

## Chapter VII – RANCHOS CHIQUITOS

### Of Foundlings and *Hijos Naturales*

On the 30th of January 1808, a curious baptism was recorded at Mission San Juan Capistrano. The corporal and head of the guard for the Mission, Cristóbal Domínguez, reported to Father Juan Norberto de Santiago, that he, Cristóbal, had baptized an infant girl two days ago as he believed she was in danger of dying.

As the Catholic Church taught that baptism was required for both burial in consecrated ground and for the possibility of entrance into heaven, all infants were presented for baptism as soon as possible, usually within two days of birth. If a child was born, appearing sickly, any adult present at the birth could baptize the child immediately. Most adults knew the proper procedure, and upon satisfying the Father that they had followed the correct form, the baptism would be entered in the Baptismal register, with the notation of the necessity for the immediate baptism. Many of these infants, believed to be in danger of death, actually survived. We might regard these lay baptisms as a form of religious insurance.

So why was this baptism so curious? The entry continues that her father was Ignacio Ruíz, a soldier of the San Diego Company, married to María Borbon. The mother was given as María Valeriana Lorenzana, married to Desiderio Ybarra, she having come from *la casa de los expositos de Mexico*. An orphanage had been founded in Mexico City under the auspices of Bishop Lorenzana, and therefore the children from there all assumed the family name Lorenzana. Almost as an afterthought the Father added that the infant had been named Juana Juliana.

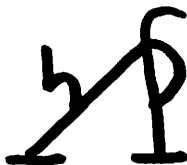
Finding and recruiting new settlers for Alta California was very difficult, and the Central Government tried a number of different schemes. In 1797 Manuel Carcaba,



Msn San Juan Bautista  
1797



Msn Santa Barbara  
1786



Palomares



E. Vejar  
Rancho Boca de  
la Playa

Quartermaster for California and Coordinator of Recruitment, began to consider the vice-regal suggestion that orphans should be used. Twenty orphans and a young orphan woman to supervise the girls were selected, and on 6 June 1800 they began the overland journey from Mexico City to San Blas, where they boarded the *Concepción* for a sea voyage to Monterey. All but one boy arrived to be turned over to *Commandante* Raymundo Carrillo to place. It should be noted that they were conscripted, and pathetic letters survive of many requests to be allowed to remain in Mexico City, and even requests to be allowed to return to Mexico from Alta California.

The selection process had requested children of good blood and the girls in particular to be suitable brides for the unmarried soldiers of Alta California. The final list contained ten *Españoles*, eight of whom were girls; seven *Mestizos*, and three *Indios*. María de Jesús Valeriana was listed as an *Española*, described as having "red hair and complexion, aged 10". For the journey she, like all the girls, was provided with at least a knapsack, two blouses, two housecoats, four small handkerchiefs, a pair of shoes, four skirts of wool and local cloth, ties, bedsheets, pillows, shawls, stockings and blankets, each marked with her name. Interestingly, a special allowance was authorized to provide cigars for all the girls, so they would not be tempted to beg from the soldiers and peons accompanying them.<sup>40</sup>

Valeriana with the other girls were to be placed in homes, where they were to be instructed in cooking and sewing. Valeriana apparently remained with Raymundo Carrillo for several years and then was placed in the household of his son-in-law Don José de la Guerra y Noriega. In 1806 de la Guerra was transferred to San Diego and Valeriana went with him. On 20 September 1807, she was married to Desiderio Ybarra at the San Diego Presidio Chapel. Juana was born four months later. Having been abandoned herself by her parents, what agonies she must have gone through, when she found she was pregnant. By the time of the birth, she had confided the paternity of her child, but Desiderio accepted the child and raised her as his own. In all records after her baptism, she carried the name Ybarra. When Juana also had a child before marriage, Desiderio also cared for him in his teen years and young manhood. Perhaps the story of his own father influenced him.

Desiderio Ybarra's father, Juan Antonio Ybarra, had been born about 1760 at Mazatlán de los Mulatos, Sinaloa, the *hijo natural* of María Estebana Ybarra and an unnamed father. He had married María de los Angeles Velasquez about 1778 and their first son José Alvino had already been born, when he joined in the Rivera-Moncada Expedition of 1781 to bring the first settlers for Los Angeles to San Gabriel. Both he and his wife were listed as *coyotes*, that is, of a mixture of European, Black and Indian ancestry. Upon arriving in Alta California, he was assigned to the Company of San Diego, where he served until at least

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<sup>40</sup>Hernandez 1990, HSSCQ, Vol. LXXII, pp. 219-220.

1798. By 1804, he was listed as a retired soldier at Los Angeles. He was buried at San Gabriel 27 September 1812. María de los Angeles Velasquez was buried there on 2 November 1819, with the notation that she was 58 years of age.

Juan Antonio Ybarra and María de los Angeles Velasquez had nine known children, all but two of whom were baptized at San Diego:

José Alvino, born about 1779 in Sinaloa, married María Antonia Valenzuela 8 September 1805 San Gabriel, buried 30 September 1805 San Gabriel;

María Gertrudis, baptized 26 December 1781 San Diego Presidio, married Juan Nepomuceno Alipas 26 May 1798 San Diego Presidio, living in 1853 at Capistrano;

Gil María, baptized 26 April 1784 at San Diego, married Apolinaria Manríquez 11 February 1812 San Gabriel, living in 1851;

José Desiderio, baptized 28 May 1786 at the Mission San Diego, married Valeriana Lorenzana 20 September 1807 San Diego Presidio, buried 17 January 1857 Plaza;

Andrés de Dolores, baptized 2 December 1788 Capistrano, married Francisca Moreno 27 August 1808 San Gabriel, living in 1860;

Calixto José Antonio, baptized 15 October 1791 San Diego married about 1830 Eugenia Silvas, died after 1844;

Quirina, baptized 8 June 1794 San Diego, married Joaquín Ruíz of Chapter IX 9 January 1814 San Gabriel, buried 20 June 1853 Capistrano;

Antonio, baptized 29 October 1796 San Diego, buried 5 July 1849 at San Gabriel unmarried; and

Natividad, baptized 9 September 1798 San Diego Presidio, married Francisco Lisalde 7 November 1825 San Diego Presidio, buried 21 July 1828 Plaza.

The eldest son, José Alvino enlisted in the Company of San Diego. On 8 September 1805 at San Gabriel his marriage to María Manuela Valenzuela is recorded. Sadly he suffered a sudden death and was buried there only 22 days after his marriage. The name Manuela may be an error in the record, as she had been baptized María Antonia Nicolasa 13 September 1791 at Santa Barbara, the daughter of Pedro Valenzuela and María Dolores Parra. She used the name Antonia for both of her subsequent marriages in 1809 to Ignacio Varelas and in 1835 to Manuel Soto.

Gertrudis, the eldest daughter of Juan Antonio Ybarra, married Juan Nepomuceno Alipas, born about 1764 in Real de Buenavista, Sonora, the son of Gregorio Alipas and

Josefa Mandizabal. Gertrudis was still living at the time of the burial of Juan Alipas 23 October 1853 at Capistrano. Their children included:

- Gervasio, born about 1800 San Luis Rey, buried 8 April 1836 Plaza;
- Damaso, born about 1807 San Luis Rey, married Juana Machado 22 August 1827 San Diego Presidio, died before 1844;
- José Severiano Antonio, baptized 24 February 1809 San Gabriel, married María Antonia Aguilar 22 February 1830 at San Diego, living in 1856 at Capistrano;
- José Asumpción, baptized 17 August 1812 San Gabriel, probably buried 14 November 1845 San Gabriel;
- Martín, baptized 1 February 1815 San Diego, married Petra Nieto 4 November 1840 San Gabriel, living in 1844;
- José Julian, baptized 28 January 1818 San Diego Presidio, living in 1833;
- Dionicio, born about 1823, confirmed 1833 San Diego, [a child María Candelaria, baptized Feb 22 1855 Plaza, with Cornelia López is recorded], probably buried 10 January 1859 Plaza; and
- José Guadalupe, baptized 12 December 1827 San Diego Presidio, married Juana María Bermudez 20 January 1853 Capistrano, living in 1862.

The eldest, Gervasio Alipas, about 1834 took as his mistress María del Rosario Villa, the wife of Domingo Félix. Félix took his case to the authorities, who took Rosario into custody in late March 1836 and turned her over to her husband. As they were riding back to Félix's rancho, Gervasio overtook them and stabbed Félix to death. With the assistance of Rosario, Félix was dragged by his horse, and his body thrown into an arroyo. Domingo Félix was buried 28 March 1836 Plaza. Gervasio and Rosario were taken into custody, tried and convicted of the murder by the local town council. Under Mexican law, the local council did not have the authority to order an execution. The case had to be appealed all the way up to and finally reviewed by Mexico City, much as our current State laws require review by the State Supreme Court before an execution can be ordered. The local populace was so incensed, that a vigilante committee convened, relieved the jail guard of his keys, reconvicted the couple, and after allowing them the right to have a confessor, shot them both on 7 April 1836. They were buried the next day in the Plaza Cemetery.

The third known son, Severiano Alipas, married Antonia Aguilar, who had been baptized 20 April 1814 at the San Diego Presidio, the daughter of Rosario Aguilar of Chapter II. This son remained the main support of his parents in their old age. He was granted one of the small house lots in Capistrano in 1841. In 1851 he was a small farmer

in the Mission Viejo area. It was their second son Santos who died in the Pauma Massacre. Their children were:

José Hilario, baptized 17 February 1831 San Diego;  
José de los Santos, baptized 26 November 1832 San Diego Presidio, died  
December 1846 in the Pauma Massacre;  
María del Rosario Dionicia, baptized 10 October 1835 San Diego, living in 1851;  
José Doroteo, baptized 6 June 1838 San Diego, living in 1851;  
Alexo, baptized 18 July 1840 San Diego, living in 1851;  
Gervasio, born about 1843, living in 1851;  
María Dolores, born about 1845, living in 1851;  
María de Jesús, baptized 25 December 1847 Capistrano, living in 1851;  
María Bersabe de Jesús, baptized 27 June 1850 Capistrano, living in 1851, perhaps  
married Rafael Machado 1 November 1868 San Diego;  
José Antonio de Jesús, baptized 1 February 1853 Capistrano; and  
Manuel de Jesús Juan, baptized 26 December 1855 Capistrano.

The other Alipas sons (Damaso, Martín, Julian, Dionicio and José Guadalupe) also left descendants but none figure in the story of Orange County.

### **The Orange County Ybarra**

Gil Ybarra was the only one of his family to take up permanent residence in what would be Orange County. Gil married in 1812 Apolinaria Manríquez, baptized 24 July 1796 San Diego, the daughter of Luis Manríquez and Juliana Alanis. She was buried 2 December 1856 Plaza. Gil was prominent in the politics of that time particularly in the 1837-1838 opposition of Southern California against Governor Alvarado. Nonetheless, Governor Alvarado granted Gil on 23 February 1841 Rincon de la Brea, about one square league which was confirmed to him by the US Land Commission. This was located in what is now known as Brea Canyon. The many children of Gil Ybarra and Apolinaria Manríquez included:

Jacoba, baptized 25 July 1813 San Gabriel, married Salvador Armijo  
(*informaciones* filed at San Gabriel 28 April 1833), married second Alejandro  
Molina, a widower from New Mexico on 7 January 1851 San Gabriel;  
José Ramón Lugardo, baptized 17 June 1815 at the San Diego Presidio, married  
Ramona Félix 6 June 1837, living in 1851;

Agustín, baptized 6 February 1817 San Gabriel, married Francisca Morales on 24 June 1841 San Gabriel, died between 1862 and 1865;  
Leonardo, born 8 March 1819, living in 1851, single;  
Calixto, baptized 14 October 1821 San Gabriel, living in 1851, perhaps buried 7 October 1868 Plaza;  
Rafael, baptized 25 August 1825 San Gabriel, buried 2 November 1825 Plaza (recorded San Gabriel);  
María del Rosario, (twin to above), baptized 25 August 1825 San Gabriel, buried 14 November 1827 Plaza;  
(María Petra) "Eduvigis", baptized 19 October 1828 San Gabriel, buried 26 September 1836 Plaza;  
Francisco de Loreto, baptized 10 December 1830 Plaza, buried 22 November 1832 San Gabriel;  
(Guillerma Emiliana) "Reyes", baptized 6 January 1833 Plaza, living in 1851, perhaps married Tomás de Aquino Félix;  
Natividad, baptized late December 1834 Plaza, married Fernando Manchego about 1855, living 1866 Jurupa;  
Manuela, baptized 10 May 1838 Plaza, buried 16 July 1848 Plaza; and  
José de Jesús Silvestre, baptized 1 January 1840 San Gabriel, married Manuela McCarray 14 September 1868 San Gabriel.

Salvador Armijo, who married in 1833 Gil Ybarra's eldest daughter Jacoba, was born about 1805 Socorro, New Mexico, son of Francisco Armijo and Francisca Gonzales. He was one of the earliest New Mexico traders to come to California, and blazed the northern trail from Santa Fé to San Gabriel. The route of his trail along the San Juan River and Mancos Creek is still marked at the Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado. Salvador was buried 20 April 1850 Plaza. Only one of the three Armijo children is known to have survived; Francisco, born about 1833, married Carolina Domínguez 13 December 1857 Plaza.

In 1851 Gil Ybarra and his family were living next door to his two elder married sons, Ramón and Agustín, in the Walnut area. Ramón (who is frequently confused with his first cousin Ramón, son of Desiderio), married in 1837 Ramona Félix, born about 1817, daughter of Tomás Félix and María de Jesús López. An incomplete list of their children includes:

José Cayatano de Altagracia, baptized 5 November 1838 Plaza, married Josefa Alvarado 16 January 1864 San Gabriel;  
Altagracia, born about 1840, living in 1851; and  
José Ramón de Jesús, baptized 18 June 1846 Plaza, living in 1851.

Agustín Ybarra married in 1841 Francisca Morales, who had been baptized 3 September 1827 San Gabriel, the daughter of José Pío Morales and Trinidad Félix. Agustín apparently died before 1865 as Francisca married again on 28 February 1865 Gabriel Lembrano. The children of Agustín and Francisca were:

José Antonio Hilario, baptized 21 April 1842 San Gabriel, probably died between 1843 and 1851;  
María Francisca Eduvigis "Manuela", baptized 9 June 1844 San Gabriel, married José Antonio Brito 9 October 1862 San Gabriel;  
José Lino Cayetano, baptized 30 July 1846 San Gabriel, buried 15 June 1847 Plaza;  
José Lázaro, baptized 12 April 1848 Plaza, buried 25 March 1852 San Gabriel;  
María Estefana, baptized 5 January 1851 San Gabriel, buried 25 May 1855 San Gabriel;  
Francisco Xavier Cayetano, baptized 12 January 1853 San Gabriel;  
María Lugarda Altagracia, baptized 7 June 1856 San Gabriel;  
José Cayetano, baptized 6 August 1859 San Gabriel;  
Francisco Atilano, baptized 6 October 1860 San Gabriel; and  
María Mauricia, baptized 27 January 1863 San Gabriel.

Gil had left the San Diego area in the early 1810's and by 1831 was *síndico* of Los Angeles. Afterwards he served as *alcalde* there. His embroilment in politics was heated and partisan. His rebelliousness against the government of Alvarado inspired one of Alvarado's men to exclaim, "Ybarra is a nobody." More than once Gil engaged in such agitation against the governor that it resulted in his arrest. In 1838 Gil Ybarra was taken prisoner by Castro at the siege of Buenaventura.

Gil Ybarra's political career was assisted by the fact that he was literate. He and his brothers Desiderio and Andrés all had at least sixteen months of education in the San Diego Presidio School in 1795 and 1796 under Manuel Vargas. Their report cards on 2 January 1797 stated that Gil and Desiderio were advanced in the fourth reader and beginning to write. Their younger brother Andrés was in the second reader with the comment "rude, but making an effort."<sup>41</sup>

Not all of Gil's time was spent in political intrigue. Like brother Desiderio and their father before them, he had received a grant in 1841 of Rancho La Cañada de la Brea. His

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<sup>41</sup>Williams 1996, "San Diego Presidio Reader, 1996", p. 189.

4,452 acres were just west of the future community of Walnut, extending from San José Creek southward into the hills of Brea Canyon.

The American conquest, which occurred seven years after Gil received his grant, took him out of Los Angeles' political life altogether. He retired to Rancho Rincon de la Brea to live in the home he had built beside San José Creek. Other adjustments resulted. The mandatory survey that followed the United States takeover forced a change in the Ybarra land boundaries. Already relatively small, the ranch shrank from the original grant of 14 November 1841. Historians have long debated whether or not the homesite remained inside the newly-prescribed boundaries. Possibly it did not, considering the usual surveying methods employed by the early Californians – a method sometimes referred to as the "mas o menos" (more or less) method in California, or "metes and bounds" in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

### **The San Diego Ybarras**

Andrés Dolores was the only child of Antonio Ybarra and María de Los Angeles Velasquez to be baptized at Mission San Juan Capistrano which was on 2 December 1788. Like his brother Gil, Andrés started his adult life as a *soldado de cuera* in the San Diego Company. He was politically active, taking part in the revolt of 1831, and served as *juez de campo* in San Diego in 1836. In 1842 he was granted by Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado, Rancho Los Encinitos, one square league, now Encinitas in San Diego County. His claim was confirmed by the US Land Commission, and he and his wife sold it in 1860 for \$3000 to Joseph Mannasse and Marcus Schiller.<sup>42</sup>

Andrés married at San Gabriel in 1808 (Francisca) Juana María Moreno, daughter of José María Moreno and Guadalupe Perez, one of the Los Angeles *Pobladores* families. Juana María appears to have been baptized as María Lorenza on 11 August 1790 at San Gabriel, she was confirmed as Juana in 1791 at San Gabriel. The fact that Andrés was for part of his married life in the jurisdiction of Mission San Luis Rey, all of whose records are missing, may explain why his family is not well documented.

In a supplemental schedule to the 1860 census of San Diego County, Andrés is listed as living in the San Luis Rey Township and having: "3 acres of improved land, 4,435 acres of unimproved land, \$5,000 cash value of farm, \$100 value of farming implements and machinery, 30 horses, 5 milch cows, 4 working oxen, 15 other cattle, \$1,000 value of live stock, and produced \$100 value of orchard products, 40 gallons of wine, 6 tons of hay, and

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<sup>42</sup>Saddleback Ancestors I reported that Andrés Ybarra was killed in a massacre in 1837 which is incorrect.



\$200 value of animals slaughtered". The children of Andrés Ybarra and Juana Moreno included:

(María Antonia Teodosia) Joaquina, baptized 1 April 1810 San Diego Presidio, confirmed 14 July 1833 San Diego, she had *hijos natural* with Lorenzo Soto in 1832 and 1834;

María de los Angeles, baptized 4 October 1812 San Gabriel, married Thomas Russell of Boston 13 December 1836 San Diego;

Andrés Abelino, buried 13 August 1820 San Gabriel;

José Circumcision, baptized 2 January 1815 San Gabriel, (with the note that his parents were residents of San Luis Rey), probably living in 1860 San Luis Rey married to María E. with five children aged 15 to 2 years;

Marta, baptized 29 May 1817 San Diego, (with note that her parents were residents of Los Angeles), married Guillermo Stenner 12 January 1834 San Diego Presidio, died by 1839;

Simón, baptized 28 October 1821 San Gabriel, confirmed 14 July 1833 San Diego;

José de Jesús, baptized 26 December 1823 San Diego Presidio, confirmed 14 July 1833 San Diego;

María Celestina, baptized 12 September 1828 San Diego, confirmed 14 July 1833 San Diego, living 1852;

Concepción, born about 1829, confirmed 14 July 1833 San Diego, living 1851;

Miguel Cristóbal de Jesús, baptized 23 July 1831 San Diego, confirmed 14 July 1833 San Diego, living 1860 San Luis Rey married to María S. with two children; and

Felipe de Jesús, baptized 15 October 1833 San Diego Presidio, confirmed 18 December 1841 San Diego, living in 1860 San Luis Rey married to María C. with one infant.

In the 1850 census, living on the Rancho los Encinitos, Andrés and Juana also had living with them, Francisco, born 1834; Antonia, born 1836; and Rafaela, born 1838.

(Calixto) Antonio Ybarra, the next son of old Antonio and María de los Angeles Velasquez, born in 1791, married about 1830 Eugenia Silvas, born about 1801 probably at San Luis Rey, daughter of Manuel Silvas and Gertrudis Camacho, and widow of Diego Lisalde. They lived in Old Town San Diego, where they had a fine house just off the plaza and a noted garden. It was destroyed in the 1870's to be replaced by a Victorian house of

an Irish immigrant, but a partial archeological excavation was done in 1996 and 1997. Their children included:

José Joaquín de Jesús, baptized 1 September 1832 San Diego, living in 1851;  
María Antonia, baptized 30 November 1834 San Diego Presidio, married  
Francisco Albaines of La Paz, Baja California 14 November 1850 San Diego;  
Santiago, confirmed 17 December 1841 San Diego, living in 1851;  
Francisca Ramona, baptized 11 October 1838 San Diego, married Pedro Rivera  
28 September 1868 Plaza, buried 14 December 1869 Plaza;  
Jacome de la Marca, baptized 28 November 1841 San Diego Presidio; and  
José de los Dolores, baptized 22 December 1844 San Diego, living in 1851.

### **The Los Angeles Ybarra**

Desiderio Ybarra, third son of Antonio was the one who married Valeriana Lorenzana. Desiderio Ybarra, unlike his brother Gil, led a quiet, pastoral life. He cultivated the bottom lands of his ranch along the Los Angeles River bed north of the Plaza. The home was situated on the bluff above the river and overlooked much of the orchard which caused their ranch to be known as la Huerta de los Ybarras. In the 1851 census he is listed as a farmer with \$5000 of real property, however no record of him claiming any property from the Land Commission has been found. Their family consisted of seven sons and only one daughter, in addition to Juana Juliana:

José de Jesús Severiano, baptized 25 February 1810 San Diego Presidio, married  
María Emiliana Valenzuela (*informaciones* 13 April 1833) San Gabriel, died  
3 September 1892, buried Calvary Cemetery, Los Angeles;  
Florentina, baptized 15 March 1812 at San Gabriel, married Mariano Ruíz  
(*informaciones* 17 October 1830) San Gabriel, living in 1851;  
Ramón Joaquín, baptized 8 May 1814 San Gabriel, married Pilar Romero  
(*informaciones* 7 November 1835) San Gabriel, probably buried 18 December  
1860 Plaza;  
Felipe de Jesús, baptized 13 September 1818 San Gabriel, married about 1844  
Francisca Cañedo, widow of Juan Ruíz;  
José María, born about 1819 San Gabriel, married María Guadalupe Romero 29  
October 1838 at San Gabriel, buried 31 July 1857 Plaza;  
Hilario, baptized 16 January 1821 San Gabriel, married Florentina Silvas 27  
November 1847 San Gabriel, living in 1862;

Geronimo, baptized 10 September 1823 San Gabriel, buried 6 February 1863 Plaza (but had at least two *hijos naturales*); and  
Luis, baptized 25 August 1827 Plaza, married Cayatana Ramírez 6 May 1852 Plaza.

A son, Pedro, was also confirmed in 1831 at Plaza, and may be either Luis above or an additional son, no other records of Pedro were found.

Severiano Ybarra, eldest son of Desiderio, married in 1833 Emiliana Valenzuela, granddaughter of Claudio López, who long functioned as *mayordomo* of Mission San Gabriel. Born about 1817, her parents were Gaspar Valenzuela and Ignacia López. She was buried 19 August 1881 Los Angeles Plaza Church. In 1851 Severiano Ybarra and his family were living in the Los Angeles area, his occupation is listed as a laborer, but he has real property worth \$200, so perhaps he at least had managed to own his own home. Severiano's and Emiliana's known children included:

José Pedro, born about 1835, living in 1844;  
Bonifacio de Jesús, baptized 16 May 1836 San Gabriel, buried 11 March 1838 Plaza;  
José María Luis Sabino, baptized 2 January 1838 San Gabriel, buried 5 February 1838 Plaza;  
José Inocente, born about 1839, married first Cecilia Canas on 9 January 1861 Plaza and second the widow Eloísa Martínez 10 January 1881 Plaza;  
María (Saturnina) de Jesús, born about 1842, married Manuel Ferdinand Brunet 18 April 1857 Plaza;  
Juan Pablo, baptized 27 March 1843 Plaza, buried 30 December 1844 Plaza;  
María Salomé, baptized 7 October 1844 Plaza, buried 6 November 1844 Plaza;  
Presentación, baptized 25 December 1845 Plaza, married first Charles Russell 9 September 1864 Plaza, and second Ramón Wilhardt 7 May 1881 Plaza, died 23 January 1925 Los Angeles;  
María Marta del Refugio, baptized 20 March 1848 Plaza, married first Teodoro Gonzales 18 November 1869 Plaza and second Guillermo Antonio Verdugo in the late 1870's, died 21 December 1936 Los Angeles;  
Candelaria, baptized 4 February 1850 Plaza, buried 26 February 1868 Plaza;  
Felipe de la Luz, baptized 10 May 1852 Plaza;  
José María, baptized 22 July 1854 Plaza, married the widow Isabel Villanueva 11 June 1877 Plaza;  
María Porfiria, baptized 17 September 1856 Plaza;

José Dolores, baptized 28 March 1858 Plaza, buried 19 January 1863 Plaza; and Ramón Vital, baptized 30 April 1861 Plaza.

Desiderio's next son, born in 1814, was Ramón who married in 1835 Pilar Romero who was born about 1817, the daughter of Antonio Romero and Serafina Rosas. Pilar was buried 15 May 1858 at Los Angeles Plaza Church. In 1851, Ramón Ybarra is living two houses away from his brother Severiano, listed as a farmer with \$1500 of real property. In 1840 he was *juez de campo* for Los Angeles. The house between was occupied by Luis Wilhardt who married the Peralta girls, mentioned in Chapter VI. The children of Ramón and Pilar included:

María de la Altagracia de las Angustias, baptized 17 December 1836 Plaza, living in 1851;

Francisco, born about 1839, probably buried 7 August 1855 Plaza;

María Encarnación, baptized 24 April 1841 San Gabriel, married Ramón Sotelo 8 March 1862 Plaza, living in 1868;

Pedro, baptized 27 October 1844 Plaza, buried 8 November 1844 Plaza;

Ramón Caterino, baptized 25 December 1845 Plaza, living in 1851;

Francisco Nestor de Jesús, baptized 5 March 1848 Plaza, buried 30 October 1849 Plaza;

Estanislao de Jesús, baptized 9 May 1850 Plaza;

Marcos de la Trinidad, baptized 25 April 1852 Plaza, living in 1855;

(Gregorio) Victor, baptized 4 December 1853 Plaza, living in 1855;

Francisco Guadalupe, baptized 16 December 1855 Plaza; and

Romualdo Esteban, baptized 8 February 1858 Plaza.

Desiderio Ybarra's son José María, married in 1838 Guadalupe Romero, who had been baptized 18 March 1813 San Gabriel, the sister of Pilar Romero, the wife of his brother Ramón. She was buried 5 January 1863 Los Angeles Plaza Church. In 1851, José María Ybarra, was living next door to Severiano, also listed as a laborer with real property of only \$100. He may have also owned his own house. Among José María's children were:

María Concepción Adelaida, baptized 29 November 1838 San Gabriel, married José Dolores Cañedo 23 December 1857 Plaza, buried 25 December 1862 Plaza;

José Valentín, baptized 17 February 1840 Plaza, married María del Refugio Verdugo 25 November 1861 Plaza, buried 6 February 1863 Plaza;  
José (Vicente) de los Reyes, baptized 9 January 1842 Plaza, living in 1851;  
María Timotea, born about 1844, married first Santiago Johnson 25 August 1869 Plaza, and second Vicente Olivera 14 April 1873 Plaza;  
María de la Cruz, baptized 20 July 1845 Plaza, living in 1851;  
María Francisca Anastacia, baptized 2 May 1847 Plaza;  
Francisca Vicenta, baptized 23 October 1848 Plaza;  
José Leon de los Reyes, baptized 5 October 1850 Plaza;  
Natividad del Refugio, baptized 12 September 1853 Plaza; and  
José Desiderio Sebastiano, baptized 3 March 1857 Plaza.

Desiderio's fifth son, Hilario, born in 1821, married in 1847 Florentina Silvas, who had been born about 1826 probably at San Luis Rey, daughter of Francisco Silvas and Magdalena Alvarado. In 1851, Hilario Ybarra is living in the Los Angeles area listed as a farmer with \$3000 of real property. He obviously was doing better than his older brothers. Hilario's and Florentina's children included:

José Cornelio Cipriano, born about 1848, buried 20 October 1848 Plaza;  
José Fecundo, baptized 13 December 1849 Plaza;  
José Antonio Pío, baptized 24 May 1851 Plaza;  
María Irenia, baptized 6 April 1852 Plaza, married Silvestre López 25 May 1869 Plaza;  
María Gregoria, baptized 29 March 1854 Plaza, married Felipe Rivera 9 September 1871 Plaza;  
Andrés Saturnino, baptized 30 November 1856 Plaza;  
José Andrés, baptized 7 February 1859 Plaza; and  
María de Jesús, baptized 3 January 1862 Plaza.

It would appear that Hilario had at least five *hijos naturales* by various mothers in addition to the above.

And what happened to Juana Juliana, that first child of Valeriana Lorenzana, whose story she was so fearful to tell? After the birth of Pedro Alcantara, baptized 21 October 1823 San Gabriel, Juana married Nicolás Olivas on 18 January 1824 at San Gabriel. He had been baptized 20 December 1796 Santa Barbara, son of Juan Olivas and Juana de Dios Ontiveros. Both Nicolás and Juana were living in Los Angeles in 1851, with six children in

the home, next door to Desiderio. Pedro Alcantara, always known as an Ybarra, married 31 January 1853 at Plaza to Adalaida Valenzuela and had five sons and two daughters all of whom carried the Ybarra family name.

### **Mexican Land Grants**

Early Spanish land grants were very large and usually made in recognition of services rendered to the government. It was more a permit to develop and use government land than an outright grant of ownership. In contrast, under Mexican rule the grants were generally smaller in size, given more on a basis of patronage, and led to full and complete ownership.

The procedure by which Emigdio Véjar obtained his grant to his ranchos was typical of the process in the 1840's. The official documents concerning the grant for Rancho Boca de la Playa reveal the ease with which land could be obtained from the Mexican Government and the manner in which the boundaries were set. The grant to Emigdio Véjar, one of the last made under the Mexican regime by Governor Pío Pico, was translated as follows:

#### **Emigdio Véjar Grant of Boca de la Playa**

Whereas, the citizen Emigdio Véjar, has petitioned for his personal benefit and that of his family, the tract of land, known by the name of Boca de la Playa, in the jurisdiction of San Juan Capistrano; by virtue of the Authority conferred on me, in the name of the Mexican Nation, I have determined to grant him the said place; declaring to him the ownership of the same by these presents, acting in Conformity with the law of the 18th of August 1824, and the regulations of the 21st of November 1828; subject to the approval of the Most Excellent Departmental Assembly, and under the following Conditions: 1st. He may enclose it without prejudice to the ?? [roads and rights of way]; he shall enjoy it freely and exclusively devoting it to the use or cultivation that may be most Convenient. 2nd. He shall solicit the respective Judge to give him Judicial possession, by virtue of this title, by which the boundaries shall be measured out, with the Corresponding land marks. 3rd. The land of which donation is made, is strictly that which is shown on the map, and is bounded on the North by the Cienega, which is also bounded; on the East by the boundaries of the Rancho of Don Juan Foster, and the place known as the tract granted to Don Felipe Carrillo, between San Mateo and Las Pulgas; on the South by the beach and on the West, by the first range of hills of the Cañada of la Boca de la Playas; The Judge who may give the possession, will cause the same to

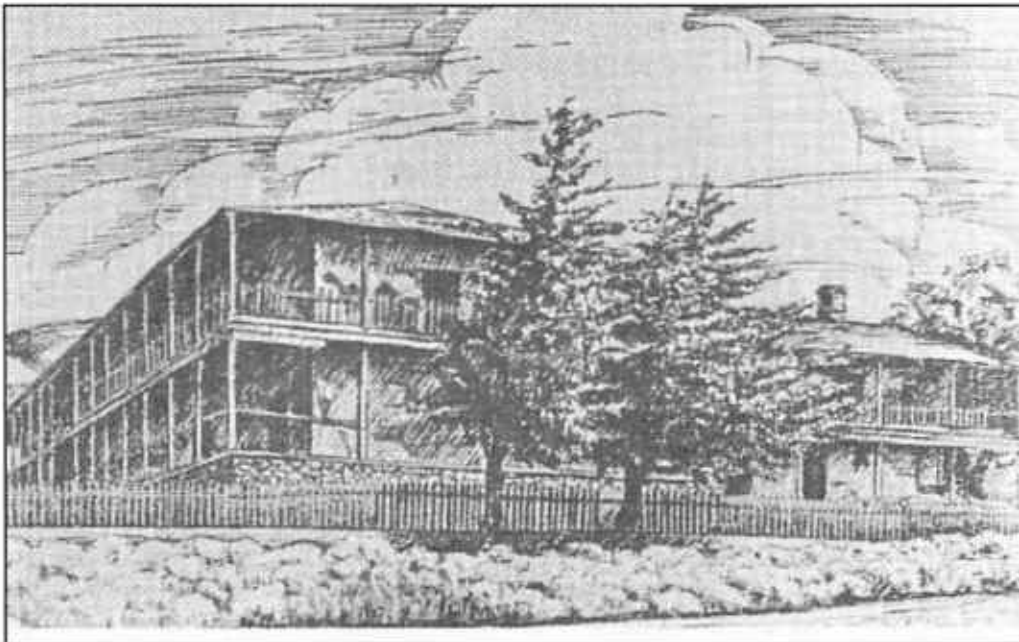
be measured in accordance with the ordinances, in run of the map, first summoning the adjoining land holders and noting the number of Square leagues that may be included in the tract.

In consequence thereof, I order that this title being held as firm and valid, be registered in the corresponding book, and be delivered to the interested party for his security and further ends.

Given in the City of Los Angeles on common paper for lack of Sealed paper on the 7th day of May 1846.

Pío Pico.

José Matías Moreno Secy.<sup>43</sup>



San Antonio Adobe

Drawn by Jan Goodwin from a photograph of about 1875.

(*Saddleback Ancestors*, 1969)

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<sup>43</sup>*Expedientes* No. 445.

As stipulated under the second condition of the grant, Véjar applied for judicial possession of the rancho from the *alcalde* who recorded the necessary survey as follows:

Grant to Emigdio Véjar

In the City of Los Angeles, on the 19th day of the month of April 1847, in ?? [compliance] with the petition of Don Emigdio Véjar, asking for possession of the place named Boca de la Playa, in the jurisdiction of San Juan Capistrano, of which he presented the corresponding title, issued by the Supreme Government, on the 7th of May 1846; I shall proceed with the assisting witnesses, to give the corresponding possession, in accordance with the said title; Thus I, Julian Chaves, Senior *Regidor* of the Illustrious *Ayuntamiento* and exercising the Authority of Second *alcalde* on account of the incompetency of the Second *Alcalde*, deceased, ordered and signed with the Assisting witnesses, according to law.

Julian Chaves, Asst. Leonardo Cota. Asst. José Ma. Herrera.

Wherefore I notified the *Señores Cohudantes* [adjoining owners] of the object of my visit to the place of the Boca de la Playa. Since I came to place Don Emigdio Véjar in possession of the said tract of land; and as the said *Cohudantes* made no objection: I make the entry in the proceedings, and Sign with the Assisting witnesses according to law.

Julian Chaves. Asst. Leonardo Cota. Asst. José Ma. Herrera.

Wherefore being due to the plan of the Boca de la Playa; I appointed two Cordbearers [linesmen], who are Miguel Berdugo and Guadalupe Rodríguez, to whom I represented the object of this appointment, who accepted the same, offering to discharge faithfully and legally their duty as measurers; Those who know how to write signing and I signing with the assisting witnesses, according to law.

Julian Chaves. Asst. Leonardo Cota. Asst. José Ma. Herrera.

Wherefore, being at the Boca de la Playa, at the foot of a hill, situated on the beach; present the assisting witnesses and the cordbearers, I ordered a cord to be measured to the length of one hundred *varas*, having a stick attached to each end thereof, and after the necessary Observation and Calculation, by my direction, the line was run towards the East seven thousand five hundred *varas*, the line terminating at the second *disecho*; the boundary of Don Felipe Carrillo, where I ordered a land mark to be placed: From this point, the second line was run towards the North thirty degrees East, five thousand *varas*; the line terminating at the point of a hill; where there is a land mark; the boundary of Don Juan Foster and Don Felipe Carrillo. From this



point the line was run North 40 degrees West, five thousand *varas*; the line terminating at the high ridge Cauchilla Alta, from which a view is had of the Old Mission, at which point a land mark was ordered to be placed: From this point for the Conclusion of the measurement of this place the last line was run towards the South 70 degrees West eight thousand two hundred *varas*; the line terminating at the point of commencement with which the interested parties were content; wherefore I gave the interested party possession, in the name of the nation under the law; wherefore the proceeding were concluded; the same being signed by myself, and the interested party according to law.

Julian Chaves. Asst. Leonardo Cota. Asst. José Ma. Herrera.  
Angeles. April 20th 1847<sup>44</sup>



Taking Possession  
(by Howard L. Kent)

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<sup>44</sup>Los Californianos, *Expedientes* No. 445.

The measuring process was: The first linesman would hold one stick at the beginning point while the second rode in the proper direction until the end of the line was reached, placing the other stick in the ground. The first horseman then rode ahead of the second to the end of the line, repeating the change many times until the end of the boundary was reached. Each change was tallied and landmarks noted. If one attempts to plot these measurements, they do not close.<sup>45</sup>

In this way Emigdio Véjar came into possession of the small (1 1/2 square leagues) but beautiful Rancho Boca de la Playa, around the mouth of San Juan Creek. Emigdio's father, Salvador Véjar, born about 1767 at Tepic, Nayarit, came to Alta California as a carpentry instructor. He was at Santa Cruz in 1791, San Diego in 1792, and Monterey in 1795 (Schuetz-Miller 1994:55-56). Salvador Véjar returned to San Diego before marrying María Josefa López there on 14 October 1798 at the Presidio. She had been baptized at San Juan Capistrano on 4 April 1784, the daughter of Francisco López and Feliciana Arballo. Salvador was buried on 27 March 1824 at San Gabriel, and Josefa on 11 March 1863 at Plaza Cemetery. The children of Salvador Véjar and Josefa López were:

(María Josefa) Magdalena, baptized 9 November 1799 San Diego Presidio, married first 7 January 1821 San Diego to Joaquín Verdugo, son of Leonardo, married second about 1834 to Jorge María Morillo, still living in 1851;

Rosa María, baptized 24 January 1801 San Diego Presidio, probably buried as María Salomé 28 March 1807 at the San Diego Presidio;

Pablo José, baptized 21 February 1802 San Diego Presidio, married 27 January 1827 San Juan Bautista to Mariana Félix;

José Ricardo Francisco, baptized 2 April 1803 San Diego Presidio, buried there 26 June 1804;

María Felipa, baptized 30 September 1804 Mission San Diego, buried at San Diego Presidio 24 June 1805;

(Juan Nepomuceno) Ricardo, baptized 19 December 1805 San Diego Presidio, married first on 7 November 1825 at Plaza (but recorded at San Gabriel) Francisca Trinidad Soto, married second 25 April 1875 San Gabriel to María Luz Figueroa, of Sonora, widow of Joaquín Monroy, died about 1882;

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<sup>45</sup>The editors have plotted many Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania land records with "medes and bounds" with similar results. In these places also, the neighboring landowners were called to observe the survey.

María Nasaria, baptized 30 July 1807 Mission San Diego, married (*informaciones* 2 September 1823) San Gabriel to Joaquín Velasquez, buried 5 April 1852 San Gabriel;

(José Mara de Jesús) Emigdio, baptized 17 September 1809 San Diego Mission, married first (*informaciones* 7 December 1834) San Gabriel to Rafaela Avila, married second 2 August 1853 Plaza to Isabel Cota, buried 24 January 1863 Plaza;

Lázaro María, baptized 15 September 1811 San Diego Presidio, married 17 March 1855 Plaza to María (Anselma) Félix, buried 11 February 1863 Plaza;

María Ramona (Candida), baptized 20 December 1812 San Diego Presidio, married (*informaciones* 27 December 1831) San Gabriel to Tomás Urquidez, widower of Tomasa Francisca Sánchez;

(Juan) Crisostomo, baptized 27 January 1815 San Diego Mission, married 19 February 1838 San Gabriel to Engracia Reyes, buried 4 May 1877 Plaza;

Manuel, born about 1820 San Luis Rey, married Eulogia Ballesteros, buried 11 November 1868 Plaza; and

Francisco, born about 1822 San Luis Rey, married 24 January 1843 San Gabriel to María de los Angeles Villa, still living in 1860.

Pablo Véjar, the eldest son of Salvador, served as a soldier in the San Diego Company from 1821, but was soon sent to Monterey for attempting to desert. At San Juan Bautista in 1827 he married Mariana de Jesús Félix, baptized 8 September 1801 San Carlos, daughter of Juan Manuel and Isabel Cota. Pablo was a leader of a revolt in Monterey in 1828-29 and was sent to Mexico for his part. He returned to Alta California by 1831, living in the Los Angeles area. He was taken prisoner in the battle of San Pasqual in 1846. In 1877 he was living with his brother Ricardo near Spadra "with a large family and in great poverty, he dictated 90 pages of the *Recuerdos de un Viejo* for my use" in the words of Bancroft (1963, XX:761). Some of the children of Pablo and Mariana Félix were:

Salvador de Altagracia, baptized 7 January 1828 Monterey, buried 18 January 1828 San Carlos;

(José Ignacio) Juan, baptized 29 May 1829 San Carlos, confirmed 9 November 1831 Plaza;

Salvador Francisco, baptized 4 October 1834 Plaza;

María Isabel, baptized 3 November 1836 Plaza, married 20 October 1861 San Gabriel to Julio Osuna;

Estefana, born about 1838, buried 31 January 1841 Plaza; and  
María Guadalupe, baptized 14 December 1841 San Carlos, confirmed 1844 San  
Luis Obispo.

Ricardo Véjar, the second surviving son of Salvador, served as *juez de campo* in Los Angeles in 1833. Ricardo and his good friend, Ignacio Palomares, were at the time developing a sizable herd of cattle on the ranch of the widow, María Rita Valdez de Villa. By 1837 the herds had outgrown the capacity of the small Rodeo de las Aguas, later the site of Beverly Hills. Véjar and Palomares decided to seek greener and larger pastures for their growing herds and families.

Application was made to Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado for two leagues of land located a good day's ride east of Los Angeles to be shared by the two partners. The grant was made as requested for Rancho San José, at the corners of Orange, Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties on 15 April 1837, and Palomares settled on the northern portion of the new ranch while Véjar built his adobe on the southern part. The ownership of the ranch was expanded from two to three partners and the land area from two to three leagues when Palomares' brother-in-law, Luis Arenas, joined the partnership in 1840. Ricardo had a chapel in his home in 1856 in which at least one baptism is recorded at San Gabriel.<sup>47</sup>

The families prospered in the golden years of the 1850's and the Ricardo Véjar family was considered one of the wealthier in southern California. His wife, María Trinidad Soto was baptized 2 March 1809 San Gabriel, the daughter of Guillermo and Juana María Perez. Their children were:

María (Trinidad Francisca), baptized 19 May 1826 Plaza, married first Antonio  
María Reyes 18 January 1852 San Gabriel, married second Teodosio Perez  
1 May 1865 San Gabriel;

Pilar, baptized 12 October 1827 Plaza, married José Antonio Lugo 9 May 1845 at  
San Gabriel;

Francisco Salvador de Jesús, baptized 29 March 1829 Plaza, married first  
Florentina Martínez 1 May 1850 San Gabriel, married second Felipa Lugo  
about 1855;

Ramón, baptized 1 January 1831 San Gabriel, married Teresa Palomares 18 June  
1855 Jurupa, died 22 December 1926;

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<sup>47</sup>San Gabriel Baptisms, Tomo IV #9574.

Josefa, baptized 23 December 1832 Plaza, married Leonor Martínez 1 May 1850 San Gabriel in a double ceremony with her older brother Francisco;  
Francisco de Sales Antonio, baptized 1 February 1835 Plaza, living in 1851;  
Concepción, baptized 9 December 1836 Plaza, buried January 1847 San Gabriel;  
(María Antonia) Julia, baptized 19 February 1838 San Gabriel, married 14 January 1857 Plaza José María Velarde, buried 11 May 1863 Plaza;  
María Magdalena de Pacis Angustias, baptized 27 May 1839 San Fernando, married Tomás Palomares, brother of Teresa, who had married Magdalena's older brother Ramón;  
Ignacio (Alvarado de los Dolores), baptized 11 February 1842 San Gabriel, living in 1851;  
José Ramón de Jesús, baptized 2 December 1843 San Gabriel, buried 30 January 1846 San Gabriel;  
María Isidora, buried 30 January 1846 San Gabriel;  
An unnamed daughter, baptized 31 May 1846 San Gabriel, died soon;  
Concepción, confirmed 8 September 1850 Plaza, married Demetrio Martínez 21 September 1868 San Gabriel; and  
Rosa, born about 1855, married Juan López of Sonora 16 July 1877 Plaza, buried 27 January 1878 Plaza.

As with nearly all the rancho families, the drought years brought financial disaster to the Véjars. In 1864 Ricardo lost his part of the ranch by foreclosure to Isaac Schlessinger and Hyman Tischler. Bitterness was so great against the two new owners that they were afraid to live on the ranch. One attempt was made on the life of Tischler, but another man was shot by mistake. Later Tischler disappeared, whether murdered or driven away by fear is not known. Ricardo died in 1882 leaving a large family in poverty.

Emigdio Véjar, third son of Salvador, the grantee of Rancho Boca de la Playa, married in 1834 Rafaela Avila, who had been born about 1817 at San Gabriel, the daughter of Anastacio Avila and Juana Ballesteros. She was buried 2 July 1852 Capistrano. Emigdio and Rafaela became the parents of at least ten children:

María del Pilar Hilaria, baptized 14 January 1835 Plaza, who apparently died soon;  
María de Jesús Natividad, baptized 3 January 1836 Plaza, married Marcos Cota 8 January 1854 Capistrano;  
Ildefonso Lobato, baptized 13 December 1837 Plaza, buried 28 March 1840 Plaza;

Isabel "Isidora", baptized 30 March 1840 Plaza, married Julian Rodriguez by 1864;  
Francisco de Paula, baptized 27 April 1842 Plaza, married Carolina Altamirano  
3 July 1863 Plaza;

José de Jesús, born about 1843, living in 1846;

José Ramón Antonio, baptized 27 January 1845 Plaza, living in 1851;

Juan Bautista del Refugio, baptized 5 February 1847 Plaza, living in 1851;

Casimiro Salvador, baptized 14 March 1849 Plaza, buried 8 April 1849 Plaza; and

María Donatilia Francisca, baptized 13 May 1852 Capistrano.



Ignacio Palomares  
(Saddleback Ancestors, 1969)



Ricardo Vejar  
(Saddleback Ancestors, 1969)

Emigdio Véjar was briefly the *mayordomo* of Mission San Juan Capistrano in preparation for its auction and *juez de paz* in San Juan Capistrano in 1844-1845 and in 1846 lived in the old "Hide House" between the mission and the sea. Emigdio married in 1853 his second wife Isabel Cota, baptized 7 July 1835 at Plaza, daughter of Manuel Cota and Barbara Machado. The seven children of this second family were:

Manuel Antonio Salvador, baptized 24 June 1853 Plaza;  
María Elena, baptized 28 August 1854 Plaza;  
Domingo Estanislao, baptized 8 May 1856 Plaza, living in 1883;  
José Manuel Emelino, baptized 5 January 1858 Plaza;  
Guillermo Enrique, baptized 28 March 1860 Plaza, living in 1883;  
José Medio Cleofe, baptized 14 April 1861 Plaza; and  
José Espiridion Tranquilino, baptized 31 August 1862 Plaza.

Rancho Boca de la Playa was sold on 15 August 1860 to Juan Avila for \$6,000. On 24 January 1863 Emigdio Véjar was buried at Plaza. His wife survived him at least a few years for there is record of her selling to James McFadden her interest in Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana, (about 290 acres) for \$362.50 on 9 July 1868. Land records indicate that Enrique and Domingo Véjar gradually lost or sold the other lands inherited from their parents. In 1869 their names appear in a sheriff's tax sale. In 1877, 1882, and 1883 they also sold their interests in the Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana.

Lázaro María Véjar, the fourth surviving son of Salvador, in 1855 married María Félix. María had been baptized 20 April 1813 San Gabriel, the daughter of Juan and Ignacia Verdugo. She had married first in 1834 Julian Cruz-Rayales who had been buried at Plaza in 1844. The marriage of Lázaro and María legitimated their five children:

José Ramón de los Santos, baptized 9 November 1845 Plaza, married Carmen Bermudez 31 May 1869 Plaza;  
María Bersabe, baptized 11 June 1847 Plaza;  
José Lorenzo de Jesús, baptized 12 August 1848 Plaza;  
Francisco Xavier, baptized 22 February 1852 Plaza; and  
María del Rosario, baptized 20 January 1854 Plaza.

Crisostomo Véjar, the fifth surviving son of Salvador, married Engracia Reyes 1838 at San Gabriel. She had been baptized 15 March 1810 San Gabriel, daughter of Jacinto Reyes and Antonia Machado. Crisostomo served as *regidor* in Los Angeles in 1839 and as a member of the city council from 1865 to 1867, and in 1870. Their children included:

Petra, born about 1839, married Pablo Bojorquez of Sonora 24 February 1879 Plaza;  
María de los Auxilios, baptized 19 January 1840 Plaza;  
Pedro María, baptized 2 March 1841 Plaza, married about 1870 to Mary Goss;

(María Petra) Soledad, baptized 18 April 1842 Plaza, married Thomas Delano 8 January 1862 Plaza;  
José Dolores Mateo, baptized 22 September 1844 Plaza, married about 1882 Mary Goss, widow of Pedro, above;  
(María Antonia) Bersabe del Refugio, baptized 15 June 1847 Plaza; and  
Juan José Nicodemo de Jesús, baptized 26 September 1848 Plaza.

Manuel Véjar and his brother Francisco were both born at San Luis Rey and probably baptized there, while their father Salvador, as a *Maestro Carpintero*, was employed in reroofing the Mission there. Manuel is alleged to have married María Eulogia Ballesteros who had been baptized 11 March 1830 Plaza, daughter of Juan and María del Carmen Figueroa. There were no known children and three weeks after Manuel's burial on 11 November 1868, she married Pedro Antonio Avila, by whom she had had at least five children between 1851 and 1868. The only evidence of marriage is that at Manuel's death he is recorded as married to María Ballestero, and when she remarried she is listed as the widow of Manuel Véjar.

Francisco Véjar, the last child of Salvador, married in 1843 María de los Angeles Villa, baptized 17 August 1823 San Gabriel of Vicente and Rita Valdez. The children of Francisco and María included:

Asunción del Refugio, buried 30 March 1845 Plaza;  
(María Rosa) Francisca, baptized 21 September 1845 Plaza;  
María Asención Trinidad, baptized 17 March 1847 Plaza, married Felipe Sepúlveda, of Baja, 27 October 1866 Plaza;  
José Ramón, baptized 17 April 1850 Plaza, probably died soon;  
Romualdo de San Vicente, baptized 11 May 1851 San Gabriel;  
José Ramón, baptized 29 April 1853 San Gabriel, living in 1856;  
José Vicente Baltazar, confirmed 6 January 1856 San Gabriel;  
Manuel de Jesús de los Reyes, confirmed 6 January 1856 San Gabriel; and  
Rita Anacleto, baptized 16 July 1860 Plaza.

Francisco is in the 1850 Los Angeles Census in the Downey area as a farmer with \$500 of real property.

Salvador Véjar was a *Maestro Carpintero* who worked in the missions of Santa Cruz, San Diego, and San Luis Rey, and by family tradition at San Gabriel and the Los Angeles



Plaza Church. Strangely, no evidence has been found that any of his descendants followed in his occupation, in which he was so prominent.

### Partners in Rancho San José

Rancho San José was granted by Governor Alvarado to Ricardo Véjar and his good friend Ignacio Palomares. Later Luis Arenas joined the partnership. The second partner in this triumvirate, Ignacio Palomares, was the seventh of ten children of another early soldier, José Cristóbal Palomares. The third partner, Luis Arenas, was the husband of the ninth child.

José Cristóbal Palomares came from Real San José de Canales, Durango, where he had been baptized 20 May 1770, the son of José Antonio Palomares and María Pascuala Valenzuela. By 1790 he was a soldier of the Santa Barbara Presidio, rising to the rank of sergeant by the time of his retirement in 1810. On retirement he moved to the Los Angeles Pueblo. From 1822 to 1824 he was *elector* for Los Angeles and a member of the first *Diputacion*. He served as *síndico* in 1826 and was *fiscal* for the famous trial of Enrique Fitch and Josefa Carrillo in 1830. This was his last official act as he was buried 6 December 1831 at Plaza. On 24 February 1794 he married María Benedicta Saez at Santa Clara. She had been baptized at San Carlos 21 March 1780, the daughter of Justo Nacario Saez and Micaela Sotelo, and was buried at Ventura 22 January 1858. Many of their children and grandchildren had significant connections to others whose stories are told in this book. The children of José Palomares and Benedicta Saez were:

María del Carmen Barbara, baptized 6 August 1798 Santa Barbara, married Juan Nepomuceno Alvarado 31 May 1812 San Gabriel, living in 1869;

María Concepción Eulogia, baptized 12 March 1800 Purissima, married first José Antonio López 11 February 1816 San Gabriel, married second the widower Ygnacio Higuera (*informaciones* 15 December 1826) San Gabriel; living in 1841 Santa Barbara.

José Luis Procacio, baptized 24 February 1802 Santa Barbara, and buried unmarried 22 October 1827 Plaza;

María del Rosario Andrea, baptized 7 February 1804 Santa Barbara, married Bernardo Higuera, brother of Ygnacio above, 26 September 1818 San Gabriel, buried 25 March 1863 Plaza;

Francisco de Paula, baptized 4 April 1806 Santa Barbara, married Marguerita Pacheco 19 July 1827 Santa Clara, died after 1877;

Estefana, baptized 4 August 1808 Santa Barbara, married Ygnacio Machado 7 February 1826 San Gabriel, living in 1878 Los Angeles;  
Ignacio María, baptized 6 February 1811 San Fernando, married Concepción López 26 June 1832 San Gabriel, buried 25 November 1864 Yorba Cemetery;  
María Dolores, baptized 3 April 1813 San Gabriel, married about 1827 José María Ramírez, living in 1855;  
María (Petra) Josefa, baptized 16 March 1815 San Gabriel, married first José María Avila (*informaciones* 9 January 1830) San Gabriel, married second Luis Arenas (*informaciones* January 1837) San Gabriel, died 12 October 1901, buried Palomares Cemetery, Pomona;  
María de Jesús, born about 1818 San Gabriel, married Francisco Figueroa of Mexico (*informaciones* 28 November 1834) San Gabriel, living in 1851;  
María del Pilar, baptized 21 January 1821 San Gabriel, and buried 25 January 1821 Plaza; and  
Cristóbal Atanacio de la Cruz, baptized 3 May 1823 San Gabriel, buried 5 February 1828 at Plaza.

María del Carmen Barbara, the eldest child of José Palomares and Benedicta Saez, married 1812 Juan Nepomuceno Alvarado, who had been baptized 16 May 1792 at Santa Barbara, son of Francisco Xavier Alvarado and María Ygnacia Amador. He was buried 8 August 1869 at Plaza. They had nine children:

Tomasa, baptized 30 December 1813 San Gabriel, married Bruno Antonio Soto 20 September 1841 San Gabriel, buried 5 February 1849 Plaza;  
José de Gracia, born about 1815, buried 6 March 1816 San Gabriel;  
Francisco María, born 19 January 1817, married Juana María Avila (*informaciones* 6 October 1836) San Gabriel, died 26 December 1895, buried Agua Mansa;  
Mariano, baptized 8 December 1818 San Gabriel, married Soledad Avila 30 August 1843 San Gabriel, buried 11 May 1859 Palomares Cemetery and recorded at San Gabriel;  
Emerenciana Ygnacia, baptized 23 January 1821 San Gabriel, buried 26 April 1878 Plaza;  
María Concepción, baptized 6 December 1822 San Gabriel, married Manuel Castillo of Hermosillo 1 September 1843 San Gabriel, died 1 June 1903, buried Agua Mansa;

Narcisa, baptized 6 March 1825 San Gabriel, married first Joaquín de los Ríos y Ruíz of Mexico 15 October 1841 San Gabriel, married second Pablo Rodríguez 1853 Plaza;

Ramona, baptized 25 May 1827 San Gabriel, buried 31 May 1827 San Gabriel; and

Isidro, baptized 16 May 1828 Plaza, married Concepción Moya 19 January 1850 Plaza, living in 1869.

Barbara was reputed to be the most beautiful of the Palomares girls, and in spite of a hard life, maintained that reputation into old age. Her skin remained white and unwrinkled, her hair still golden, and her eyesight so acute that she continued fine needlework without glasses. When she had married Nepomuceno, he was *majordomo* at Mission San Gabriel. But soon he was sent to supervise the *asistencia* established near the future San Bernardino. There were no near Hispanic neighbors and she bore her children with the help only of *neofitas*. There were so many problems with wild Indians, that they were unable to harvest crops. After they left there to move to the Rancho San José, Ignacio Palomares ceded to Nepomuceno a portion later known as Rancho San Antonio (Garner, 1939:40-41). Alvarado, as opposed to the Palomares and Véjars, planted orchards and fields. The ditch that he dug for irrigation became the basis of water rights for the Pomona Valley.

In 1851 Juan Nepomuceno Alvarado was living in the Pomona Area as a farmer with \$1500 of real property to support his family, two married sons and one widowed daughter. Significant to our story is that two of his sons married daughters of Anastacio Avila of Chapter III. There is a question of whether his daughter, Emerenciana, ever married. She had many *hijos naturales* including Francisca Roldan, child of Mariano Roldan and mother of Leo Carrillo discussed in Chapter X.

Francisco de Paula, the eldest son of José to marry, went north to the Santa Clara area where he settled and married in 1827 Margarita Pacheco. She had been baptized 13 June 1803 Santa Clara, the daughter of Bartolomé and María Soto. They had nine children, all of whom remained north and do not enter our story.

Ignacio María Palomares, the next son of José, married in 1832 Concepción López, born about 1817 San Gabriel, the daughter of Esteban López and María del Sacramento Valdez. Their children were:

José Luis del Pilar, baptized 12 July 1834 Plaza, buried 21 February 1863 Yorba Cemetery;

Tomás, baptized 20 September 1836 Plaza, married Magdalena Véjar, daughter of Ricardo, above;

(Calistra Josefa) Teresa, baptized 15 October 1838 Plaza, married Ramón Véjar, son of Ricardo 18 June 1855 Jurupa;  
Francisco, baptized 4 October 1840 Plaza, married Lugarda de Jesús Alvarado 11 January 1866 San Diego;  
José Manuel, baptized 29 March 1843 San Gabriel, married María del Carmen Rubidoux 5 June 1862 San Salvador de Jurupa, buried February 1864 Yorba Cemetery;  
Josefa, baptized 19 October 1847 Plaza, married José Trinidad Yorba, widower of María de Jesús Lugo, son of Bernardo 26 May 1869 San Gabriel;  
María de Jesús, baptized 16 April 1851 Plaza, buried 21 February 1863 Yorba Cemetery; and  
Carolina Concepción, baptized 17 October 1853 San Gabriel, died young.

Ignacio Palomares was *juez de campo* at Los Angeles in 1834, *regidor* in 1835, again *regidor* in 1838, *juez de campo* in 1840, *juez de paz* in 1841, an *elector* in 1843, captain of *defensores* in 1844, and *suplente* of the assembly in 1845. In 1846 he took part in a movement against Flores, being also elected *alcalde*. He was a partner with Ricardo Véjar when Rancho San José was granted in 1837 to them.

Ignacio Palomares was, unlike many early Californians, inordinately proud of his "blue blood", and claimed that Doña Concepción López was of equally fine lineage. When their eldest daughter Teresa was courted by Ramón Véjar, Ignacio tried desperately to discourage the marriage. The Véjars might be fine upright men and admirable business partners, but their lineage was not sufficient to marry a Palomares. But he knew that the argument was lost. Indeed the family stories relate that he and Ricardo Véjar vied as to whom would build the adobe for the newlyweds. It must be noted here that José, the eldest son of Ramón and Teresa, became his favorite grandchild and reportedly was hopelessly spoiled by him.

María Dolores, José Palomares' eighth child, married José María Ramírez, born about 1794 in Chalchicomula, Puebla, Mexico, son of Pedro and Susana Fernandez. José María Ramírez, Dolores' husband, came to Alta California about 1825 with Governor Echeandía and was briefly attached to the San Diego Company. No record has been found of his marriage to Dolores, however, Bancroft notes that in 1830 he was tried and acquitted for bigamy. He was politically active, serving as an *alferez* and commissioner to secularize several of the Missions. He also took part in the revolts of 1831 and 1837, being arrested more than once. In the 1851 census he is listed as a miner.

María de Jesús, the last surviving daughter of José Palomares, married in 1834 Francisco Figueroa, born about 1804 Tonacatepec, Estado de Mexico. Francisco Figueroa came to Alta California with his brother Governor José Figueroa in 1833. He served as Captain of the Militia of Cavalry<sup>48</sup> from 1833 in Monterey for a time. By 1839 he was listed as a merchant in the Los Angeles area. In the 1851 census he is again listed as a merchant with \$15,000 of real property. More interesting to our story is that Benedicta Saez, widow of José Palomares is living in the home of this, her youngest daughter. According to one family historian, he later returned to Mexico.

### Third Partner

María Josefa, the ninth child of José Palomares, was that sad figure, whose intentions to marry José María Avila were approved 9 January 1830 at San Gabriel just before her 15th birthday, and was left a widow on 6 December 1831, while pregnant with her first child. Her father was buried the same day. The story of this tragedy is told in Chapter III.

In January 1836, when the Mexican census was taken Josefa was living alone with her daughter. She supported herself and her daughter by teaching reading and writing (Garner, 1939:56). From the fact that her father José rose to the rank of sergeant, we know that he was an educated man. This appears to be another example of girls having been educated at home by their own family.

Josefa married again in early 1837 to Luis Arenas, the third partner in Rancho San José. Luis Arenas, was born about 1791 in Sonora, making him about 24 years her senior, the son of José María and Juliana Salgado. He had married first (*informaciones* 6 November 1822) in Hermosillo to Merced Preciado, born about 1800, Sonora of Andrés and María de Jesús Orosco. He and his wife Merced Preciado are given as residents of Hermosillo de Pitique, Sonora in March 1833. They must have come to Los Angeles soon after that as their eldest daughter was buried at Plaza in 1835. Merced was buried on 18 February 1836 at Plaza. The children of Luis Arenas and Merced Preciado included:

María Asunción de la Luz, baptized 29 January 1823 Pitique Hermosillo Sonora,  
buried 29 May 1835 Plaza;

José Benito de Jesús, baptized 23 March 1824 Pitique;

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<sup>48</sup>Figueroa's title was "*Capitan de Milicia activa de Caballeria*", from his marriage *informaciones* [23 November 1834], which we translated as "Capitan of the Militia of Cavalry". These "soldiers" (not the officers) were jailbirds pardoned in Mexico to serve in California.

María del Carmen Tranquilina, baptized 9 July 1825 Pitique, buried 2 April 1827 Pitique; and  
José Cayetano, baptized 7 August 1827 Pitique, buried 13 March 1866 Ventura, unmarried.<sup>49</sup>

In January 1836 the census lists Luis as a merchant-trader in downtown Los Angeles. The following January Luis' intentions to marry Josefa Palomares were approved. Luis and Josefa had at least five children:

Francisco Regis de los Dolores, baptized 6 October 1837 Plaza, married Regina Higuera about 1859, was living in Ensenada in 1888;  
Josefina, born about May 1 1843, married Joseph M. Miller, died 9 December 1914, buried Calvary Cemetery Los Angeles;  
María Amparo, probably born in Ventura, married Leopoldo Schiapaprieta, living in Ventura in 1886;  
Luisa, born 14 February 1856 Stockton, married Luis Gould Stanchfield 18 July 1872 Ventura, died 12 July 1950, buried New Calvary Cemetery Los Angeles;  
and  
María Aurelia, baptized 8 January 1860 San Gabriel, married Charles Ross, died 26 June 1900, buried Calvary Cemetery.

Luis Arenas had been granted not only a share in Rancho San José but also three other properties. Luis and Josefa moved to the Rancho San José and built a house a mile or so from her brother Ignacio's home. The marriage may not have been a happy one and there was trouble between the Palomares' and Luis Arenas according to a family historian when Luis lost his share in the Rancho San José on gambling debts to Enrique Dalton. About this time he seems to have lost his rights in the other properties also. Reportedly, he went to the gold fields in Northern California, where he was sometimes very successful so that "so many piles of the usual canvas sacks of gold dust [were there] that Josefa's children used them for playthings, then again there would be no gold at all" (Garner, 1939:57-58). After her marriage to Luis, Josefa continued to teach school on the Rancho San José, primarily to the children of her brother Ignacio. "None of them liked much to go to school with *Tía* Josefa. Her temper was short and her cane always ready, but Doña China [Concepción López de Palomares] made her unwilling brood go to Josefa's house by the big spring for

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<sup>49</sup>Stanchfield personal communication.

their lessons" (Garner, 1939:55). The Palomares had to look elsewhere for a teacher by 1856 when Josefa left the Rancho. After Luis left the gold fields, he settled in the Ventura area. Luis died in 1869 in Aguaje, Los Angeles County and Josefa died 12 October 1901 and was buried in the Palomares Cemetery in Pomona.

Francisco, the only known son of Luis Arenas and Josefa Palomares and his wife Regina Higuera, registered their births and those of five children in 1888 in Ensenada [Mexican law required that the births of all residents be recorded], Regina stated that she had been born in 1846 in Alta California. Their known children were:

Siria, born 3 August 1860, Alta California, living 1888 Ensenada;  
María Lucinda, baptized 14 August 1861 Plaza;  
María, born 1 December 1865, Alta California, living 1888 Ensenada;  
José María Eloy, baptized 4 June 1866 Yorba Chapel, died 12 October 1925  
according to a San Diego obituary;  
Luis Prudencio, born 28 April 1874 Ensenada, living in 1888 Ensenada;  
Francisco, born 30 June 1878 Ensenada, living in 1888 Ensenada; and  
Francisco, born 4 June 1881 Ensenada, living in 1888 Ensenada.

Are there any descendants carrying the Arenas name in Alta California? Cayetano, Luis Arenas' only known son by his first marriage, died unmarried in 1866, and Cayetano's only known *hijo natural* was buried in 1863 at nine months of age. Francisco, the only known son of Luis and Josefa Palomares had moved to Ensenada by 1874. It would appear that Juan Arenas born about 1840 was an *hijo natural* of Luis Arenas and Nieves Ruíz (Nieto/Bustamante), and he married Refugio Marron 22 December 1862 Plaza, and had one known son and four daughters:

Francisco, baptized 7 December 1865 Plaza;  
Elvira, baptized 6 April 1867 Plaza;  
Helena, baptized 20 June 1869 Plaza;  
María Francisca, baptized 14 September 1871 Plaza; and  
Cleotilde, baptized 3 March 1873 Plaza.

The Rancho San José is gone and the descendants of its founders scattered. Founder Ricardo Véjar had established in his home a chapel to serve the living, but it was Ignacio Palomares who set aside a parcel of land in 1859 in which to bury the dead. Both Ricardo Véjar and Ignacio Palomares were buried there, although Ignacio's death is recorded in the books of the Yorba Chapel. Long abandoned, the cemetery has been acquired by the City

of Pomona and is to be made into a Memorial Park dedicated to the early settlers of Pomona Valley. In death, Ricardo Véjar and Ignacio Palomares never did and never will leave their once grand Rancho San José.