have to penetrate if we wanted to go due north. It was resolved, then, to follow through the canyon in which we were camped right down to the sea (Santa Clare River). So scouts were sent out to saunter as far as possible and the expedition rested. For company we had a multitude of aborigines (heathens) who

presented us seeds, acorns and honeycombs in carrizo (grass). They gave us to understand that the road inland (Castaic Jct. to Tejon or Grapevine passes) was rough and high but the beach route was easy of access and level. (Highway State 126 through Camulos, Santa Paula and Point Mugu) and, when the scouts reported we found that there was a passage to the sea, but that they had not advanced down to it and six leagues was their limit.

"Thursday, Aug. 10, 1769. Heading WSW, we made three of those leagues riding down the canyon, and stopped on the banks of an arroya which ran with enough volume upstream. It later appeared to be dried up by the heat of the sun (Sespe Creek in Ventura County), where it is claimed that gold was discovered in Alta California even before the 1842 Placerita Canyon strike of Francisco Lopez back a dozen miles near Newhall and Castaic Jct). The scouts told us of many streams during the day that seem to dry up. Much of the land of this Valley is soft, slippery and whitish terrain. The beasts sank into it at almost every step. The Valley received the name of Santa Clara. THROUGH THE CANYON DE SANTA CLARA, THREE LEAGUES. FROM SAN DIEGO SIXTY-ONE LEAGUES. (This ultimate the camp site of our translation is near the present CAMULOS or RAMONA RANCH which was made famous in Helen Hunt Jackson's 'Ramona'.)

(The Portola Expedition continued to Piru and San Francisco.)

The Portola Expedition returned to Los Encinos Los Robles or Santa Catalina by way of Conejo, Thousand Oaks, Triunfo, Girard, and left the Valley by way of Cohuengo rather than Sepulveda Blvd.

* * *

Portola's Second Visit

Little is thought about the Los Encinos discoverer's second trip on his return to San Diego. But when he reached the delta of the Santa Clara River near Assumpta or Ventura, he determined to take a short cut over what is now Ventura Freeway rather than proceed up one side of a triangle east to Castaic Jct., and then down the other side due south to our present State Monument. . . Again the words of Miguel de Constanso are graphic in description:

"Fri., Jan. 12, 1770. Upon leaving the Santa Barbara Channel area we entered the water shed of the Canada de Santa Clara and to the SE so as to penetrate the Sierra de la Conversion (The Conejo Grade, Thousand Oaks, Triunfo, Russell Valley, Las Virgines, and Calabasis route to Girard, now Woodland Hills and Encino with the view of heading for the Canada de los Robles or de los Encinos, also known as Santa Catalina ((San Fernando Valley)).

We crossed the river of Santa Clara and enlisted a guide from a rancheria there where we had also camped on Aug. 13, 1769. We followed a low range of hills and came upon a plain of sufficient extent to go down to the seawest and end on the east at some hills we could climb (Las Pozas), St. John's Seminary and Camarrillo. Up there we entered a spacious

valley still toward SE direction and we stopped at an Indian village of some poverty stricken, under-nourished natives, about seventy in number. There was wood and pasture aplenty. TO THE SIERRA DE LA CONVERSION, SIX LEAGUES. FROM THE ENCENADA DE LOS PINOS (MONTEREY), NINETY SIX AND A HALF LEAGUES.

"Sat., Jan. 13. A guide from this rancheria took us to a very transitable abra (cove) and we left a great part of the Sierra behind us. Then we climbed a cuesta (hill) down which gushed an arroya, the source of which was a large water-cress-covered pool (Creek o' the Conejo to Thousand Oaks). Once over this grade we found ourselves in a very pretty valley covered with pasto or grass, arboledas de encinos (stands of oaks). This valley ended on another painful cuesta at the foot of which was a small village whose dwellers gave us mescales tlalermados (toasted maguey or century plant) in exchange for trinkets. This whole area is bright in beauty with landscapes mirrored in abundant waters. After climbing the grade to the top we saw another beautiful plain with its attendant village... and we stopped nearby. Again there was lots of wood, water and pasture for the caballada (horses). NOW THROUGH THE SAME SIERRA DE LA CONVERSION, TWO LEAGUES AND A HALF. ONE HUNDRED LEAGUES FROM THE ENSENADA DE LOS PINOS.

"Sun. Jan. 14, 1770. Two Gentiles from among the oldest of the pueblo now offered to serve us guides to get us out of the Sierra. Again we headed SE to the salida (exit)...because we thought it a short cut. But at half a league or less from our camp we were getting into some mighty rugged and intricate parts of the serrania. Recognizing, albeit late, that we couldn't get our recura (beasts) over those brenales (craggs), we went back a bit toward the rancheria and recruited other guides who took us over an entirely different road...toward the NE over accessible hills and then east into some flat lands. Two short leagues and we found ourselves near a little Indian village. Here the people were insistent that we stay saying that the aguaje (spring) was too far away to reach in daylight. It did not bother us too much to make a halt at this site and we named it Triunfo. A plain of amenable beauty, this valley is surrounded on all sides by encinos and robles (Quercus robur or deciduous oaks) while abundant in pasture and water. TO TRIUNFO, TWO LEAGUES. FROM LA EN-CINADA DE PINOS, ONE HUNDRED AND ONE LEAGUES.

"Mon. Jan. 15, 1770. Guides from Triunfo took us a short distance away, one and one half leagues to a rancheria. From here some other guides led us NE and caused us some worry. But the more we signalled that we wanted to go east or SE, the more

they resisted claiming that the terrain was intransible that way. We did not have to repent for having believed them for they soon took a bearing to the east over a long and widening grade and from its peak we could look down into the valley of Los Robles or Santa Catalina. So now it was possible to go SE down in the valley and arrive, again a little bit late, to our antiquo real (ancient camp) Los Encinos, occupied on Aug. 5th, 1769. TO THE REAL DE LOS ROBLES, SIX LEAGUES. FROM THE ENCENADA DE PINOS, ONE HUNDRED AND SEVEN LEAGUES.

"Tues. Jan. 16. Now we are getting to know the terrain of San Fernando Valley better, and we could discuss with some certainty about the way we were to go. The mountain ranges of the sierras offered us sharp points of reference to designated places which on the first trip were passed and now served as markers or aids in the reconnoitering of short-cuts. So from Los Robles (Los Encinos) and without leaving its valley we continued to the SE without having lost any ground (for not having entered the San Diego Pass). Also we were aided by having the good fortune to find an abra (Cohuengo Pass) which opened up to us a passage down to the plain of Ojo de Agua de los Alisos (Spring of water of the sycamores or head waters of

Ballona Creek within the Los Angeles Hollywood area). Now that we were free from the obstacles of sierras we could say from here on it would be level going to San Diego. Three leagues and one half were covered on this journey, and a stop was made in the hullocks of the salida or (exit) from the sierra, a short distance from an arroyo corto (small creek) which dies out not far from its source, dying within its own sands. (Downtown Hollywood, south of the dam). TO THE PLAIN OF OJO DE AGUA OF THE ALISOS, THREE LEAGUES. FROM THE ENCENADA DE PINOS, ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN LEAGUES.

"Wed. Jan. 17, 1770. When we entered this plain (The Los Angeles Basin), we derived to the east a great cordillera (chain of sierras which were covered with snow, (Mts. San Gabriel, Wilson, San Antonio and its volcanic looking adjuncts Ontario, Cucamonga and Sevain look-out) nieve (snow) which we also saw above the Santa Clara Valley a few days ago. To our pleasure the Rio de Porciuncula (Los Angeles River) was re-discovered from the hills above it (Sunset Blvd.) or at least a clump of trees swelling its bank in adornment. All that could be done was to approach the river and cross it to the SE. Noticed upon wading through it was the condition of the sand: full of rubbish, sweepings, fallen trees and smallish pools to the sides, the remains from over-flowed banks. Going

on three leagues to the Valle de San Miguel (San Gabriel Valley, we stopped at our camp of July 30, 1769. TO THE VALLEY OF S. MIGUEL, FIVE LEAGUES. FROM ENCENADA DE PINOS, ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN LEAGUES (At La Puente in eastern Los Angeles.)).

* * *

PORTOLÁ TREK ON
AUG. 5, 1948

The State Centennial Committee together with the Mission Trails Association sponsored the Portola Trek which followed the exact days of California's first Governor's Campsites from San Diego, July 15th, 1769 to Nov. 1, 1769, the Laguna above Millbrae, San Mateo County, overlooking San Francisco Bay, or what the Expedition called the last campside La Canada de Francisco (Skyline Blvd. down to Canada Road).

Fourteen hardy horsemen made this trek in honor of Gaspar de Portolá. It took both parties the old and the new 108 days on the march.

The Encino Historical Society was notified that the riders would arrive at the Amestoy Ranch at 2 P. M. on Aug. 5, 1948. At eleven o'clock the Encino Fire Department was seen washing down the old buildings and settling the dust on the rancho grounds while we of the committee were on ladders decorating the Adobe with colored paper, flowers, flags and green boughs; several boys were raking and cleaning, aptly preparing for the afternoon arrival of the Portola trek.

Imagine our surprise when at the stroke of noon the modern expedition was seen coming down Ventura Boulevard.

Also picture a reception committee in the deplorable predicament of being outfitted in slacks, blue jeans and bandanas. Laughingly we greeted the travelers of "Old Spain" who were more dusty and worn out than we were.

Bill Seiter, eminent motion picture director and Encinian, invited the "Spanish Travelers" to his ranch where they showered and became guests at a grand dinner. At four P.M. trek returned to the Adobe and obliged a crowd of half a thousand people by pretending that it had just arrived.

Still more impressive was the Pageant held at seven o'clock. Boy Scouts, with powdered brown bodies, wearing loin cloths, carrying bows and arrows, helped the trekkers to re-enact the discovery of Encino.

But the comedy of the afternoon was more real and down-to-earth than any play-acting could be. Our Historical members have had many a laugh over it.

* * *

In 1788, Francisco Reyes, Alcalde (Mayor) or chief official of the Los Angeles Pueblo was granted permission to use 4,460 acres in the south-west portion of the San Fernando Valley. Here he kept and grazed cattle for himself, Avala and others.

A stone hut or shelter was built for the vaqueros or buckaroos (cowboys). It is said that the stone building about 200 feet from the Adobe was the original hut built by Reyes. Later used as a Stage Coach stop, and still later as a Blacksmith Shop.

* * *



The arrival of The Portola Trek in 1948.



Cattlemen shelter, Stagecoach Stop and
Blacksmith Shop

LOCATION FOR A MISSION

Some time within a decade, Padre Presidente Fermin Lasuen, with several companions, arranged to establish a mission between San Buenaventura and San Gabriel. They, too, were attracted by the natural spring water and pool at Encino, and thought it might be the very place for a mission. However, after being here several days, they decided the water was not proper for agricultural purposes, but they still made Encino their headquarters to explore sites upon the Valley floor; and finally decided upon the present location and built the San Fernando Mission in 1797.

Secularization of the Missions started in the mid-1830s, and San Fernando, Rey Espano, was affected by it later.

Profuse granting of land by the Mexican Government was also the order of the day, and Eulogio de Celis received the Ex-Mission land which consisted of 121,819 acres, which included Tujungo to the east, N. Hollywood to the south with its Providencia and Cahuenga ranchos, Los Virgenes and El Escorpion to the SW, Simi and Santa Susana Mtsto to the W. and the San Fernando Range to the N., until it was cut by the Santa Clare River. Because the 4,460 acres being used by Francisco Reyes

was a part of the Mission land, the Padres objected to the Indians being deprived of their rights, especially a very old one named Tiburcio who had been squatting on "del Encino" since 1840, and three Fernandinos, Ramon, Roque and Francisco had been cultivating some of the land and had 40 to 50 head of cattle; So Pio Pico, last Governor under Mexican rule granted it to them in 1845, with the understanding that the property be surveyed. There being no surveyors in the southland at that time, they measured the land squaring it by stretching a cord from one wooden stake to another. Three black walnut trees were used at the SE corner as a landmark, and the spirit of "mañana" led them to no consideration the trees might die. The survey completed, Francisco Reyes was given another piece of land in exchange. Consequently this 4,460 acres was the only piece of the Mission land not granted to Eulogio de Celis, therefore his grant amounted to 116,858 acres.

Tiburcio and his wife Paula died, leaving two daughters who married Roque and Francisco. Ramon left "del Encino" to prospect in the gold fields, and not a word was heard from him for over five years, and it was reported that he had died. Roque, Francisco and his wife also died, leaving Aguilla, wife of Roque,

and Rita, daughter of Francisco, to work out their destination practically alone, fighting the fact that Governor Pio Pico had not completed the del Encino grant to the three Indians.

Vicente de la Osa, grantee of the present South Burbank and Forest Lawn Providencia Rancho in 1842-43, heard of these complications and came to the rescue of Rita and Aguilla. He petitioned and represented them, and after many hearings in San Francisco, the Mexican Government granted each party 1/3 of the property by supporting the claim in the light of the United States take-over and consequent respect for claims Feb. 2, 1848, by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. Of course, the Indian women felt indebted to Vicente de la Osa for protecting their interests, they were eager to give him Ramon's one-third share, but Vicente de la Osa insisted on paying them one hundred dollars Oct. 30, 1849. The record was signed by Juan Sepulveda. Vicente immediately started to build the adobe house with Mexican and Indian help. It is in an excellent state of preservation, being of mission type construction with walls two feet thick. There are nine rooms in the adobe and each one has an outdoor entrance.

On Sept. 9, 1850, California was admitted to the Union, and Aguilla, too ignorant about taxes, was given notice that they were

due, and when they became delinquent, her share of El Encino went up for auction from the courthouse steps in Los Angeles. Vicente was present and paid the \$5.48 in back taxes, and became owner of Roque's share. He was now the owner of two-thirds of El Encino Rancho. He then finished building the old adobe house.

* * *



The Zanja (ditch) through which the water flows from the spring into the lake.



The natural ever-flowing spring.



The lake, shaped somewhat in the shape of a Spanish guitar. The overflow from the lake goes into Rubio Creek and then finally finds its way into the Los Angeles River.

THE DE LA OSA FAMILY

(Research done by Thomas Workman
Temple II)

The founder of this family in Alta, California, was Don Pablo Garcia de la Osa, a native of Mexico City, New Spain. He was the son of an Officer in the Colonial forces. His name first appears in the San Diego records on Jan. 6, 1808 entry book No. 3440, Book No. 1 of Baptisms when his first son was baptized. His wife was D^{ña} Maria Rita Ruiz, born at Mission San Vicente, Baja California. He was by that time "Cobo Distinguido", a Corporal, son of an officer, merited that title. His first son was José Vicente de los Reyes de la Osa - born Jan. 6, 1808 at the Royal Presidio of San Diego, and was baptized the same day at the Royal Presidial Chapel by Fr. José Barona, the godmother was D^{ña} Maria Antonia Carrillo, wife of Don José de la Guerra Norrego of the Precedial forces, himself an officer. Next born at San Diego was Carlos Antonio de la Osa - born Nov. 5, 1809 and likewise baptised the same day at the Royal Presidial Chapel by Fr. José Faura, with the same godmother. Don Pablo returned to Mexico City, where his wife died, and then he remarried. His oldest son José Vicente de los Reyes de la Osa

(so called because he was born on Epiphany Feast Day of the Three Kings) was married at San Gabriel Arcangel on June 19, 1832 to D^{ña} Maria Rita Guillen, daughter of the late Don Miguel Antonio Guillen, an artillery officer, native of Yaque River, Sanora, and D^{ña} Eulalia Perez. Witnesses to the marriage ceremony performed by Fr. A. J. Alejo Bachelot, where Tibucio Valdez, Joseph Chapman and Pedro Guerrero. (Entry Book No. 1841, Book No. 1 on marriages.)

On his return to Alta California, Don Pablo Garcia de la Osa, father of Vicente, lived at San Fernando where he was buried in the Mission cemetery. On April 15, 1838 by Fr. Blas Ordaz, in his last illness Don Pablo lost his power of speech so he was absolved, received the last Sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction or anointing of the sick plus the privilege of a plenary indulgence.

Mother of Rita

It was about 1800 that D^{ña} Eulalia Perez de Guillen came to Mission San Gabriel. Don Diego Perez, her father, was from Ciudad Rodrigo, Spain, her mother Rosalia from Madrid. D^{ña} Eulalia was almost thirty years old when her parents brought her to San Gabriel. She died there on June 8, 1879, aged 109, many years after Antonio de Guillen died. She was

persuaded to marry Juan Mariné, a sixty-four-year old retired Spanish artilleryman. By Guillen she had nine children - Pedro, Josefa, Thomas, Ysidora, Maria Antonia, Maria de Los Angeles, Loreta, Maria del Rosaria, and Maria Rita. "The Florence Nightingale" of southern California was Doña Eulalia to those she brought back to health, attending in childbirth or teaching in school. As faithful as a religious in a convent school did she teach the Indians spinning, weaving and sewing. At San Gabriel Mission her functions were keeper-of-the-keys for the padres, paymaster, and bookkeeper. The Padres were grateful, they wished to provide security for her in her old age, and before authority was taken from the Franciscan Order, so they granted her Rancho San Pasqual, now most of Pasadena, Altadena and San Marino. A law was in effect during Mexican times that "gifts or grants" of land must comply to certain conditions before final confirmation: stocking it with cattle and showing signs of habitation. The aging Eulalia had no means to do this, and thus the "Grant" was not recorded, although it is said that José Maria Zalvidea approved the transfer from mission property on Easter Day of 1826, hence the name Rancho San Pasqual. On Feb. 18, 1835, Gov. José Figueroa gave Juan Mariné 3-1/2 leagues. It was all lost to them by 1840-43.

* * *

THE ENCINO LAND GRANT

It seems that the Indian Ramon who had left "del Encino" in order to prospect for gold and who had been reported deceased, suddenly showed up. Vicente de la Osa explained to him that a one-third share of the property had been sold for taxes, saying that he paid the taxes and gave one hundred dollars to Aguilla. Therefore on April 14, 1851, Ramon, a native of San Fernando, acknowledged that the Encino tract granted to him by the Mexican Government the following day in the Books of Deeds and Mortgages; "I do hereby grant unto the said Vicente de la Osa and heirs henceforth and forever my one-third share."

In October of 1852 a petition was filed with the U. S. Board of Commissioners for a private claim of the place "Encino" by Vicente de la Osa. He gave his share of the property to his wife Rita, April 17, 1850, San Francisco records, but after an inventory Feb. 18, 1852, of the rancho, she deeded it back to her husband. Why? We shall never know, but here follows the inventory:

300 head of all kinds of cattle;
20 branded horses also;
1 four wheel coach;
1 four wheel cart.

Everything and anything Rita de la Osa had acquired and owned and to make it clear she had it so declared on March 11, 1856, before the Land Commissioners of the Northern District of California. Then all transcripts of the proceedings were ordered to Southern California. Because taxes were due on Roque's share of the property, 312 acres with delinquencies of \$6.33 and \$9.83. Again Vicente de la Osa was on the alert, and he paid up and became owner of Roque's deed. Another undivided portion of Rancho El Encino which contained 1085 acres was sold for taxes totaling only \$5.48, and again the one who paid it was Vicente de la Osa. But he had his brother Antonio handle the transaction for him. A true and correct copy was recorded at the request of Vicente de la Osa, however. Indeed and in fact he was a pretty keen business man. The above is a rough translation from the original transcripts of records, with maps of the originals in the U. S. District Court.

* * *

LIFE ON ENCINO RANCHO

Despite the long drawn-out battle for the Indians and "gente de razon" rights to the lake-side rancho Rita and Vicente still took the opportunity to enjoy life there. Hospitable to the core as a result of their Spanish heritage and blood, they welcomed the rich or poor traveler to spend the night. A plate with coins - to be left or taken - indicated status or power of suggestion.

No son wore his hat or smoked in the presence of his father and went to the little family chapel for night prayer after the evening repast. Prayers led by a traveling Padre or the head of the house were said aloud, and the children kissed the hand of their parent before retiring. When a daughter was married in the Chapel, a fiesta followed with feasting, singing, and dancing to the accompaniment of the California guitarra. Relatives and friends came from Los Angeles, San Gabriel and Ventura in the sturdy carretas of the day, unashamed of the ribbons and flowing decorations hanging on the cart in colored streamers. And then for three days and nights the excitement went on with mejicanos and indios patting tortillas to the rhythm of the music, baking bread and rolls in an outdoor oven and setting wine bottles from water-cooled jugs on the tables around the lake.

The bridegroom would present the last of three gifts -- boxing an exact fitting chemis with heavy laden rose petals which were scattering and fluttering like his heart -- for La novia (the bride).

Long after this loud demonstration of anticipated love, the clean-up crew of natives would gather up the petals, wash thoroughly the soiled clothing in a running ditch from the lake and start making a batch of new candles -- the only means for lights. As for heat in cold and damp weather, braziers roared with heat from charcoal, until such time when the sun came out with its warmth.

Once after 1852, when Benjamin Davis - Don Bendito Wilson had to come by, in pursuit of bandidos, Don Vicente invited the Indian agent and posse in the Adobe, and he treated them to some of his best wine. The posse was immobilized and, of course, the bandidos escaped.

Tiburcio Tapia conquered the wild horse Pinto at El Encino Rancho, and he established a reputation as a horse trainer as well as an alcalde.

On Jan. 8, 1873, Vicente de la Osa's title was confirmed et al. with his heirs... Fabricio, Antonio, Constancio, José, Rita, Florestina, Pablo, Camelita, Susana, Eulalia, Vicente, Manuelita, and his widow Rita Guillen de la Osa. Shortly after the

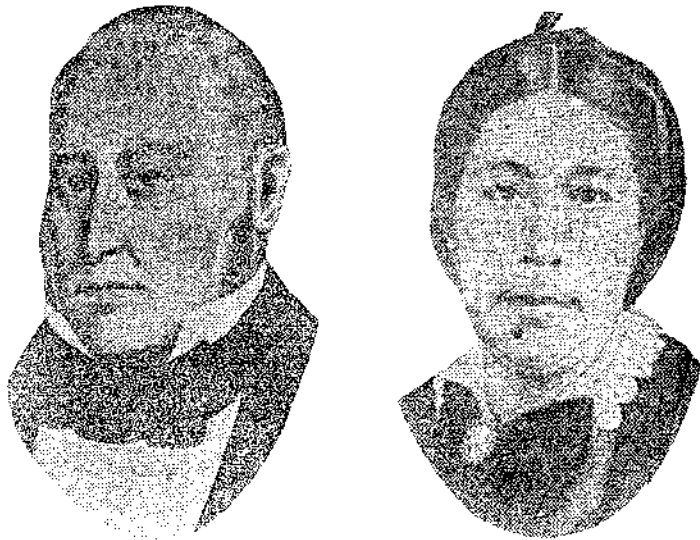
death of her husband, Rita conveyed title of the Rancho to her son-in-law James Thompson -- to one who would know how and when the taxes were due. The U.S. patent judged the one square league to be 4,461 acres.

Rita Guillen, born in 1817, married to Vicente de la Osa in 1832. Rita is buried beside her mother in Mission San Gabriel Cemetery. She was nine years younger than Vicente and out-lived him quite a few years, he having survived until 1867.

* * *



de la OSA Cattle Brands



Don Vicente and Rita de la Osa.



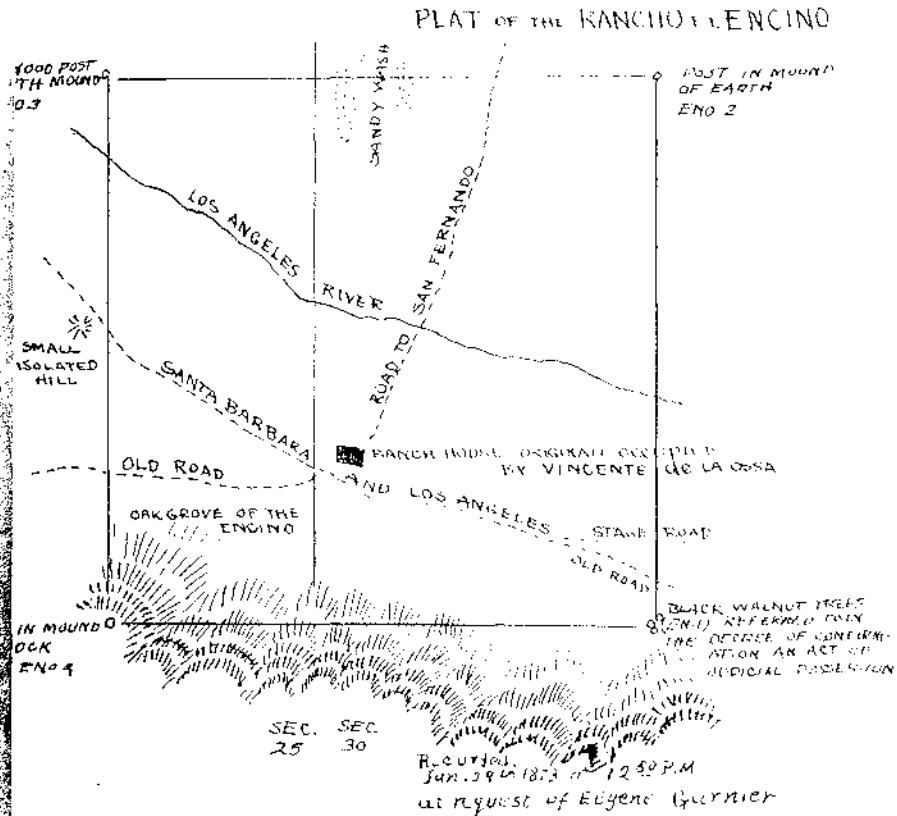
The old adobe built in 1849-50.



James Thompson and wife Manuelita de la Osa
1867



Adela and Susana Thompson, children of James and Manuelita Thompson.



Garnier limestone building -- 1872

FRENCH INFLUENCE

Two years after James Thompson acquired El Encino Rancho, he conveyed title to Eugene Garnier who with his brother Philippe who had come from the Pyrenees Mts., the Basque country, built the two story lime stone house in 1872, a replica of their home in France, walled the spring and lake of the same material, shaping it somewhat in the form of a Spanish guitarra. Woodley Ave. dead end on the southern hills of San Fernando Valley was where the stuff was quarried. Close inspection of the flagstone surrounding the lake will reveal fossil markings along with the name of Eugene Garnier inscribed on the flood gate dated 1872. The Garnier brothers improved the Adobe home by putting in wooden floors and ceilings plus kerosene lamp fixtures. The two-story building was used as a mess hall or dining room and kitchen for the twenty to forty men employed. The apartment upstairs housed the Chinese cooks. Erected also was an Inn across the road in the cove on El Camino Real (Kings Highway) for stage coach travelers, where hungry and thirsty travelers could be accommodated. The Butterfield line's stagecoach stop is still there about 200 feet from the Adobe. Some say this was

the original stone hut built as a shelter for the cattlemen. If so, it was rebuilt and remodeled, making it suitable for a blacksmith shop. There was a sign over the watering trough: WATER YOUR HORSE, BUT DON'T FORGET YOURSELF, and one taste was just about enough to induce many to cross the road and get something stronger to drink. Cattlemen taking their stock to the Los Angeles market always stopped at El Encino for meals, a place to sleep, corral the cattle, and feed the saddle horses.

Philippe Garnier became ill, so he took Marie Crevlin, wife and their sons and one daughter back to France on doctor's orders. Pierre, the elder son, married Narcicci Sentous, and their daughters are Audette Garnier and Yvonne Fry. Leon remained in France, for part of his education, his mother made nine different trips to California, and on one of them she enrolled him in St. Vincent's College. Later he married Jean Canet from the Cañada Largo Verde Rancho near Oji in Ventura County, site of the Santa Gertrudis Chapel for the Casitas Springs Indians.

Leon lived only to the age of forty-five, and Jean died early also. They left two sons, Philippe Ansel and Edward Pierre Garnier. Marie's daughter married a French Banker and Senator Paul Caillot. Madam Marie Garnier died at Gay, France, May 20, 1909.

When Philippe went back to France with his family, he left his bachelor brother Eugene in full charge of the El Encino Rancho. The latter went into the sheep business on a grand scale, paying as much as seven hundred dollars for a merino ram. Not having many responsibilities - like a typical or Spanish Basque sheep-herder of California of today - he was always ready to do a lot of entertaining and partying. In the habit of bringing friends over the week end was Andres Pico. Hilarious times were had by all. There came a drought which lasted three years and Eugene went into debt, borrowing eighteen thousand dollars plus from his friend Gaston Oxarart. Unable to pay interest on the money, he saw El Encino Rancho put up for auction and sold from the courthouse steps in Los Angeles. This took place May 28, 1878. The highest bidder was Gaston Oxarart and he paid \$29,332 in United States Gold currency for the 4460 acres and all buildings.

(A rental could have been charged by the City of L. A. for the many times El Encino auctions were held on the courthouse steps.)

SHEEP GALORE

The new owner Gaston Oxarart was somewhat of a dude sheepherder. People who knew him say he was always dressed in the height of fashion, wearing elaborate western clothing. His hand-tooled leather saddle was once studded with silver but the museum piece is now bereft of its metal buttons, yet his name is inscribed on the silver pommel -- dated 1871, Los Angeles, M. C. Santacruz, manufacturer. Very successful was he, however; at one time 150,000 pounds of wool from 32,000 head of sheep was shipped to Belgium by him. Upon his death, after eight or nine years of prosperity, his nephew Simon Gless inherited the Rancho.

But Gaston had a son by the name of Francisco born July 2, 1873, five years before the purchase of the Rancho. Gaston had a common-law wife, which was nothing unusual in those days; however, the woman never lived on the Rancho, but the boy Frank, as he was called, was brought here on numerous occasions. He loved to ride with his father herding sheep.

At the time of Gaston's death, Frank was 11 years old. His guardian George I. Cochran filed suit against Simon Gless for El Encino Rancho, but the illegitimacy meant that it was

a lost cause. Yet the Gless family, after burying Gaston on their plot in Cavalry Cemetery on N. Broadway in Los Angeles, sent Frank to College. Later he married Julia Ortez. He became an engineer on the Southern Pacific Railroad and brought up three children, Frank Jr., Laura and Margaret.

On June 1, 1889, Gaston Oxarart's Estate was distributed to Simon Gless. He married Juanita Amestoy. They also had three children: Constant, Domingo and Noeline. It was he who planted the silk oak trees still growing between the house and lake, and who set up the aviary at the end of the house near the water, and who intertwined grape vines on every third post facing the lake -- relieving them with rose bushes in between. This did not make him an adept farmer. He liked to drive to Los Angeles often, and one day gave up completely when he found it too far to go for a piece of ice.

Selling the Rancho to his father-in-law, he settled his family in a townhouse on Boyle Ave., which was considered a very elite district to live in at that time. Constant is the only one left of the three children, he has a son Dennis Gless and a daughter Juanita Bauer.



Gaston Oxarart who purchased El Encino at auction and paid for it in United States Gold Currency.

THE AMESTOY FAMILY

Domingo Amestoy purchased El Encino from Simon Gless and started calling it the Amestoy Ranch, but he never lived there, preferring to let his son John run it as foreman. And the old man died soon after the purchase. His birthplace was in the Basses Pyrénées at Saint-Pierre d'Irube near Bayonne where his family owned several houses. He first saw the light of day at the one named Pinoque out in the country in the year 1822.

By 1838, when fifteen years of age, he went to the Argentine where he learned the trade of shoemaker. Nine years later he caught the "gold fever" and voyaged to California. Landing in San Francisco, he found that the lure was further to the east and south on the Tuolumne River and went there, but the ease of obtaining gold did not outweigh his wariness of the exorbitant prices one had to pay for food and lodging. For better lodging and food he could find work in Southern California, and find it he did with Don Able Sterns, eventually saving enough through frugality and hard work to start in the ranching business. Renting property on what is now Los Feliz Blvd. and Vermont Avenue, where three children were born -- Juanita, John and Antonio. As the family increased and the fortune grew, Domingo purchased Rancho Los Posta, 645 acres of what



Simon and Juanita Amestoy Gless

is now Gardena. In 1869 the book of brands shows the distinctive ear cropping he chose for his sheep. One daughter Louise was born on a visit to the old country. This is interesting as Louise, born in France, later became the wife of Louis Sentous, French counsel of Los Angeles. Four other children were born in Gardena, Michel, Peter, Elizabeth and Joseph. All baptized in the Plaza Church in Los Angeles. I neglected to say that the wife and mother of the children was Elizabeth Aysaquer. As the Los Posta Ranch prospered, Domingo acquired property in the City of Los Angeles and built the Amestoy building at 202 North Main Street. This was in 1887. And just a few years ago it was torn down to make room for a parking lot and underground garage. "What a shame", of course they call it progress. At the time Domingo built this building, he became one of the founder directors of the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Los Angeles, and a member of the first Chamber of Commerce. He died on Jan. 11, 1892.

Wheat Field

John Amestoy, oldest son of Domingo, was put in charge as foreman of the ranch. Because the climate here was so similar to Australia, John planted Australian white wheat, in fact the whole

Valley at this time became a wheat field. However, sheep were still the main business on this ranch. It was always an exciting time when the shearers came. The wool was washed, carded and cleaned. Mattresses used by the family were made of lamb's wool by the women. John married Francoice Hauret who was born in the south of France at Oloran, and was brought to the Amestoy ranch as a bride. They reared three children, Domingo, Juanita Mahoney, and Grace Tipton.

There was a large barn west of the blacksmith shop, in line with a row of olive trees, which housed many horses, mules and six to eight matched teams for heavy hauling. Horses, cattle and pigs were bred on the ranch, and butchering was done here, too. Milk, butter and cheese were made and stored in the storage-houses, to say nothing of wine made from home-grown grapes and stored in the wine cellar of the Garnier building.

When they drove to town for a piece of ice, it was covered with layer upon layer of gunny sacks to keep it from melting. Thirty cowboys were employed. The blacksmith shop shod the horses, repaired the wheels and equipment. The horse shoes were made under the supervision of John. Much of the 4460 acres was used for dry farming. Threshing time, too, was exciting. There was a grainery to store the grain, and a vegetable and fruit orchard for the family use. Chinamen did the cooking and house

chores. They were paid yearly in gold, placing the gold in gunny sacks and putting it in the bottom of the wagon; they would drive to town over rough roads. After returning home, the sacks would be burned in a pan, and the excess gold obtained and sold. This is called "sweating".

A Frenchman named Jacque La Salle operated the Inn or Half-Way House across the road, where he offered food and refreshments for 25 cents. There also was a bath house where dusty travelers could procure a bath for the large sum of 25 cents.

Old timers like to recall the Basque picnics where whole sheep were roasted over an open fire; sometimes the festivities lasted several days.

At least part of the ranch was owned by the Amestoy family for over fifty years.

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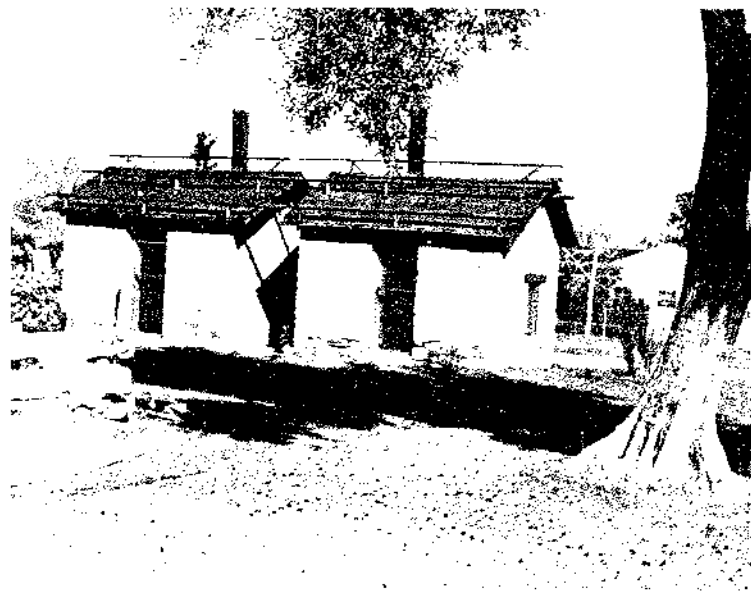
Cattle Brand
Domingo Amestoy, 1869



Cattle Brand
John B. Amestoy, 1895



Original posts on porch on front side of the ADOBE.



Storage Houses; they originally had a double roof for coolness.

WALTER FOR THE VALLEY

When there came a drought in the San Fernando Valley of which there were many, the neighboring ranchers would come from miles with barrels in their wagons, knowing there was always water flowing from the Encino Spring.

In 1913, by incorporating with the City of Los Angeles, the whole Valley acquired the right to aqueduct water from the Owens River. This made it possible to subdivide the Amestoy Ranch.

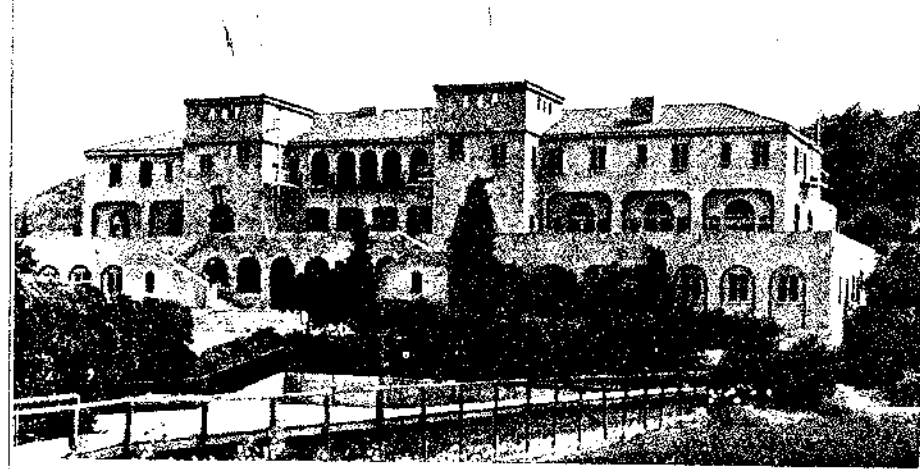
On June 15, 1915, a full page with pictures came out in the Sunday issue of the Los Angeles Times News Paper.

The Amestoy Ranch had been taken over by W. H. Hay, a Los Angeles Realtor and subdivider. He was given the right to use his name as owner, and had a sales agreement to sell the land in five, ten, and twenty-five acre parcels. All was sold but 100 acres, which the Amestoy family retained. This included the Spring, lake and old buildings. In the subdivision plan it was agreed that "Lot A" "Block F" be reserved for a school "In trust" S 4614." "Lot A" Block "E" for a city park "In Trust S 4614".

Boom

A spectacular Real Estate boom was staged by W. H. Hay, inviting everyone to attend a free B.B.Q. at Encino. People came out to Encino in droves, many in horse-drawn buggies and others in tin lizzies. They served about fifteen tons of beef. Ventura Boulevard was lined with electroliers, they called it the "Great White Way". This allowed time in the evening for music and singing without fear of losing their way home in either direction.

The Encino Country Club was built in the hills on Hayvenhurst Avenue about ten years later, after bankruptcy it was taken over by Raenford Military School. During World War II it was closed. There it stood like the old Encino Adobe going to rack and ruin. Finally this building was torn down to make way for Earl White's subdivision.



RESTAURANT



In the Nineteen Twenties, the Amestoy Estates Co. leased the old buildings to some people who operated a restaurant in the Garnier building. They built a wooden porch across the front and side where they served meals. Electric posts were erected around the adobe house. From what I hear, these people were running quite a place. This was during prohibition time; being way out in the country, they got away with this for a long time. But finally one evening they were caught serving wine with meals. Consequently the restaurant was closed by the Sheriff. There was nothing the Amestoy family could do about this as they had given a lease. However, after being closed the second time, these people did a fast disappearing act and they were never heard of again.



The Inn across the road was closed at the same time for doing the same thing. One day Jacque La Salle, who ran the Inn, became very despondent. He hiked into the hills and hanged himself to a large old oak tree. The next day one of his old cronies found his body.

By this time the subdivision was going full swing. Streets were being laid out, surveyors were all over the place. Down went the old barn and the Inn across the road. Houses were being built and before you knew it, large and small farm ranches appeared all around,

but there the old Adobe stood on its 100 acres gradually falling apart; it was the hang-out for bindle bums who traveled on foot along Ventura Blvd. Vandals did a great deal of damage, too. Ghost towns had nothing on this once proud Rancho in being neglected and forlorn.

Celebrities

During the early twenties, thirties and late forties, many actors, producers, writers and radio announcers, as well as many folk seeking privacy and rural living came to make their home in Encino among the oaks.

Edward Everett Horton, Al Jolson, Don Ameche, Ann Nichols, Warren Williams, Spencer Tracy, John Litel, Clark Gable and Carol Lombard, Phil Harris and Alice Fay, Tuffy Goff, Ben Rubin, Irving Stone, John Wayne, Jack Cavanaugh, Molly and Jim Jordan, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Jim Conlan, Mary Astor, Mischa Auer, John Buck, C.P. McGregor, Alvino Rey, Don Quinn, George Gobel, and many, many others.

* * *

RECOGNITION

In 1937, the Native Daughters of the Golden West placed a plaque on the old Adobe, marking it as a California Landmark, but the ediface kept on deteriorating.

Three different people, Bud Tuttle, Marie Walsh and Jenny Edrington all wrote a column in the Encinian and local papers trying and pleading for some one to come to their rescue and save our town's Landmark, but all three failed in the endeavor.

In 1940 J.E. Stewart, my husband and myself came to live in Encino, because our son Richard was suffering with a bronchial condition. I had been very active in a prominent Womans Club in Los Angeles. Our home was on the edge of the town of Beverly Hills. Dick, as he was called, did very well in this warm, dry valley. I then joined the P.T.A. and became acquainted with this type of work.

One day I met with Mrs. John Amestoy, who had come back to the rancho. She showed me all around the place and told me the history. It is needless to say I was very impressed. I asked her if the family would sell a small part with the old buildings, spring and lake; of course she laughed, saying the family would never agree to sell, there were too many people involved.

In 1944 an article appeared in the local newspaper stating that the 100 acres owned by the Amestoy family had been sold to Clarence Brown, Motion Picture Producer. Interested Citizens thought for sure that now something worth while would be done with our town's heritage. However, within one year he resold it to a Syndicate. That was when the horror of a huge sign appeared on the boulevard, stating, "THIS HISTORIC LANDMARK WILL BE SUBDIVIDED." It was then that the Encino Historical Committee organized to prevent destruction and to preserve and restore our town's heritage.

Because the Native Daughters of the Golden West had placed a marker on the Adobe, we asked them for help, but they informed us that was out of their line.

We then called upon the San Fernando Valley Historical Society. They told us they had too many other projects on hand. In desperation we formed our

own organization, called a mass meeting at Horton's barn with about 300 interested citizens present.

That evening Marie Stewart was voted permanent President. This was not to my liking, I was scared. However, with a lot of encouragement, I accepted, thinking surely within a few years we would have El Encino restored. Now, in 1965, I realize this was wishful thinking.

I was delegated to do the research on the history, and I sat with books up to my ears for two weeks and condensed a short history which we sent to our Assemblyman Everett Burkhalter in Sacramento. We were then instructed to get a price on ten acres. The agent representing the owner was Howard L. Bryant; the price he quoted for the ten acres, including the spring, lake and old buildings, was \$47,900. Our next instructions from Sacramento were to have the property appraised by reputable real estate brokers. This was done by Sam Garvin and Ivan Peoples. Within one month an Appropriation Bill passed Legislature for \$25,000 on a matching basis for two years.

We then became incorporated as a non-profit organization and immediately started a campaign for funds to match the State. Believe it or not, we were not able to match this amount within two years. We then asked for an extension for two more years. By this time

we had a new Assemblyman, Walter Hinton, who drew up a new Bill for two more years. We then went to the County, Roger Jessup, and his office was very interested to match the State. They made an offer of \$50,000 for all but a small piece of land which extended into the lake. This the owners would not relinquish. Besides, the agent upped the price almost double. Naturally, the County lost interest.

Our next move was the City of Los Angeles. At a meeting held with the City Council, it was voted 13 to 1 to match the State. In 1949 the State of California purchased five acres, the very heart of Encino, for \$50,000 -- all but this small pie-shaped piece of land that extended into the lake. The State and City had an agreement that the State is to maintain and operate Los Encinos State Historical Monument as it is now named. The Division of Beaches and Parks for the State of California asked the Encino Historical Committee to submit an over-all plan of what we thought should be done at Los Encinos. The committee attended to this at once, as we had formulated a plan from the very beginning.

Our next Assemblyman, Pat McGee, had an Appropriation Bill passed for \$30,000. A wording for "restoration" was in his mind at this time, but nothing happened, so the Historical Society sent Pres.

Stewart and Sec. Carol Boniface to Sacramento. We met with Ways and Means Committee. We were told that the money went back into the general fund because the Bill was misworded. However, two thousand dollars of this money was used to purchase the small pie-shaped point of land jutting into the lake.

We were glad that it was applied in part to our project, and that our public subscription fund of \$3,078.05 has been earning interest, and that it will be used for restoration when the time is ripe.

* * *

OVER-ALL PLAN

This is the plan suggested by the Encino Historical Committee - subject, of course, to the approval of the State:

The Adobe to be restored as a museum, starting with an Indian and Portolá Trek display. Next perhaps restore one small room as a Chapel for the Padres.

Dedicate a room to the de la Osa family, in strictly Spanish-Mexican period.

Then a room to the Garnier brothers who brought a French influence to the Rancho. Oxarart the Basque bachelor room.

The Gless kitchen done in early Victorian period.

Lastly, the Amestoy Victorian parlor.

By restoring the Adobe in this manner, students will grasp the passage of time by this method from one era to another.

The Garnier building has a nice five-room apartment upstairs and could be used for a curator or watchman, over-

looking the grounds. The lower floor was originally used as a mess hall or dining room and kitchen. This could be restored as a dining room and used as a meeting place for historical groups, and could be rented to bring in a revenue.

The stone storage house restored as such.

The Blacksmith and Stage Coach Stop restored. A carriage house to display same.

And Indian Village on the grounds.

A sheep corral with a few live sheep.

An adobe wall at least on Ventura Blvd., with perhaps a figure of Portolá, Crespi and Indian.

A wall and entrance building with rest rooms on Moorpark or La Maida.

We sinderely hope the State will use some of our ideas.

* * *

THE PLANTING

The Encino Historical Society sponsored a tree-planting drive. The idea was to plant trees along the west fence to block out the market and parking lot.

Organizations who donated toward this project are as follows:

Encino Woman's Club.
Encino Business and Professional Women.
Encino Breakfast Club.
Encino Chamber of Commerce.
Encino Junior Chamber of Commerce.
Altrusa Club of Encino.
Original Garden Club.
Altar and Rosary So. of Our Lady of Grace.
Rotary Club, Rotary Anns.
San Fernando Valley Art Club.
Volunteer League of San Fernando.
Encino Republican Women's Club.
Native Daughters of the Golden West.
Optomist Club of Encino.

The type of trees chosen by the State are:

15 Eucalyptus (Lehmanni)
21 Acacia (Verticulate)
3 Oaks (Quercus Agrifolia)

Many thanks to these organizations! These trees have made quite an improvement to Los Encino's Monument.

Following this drive, the Encino Elementary School also had a penny, nickel and dime drive to plant trees and shrubs along the east corner of Ventura Blvd. Trees planted by the school children were:

11 Schimus Peppers
11 Xylosmas Senticosa

Four Wilson Holly Trees planted in the parking on Ventura Blvd. by the Encino Historical Society.

* * *



Diorama of the over-all plan, now on display, subject to the approval of the State.



Encino School Children Tree Planting.

MEETING WITH OFFICIALS

The Division of Beaches and Parks Dept. met with the Board of Directors of the Encino Historical Committee at Los Encinos on April 30, 1960. We discussed all phases of restoration and we were promised for sure that moneys would be allocated in the 1961 budget for restoration at Los Encinos. But again nothing happened.

In the summer of 1963, Ranger Maurice Hayes stationed at the Monument and I were given permission by the State to restore a few rooms in the Adobe. We started with the de la Osa room. Hayes painted it a delicate pink, then Alice Kimpel and myself hand-painted a Spanish design around the door and windows. We then started a drive for donations of authentic furniture. Hayes and I called on the different families whose ancestors had once owned El Encino. We collected quite a number of things, which was very encouraging. We then made a trip to Ventura to visit Mrs. Edward Canet. I had written her a letter asking if she had any furniture of the Garnier family. Mrs. Canet called me long distance telling us to bring up a truck. Her sister Narcicci and daughter Jeane both married a Garnier. So Hayes and I went up in his car. Benny, the gardener stationed at Los Encinos, drove a State truck.

What a charming person Mrs. Canet is! She is past 90, as bright as a new silver dollar and as cute as a bug's ear. She donated all the beautiful Garnier bedroom furniture as well as many other valuable pieces.

We then started on the bedroom. We decided to paint it a delicate blue, with French blue velvet draperies over lace curtains at the window.

Now we were ready for the Oxarart, Gless kitchen. It is painted a gaslight green and is of early American period; iron stove that burns wood, old kitchen cabinet, table set with red-checked table cloth, old dishes, canister set, kerosene lamps with reflectors, etc. The rag rugs on the floor were made by the Historical Committee.

The Victorian Parlor is dedicated to the last family (Amestoy). It is painted an off-white, with red velour fringed draperies over lace curtains at the window. Many original pictures of the family were donated. The flowered carpet, organ, chairs, bric-a-brac, etc. were donated by the Historical Society and many civic-minded people in the community and surrounding towns.

Next we have a room with two cases,

brought to us by the State. These cases are filled with artifacts found on the grounds by archeologists digging on the property. The children in the neighborhood got into the spirit and picked up every tiny piece of broken glass, china, farm equipment, including boxes and boxes of square nails. A few arrow heads and Indian beads were found, to say nothing of many, many Indian grinding bowls made of stone.

Many more things were found and are waiting until restoration actually starts by the State.

* * *



Room dedicated to the de la Osa family.



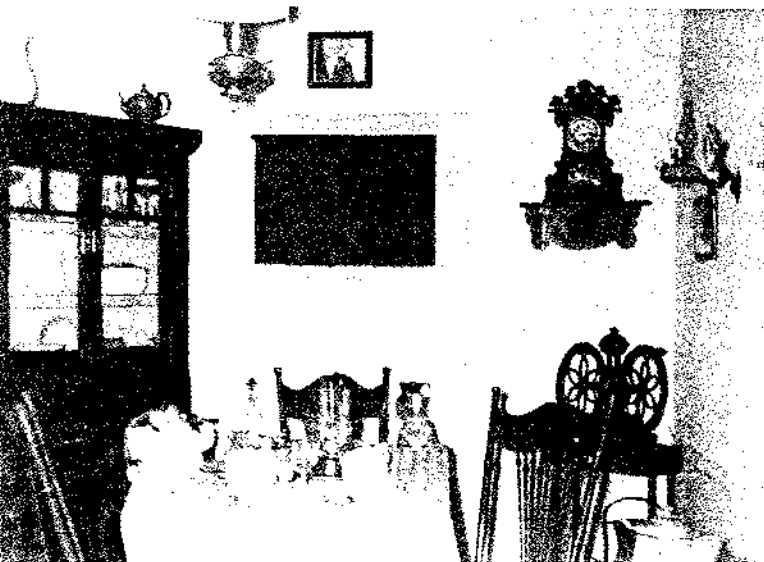
De la Osa dresser to match bed.



Authentic bed which belonged to Vicente and Rita de la Osa.



Garnier bed chamber.



Victorian kitchen dedicated to Gaston Oxarart and Simon Gless family.



Another view of the Victorian Parlor.



Victorian Parlor dedicated to the Amestoy family. Pictures are of Françoise, Domingo and Marie Elizabeth.



Fiesta at Los Encinos, 1948.



FUND RAISING

Over a period of years, the Encino Historical Committee members have been giving programs to raise money for restoration. For example:

Pageant of the Presidents' wives of the United States:

Each Lady represents a President's wife. She is dressed in a gown authentic of the period; some are replicas of inaugural gowns.

Marie Stewart, originator of this program, tells an interesting story about the first Lady as she promenades through the audience.

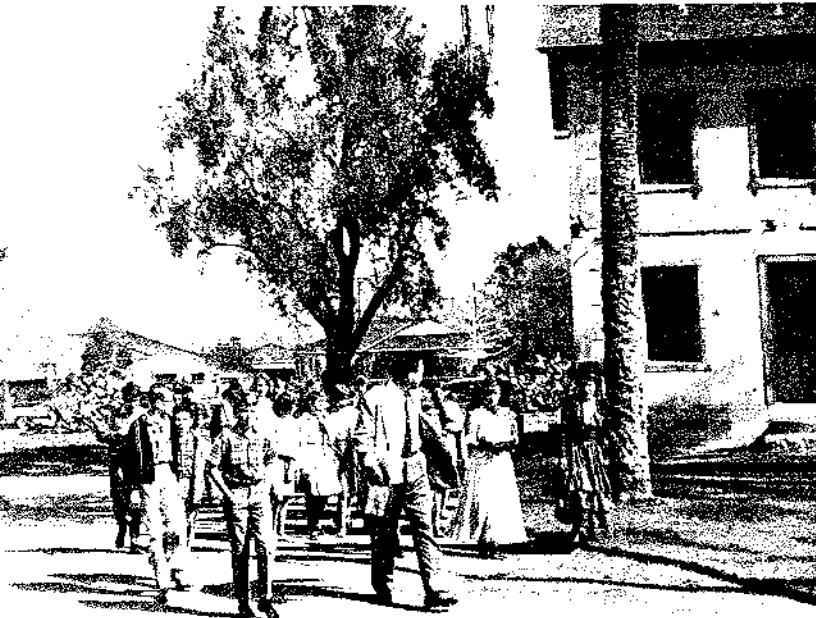
The women who once lived on El-Encino Rancho:

This program is similar to the one above.

We have given these programs before Women's Clubs, P. T. A. Groups, Schools, Churches and at Garden Parties and Teas.

*

The arrival of Portola at the Fiesta, 1948.



Group of High School children on tour of Monument.

EUREKA, AT LAST!

We conduct a tour upon request for large groups, members dressed in authentic costume, telling the story and greeting the people.

*

At least once a year we have open house for the public.

*

We took part in a Fiesta sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. We had a little theatre group enact the arrival of Gaspar de Portola and party on horses.

*

Members of our organization made ceramic souvenirs of the Adobe, Garnier building, etc. And we gave a Tertulia Party 300 people attended. . . All these things helped to swell our funds, and it has kept Los Encinos before the public. Publicity brings the people coming.

Through the efforts of Assemblyman Charles Conrad, assisted by Lou Cusanovich, A Bill was passed by Legislature in 1963, appropriating \$15,000 to be used for the beautification and restoration of the grounds at Los Encinos, and this should start this year.

The Division of the Beaches and Parks and Governor Brown's Office have informed us that funds will be included in the 1965-66 Budget.

"WHO WAITS WITH FAITH

WAITS WITH VICTORY. "



Tertulia Party, June 4, 1961.

We can't help but feel that Los Encinos State Historical Monument will be one of the most interesting and beautiful monuments in Southern California when finished.

It is located at:

16756 Moorpark Street
Encino, California.

Hours: 10 A. M. to 5:00 P. M. daily.

Closed Mondays, Tuesdays and
Holidays.



Pageant of women who once lived on
El Encino Rancho.

ENCINO SPRING WATER

NAMES

Los Encinos,
named by Gaspar de Portolá . . . 1769

Del Encino,
named by Indians 1840

El Encino Rancho,
named by V. de la Osa 1849

Amestoy Rancho,
named by Domingo Amestoy . . . 1889

Los Encinos,
by State of California 1949

After 180 years our Encino heritage
reverted back to its original name.

Analysis

Incrusted solids	
Grains per gallon	
Silica82
Calcium	<u>.23</u>
Total:	1.05
Non-Incrustable Solids:	
Sodium Carbonate	21.70
Sodium Sulphate	36.60
Sodium Chloride	3.18
Volatile and organic matter	<u>5.85</u>
Total:	67.33

This water is free of alkali.

Cash Donations since 1946

Through the efforts of the Encino Historical Committee Inc., many public spirited citizens and organizations contributed most generously toward the restoration of Los Encinos.

Peter B. Amestoy, Francoise H. Amestoy,
Joseph P. Amestoy, Louis F. Amestoy and
Elizabeth Wells.

*

Maria Helena Stewart
4606 Louise Avenue
Encino, California

Telephone: 784-1614

Adohr Farms
Dr. J. R. Bowen
Maurice Berkson
Encino Historical Society
Encino Chamber of Commerce
George Frank
Frank and Vada Flowers
Constant Gless
Domingo Gless
Eliza Hastings
Old Treasures Club (Garnett Zarn Tingle)
Placerita Parlor, Native D.G.W.
Elizabeth Stone
J. Earl and Maria Stewart
Tarzana Women's Club
Grant Weiss

*

Ruth O'D. Davis
Encino Study Club
Jack Pierce
Frank Stempel
Harry Timmons

*

California History and Landmarks Club
Canoga Park Women's Club

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Merle Larson
Don Quinn
Dr. and Mrs. W. Tedford
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Winnetka Woman's Club
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1964-65
Women's Division of Encino Chamber of C.
Tarzana Woman's Club
Placerita Parlor N. D. G. W.
Mr. and Mrs. James W. Thompson
Mrs. G. Fursenot

Encino Woman's Club

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