

Chapter XI – NORTE AMERICANOS



Rancho San Joaquin
1839



Bixby
Rancho los Alamitos
Rancho los Cerritos



A. Stearns



J. Irvine

Yankee Dreams

Californios had a number of terms for foreigners who came to their land, including "*Norte Americano*", "*Bostone*" and "*Gringo*". A "*Norte Americano*" was a person of Anglo heritage, who had adapted to the local culture and become a part of the local society. This was as opposed to a "*Gringo*", which was a term of contempt for a person who maintained the ways of his homeland and even tried to impose them on the Californians. The word is a corruption of a Spanish term for barbarian. Many of the early trading ships came from Boston, thus all sailors, regardless of place of birth were called *Bostones*, that is, Bostonians.

Two of the earliest to live in Southern California were Joseph Chapman, recorded as "José de Ingles", and Tom Fisher, both taken from the ships of Hipolito Bouchard in 1818 in Monterey. Chapman was recruited by Antonio María Lugo for his engineering skills to built a mill in Los Angeles, "*el Molino Viejo*", which still stands. Tom Fisher, a Negro born about 1798 in Pennsylvania, served as an artisan to Felipe Lugo for many years and was last recorded as heading for the gold fields in the Gold Rush of 1848.

Among the early Norte Americanos to come to Southern California was Abel Stearns. Born in Salem, Massachusetts, 9 February 1799 the son of Louis Stearns and Isabel Gudridge, he made his way into Mexico. There he became a Catholic and was naturalized as a Mexican citizen in 1828. Stearns came to Monterey the next year with the intention of obtaining a large tract of land in the San Joaquin Valley which the Mexican Government had offered for a claim he held against the government.

Abel Stearns, a man of shrewd business ability and short temper, was not one to stand still when his business was threatened. For his persistency in prodding Governor Manuel Victoria to confirm his promised grant – and for other suspicions, Governor Victoria banished Stearns to the frontier. He went only as far as San Diego, and in 1831 joined Pío Pico, José Antonio Carrillo, and Juan Bandini as one of the ringleaders in the revolt leading to the battle of Cahuenga Pass and Victoria's overthrow.

In 1833, Stearns settled in Los Angeles. An active man, with a talent for business and politics, Stearns engaged himself almost at once in the principal business of the times – buying hides and tallow from the ranchers and exchanging them for goods from the Boston ships. Shortly thereafter he started a general merchandise store at Los Angeles.

Often in trouble, Stearns was formally charged in 1835 with carrying on smuggling operations at his warehouse on a lonely stretch of beach near San Pedro. The investigating committee reported nothing illegal about his operations, and he was exonerated. The restrictions imposed by the Mexican Government in an attempt to keep foreign immigrants and traders out of Alta California were so tight that even the most ordinary trading practice could be looked upon as smuggling. As H. H. Bancroft (1963, XXII:732) observed, "Don Abel was, probably, not more addicted to contraband trade than Larkin, Fitch, Spence and others but he was less cautious and less fortunate in keeping on the right side of the authorities."

Abel Stearns was a homely man. Those not his best friends delighted in calling him "*cara de caballo*" ("horseface"). Moreover, in a quarrel with a customer, Guillermo Day, over a barrel of wine, he was stabbed in the mouth, which left him not only with a scar but also with a speech defect. At 42, perhaps to even things up a bit, he married the beautiful, talented, 14 year-old María Francisca Paula Arcadia Bandini, one of the daughters of Don Juan Bandini (of Chapter X). Bancroft states, "as beautiful as her husband was ugly, raising the personal appearance of the family to a high average" (Bancroft



Abel Stearns
(Los Angeles County Museum
of Natural History)

1963, XXII:733). She became a renowned hostess, and the Palacio de Stearns became the show place of Los Angeles.

The first discovery of gold in California is traditionally placed at Sutter's Mill in El Dorado County in February of 1848. Nonetheless, six years before that discovery Abel Stearns possessed about twenty ounces of gold which had come from a placer mine in San Francisquito Canyon not far from Los Angeles. He asked his friend Alfred Robinson to take the metal with him on a trip to Washington, D.C., for sale to the United States Mint (Bancroft 1963, XXI:297).

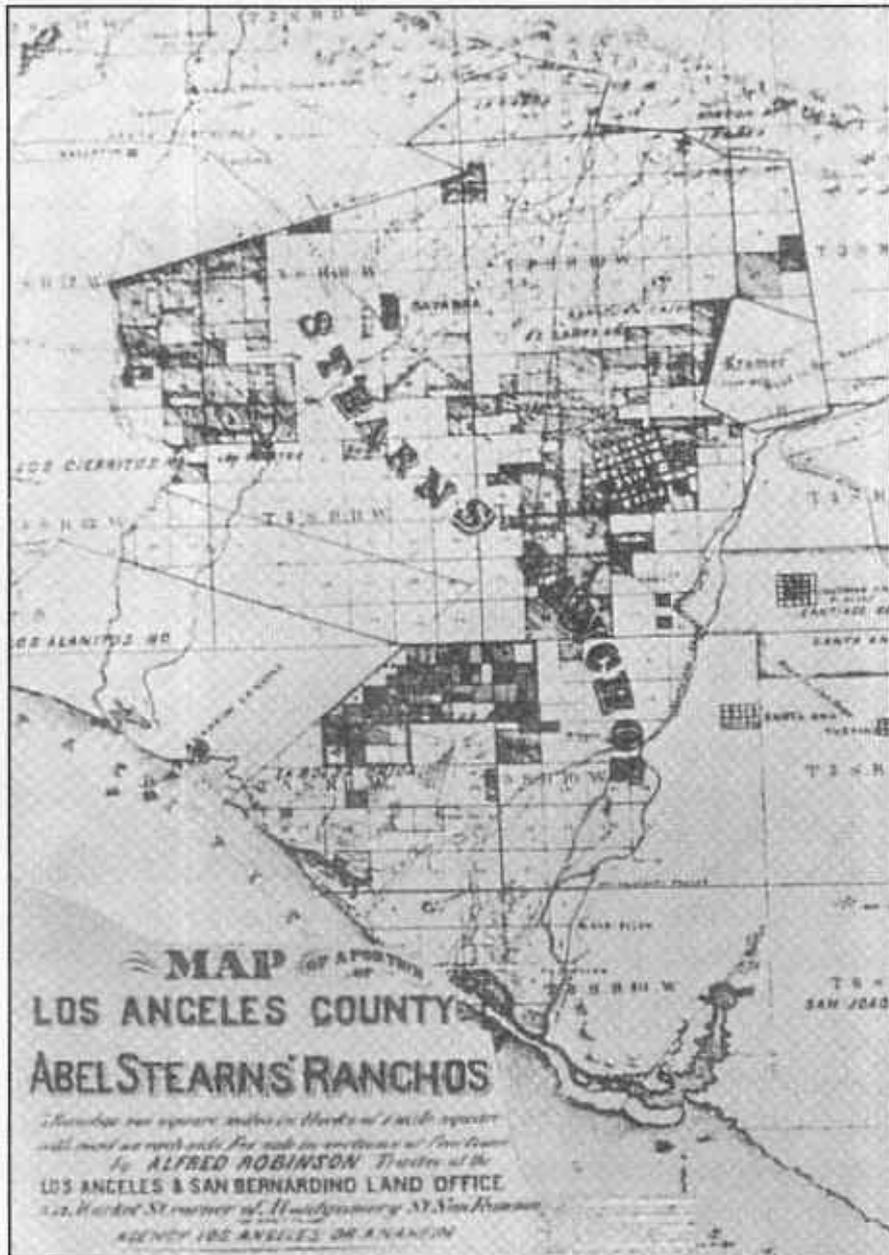
Although Don Abel was a hospitable man, a good friend, and a generous husband, he had violent prejudices. He hated Mexican officialdom and had in several instances instigated the overthrow of Mexican governors. On the other hand, he was very fond of the Californians and carried his attachment to them to such a degree that he was often against the pro-American forces.

In 1852 Don Abel was claimant for Rancho los Alamitos. Los Alamitos had been purchased in 1840 from the estate of Governor Figueroa, who had purchased it from Juan José Nieto (of Chapter IX). Stocked with cattle, it was bought for \$6,000 and was the first acquisition in Stearns' vast land holdings. The ranch was always a favorite with Doña Arcadia and her husband.



Arcadia Bandini de Stearns
(First American Title Company)

Stearns had no difficulty with his claim, but many of his California friends were in financial trouble. He helped with loans and appeals before the land commission. The cost of hiring lawyers and surveyors to press for United States patents on their lands and for fighting off land agents and squatters drove some of the old rancho families to desperate means to obtain hard cash. Friendship was one thing; business was another. Stearns usually lent money at the going rate of 5% per month, compounded monthly (about 80% annually). Although an aggressive businessman, he was honorable in his dealings, refusing in one instance to take advantage of a legal technicality in his favor and thus losing a 29,000 acre ranch.



Map - Abel Stearn's Ranchos
(First American Title Insurance Company)

The Yorbas sold him an interest in some of their undivided property, and he bought the bulk of Rancho San Juan Cajón de Santa Ana from Juan Pacífico Ontiveros. A \$15,000 note from Pío Pico eventually added Rancho los Coyotes to his empire. In 1861 Stearns bought at auction Rancho las Bolsas, foreclosing on a note from the heirs. In 1852 Don Abel filed a claim for the 11,000 acre Rancho la Laguna (encompassing the lake later called Elsinore) which had been granted in 1844 to Julian Manríquez and also a part of Rancho San Antonio (southeast of Los Angeles). Part interest in Rancho Temescal (in future Riverside County) was bought from the Serrano family, and an additional half of the Serrano undivided interest was acquired in exchange for a hundred head of two year-old cows. Stearns was soon one of the richest men in Southern California. In the year 1852 he was taxed on lands assessed with a value of \$186,000.

Stearns served in a number of public offices. His first term began when Consul Thomas O. Larkin appointed him agent for the United States Government at Los Angeles in 1846. He was a member of the Los Angeles Board of Education in 1858 and was on the City Council in 1860. He served for a term in the State Assembly as well as on the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County.

To improve his many properties, he borrowed money from Michael Reese of San Francisco and put up his ranchos as security. Two years of drought, which devastated livestock, also brought Stearns to the edge of ruin by 1865. He was forced to relinquish Rancho los Alamitos through a sheriff's sale to the mortgage holder for \$153 in delinquent taxes. Later it was sold to John W. Bixby, whose family would hold the home for a hundred years. The entire Stearns land holdings of 200,000 acres were on the verge of being sold for \$4,000 in delinquent taxes.

With the aid of friends in San Francisco, the Stearns Rancho Trust was formed. Through it much of his land was sold to a group of financiers who established the Los Angeles and San Bernardino Land Company, of which Abel Stearns held an eighth interest. The objective was to sell ranchos Jurupa, la Sierra, Bolsa Chica, las Bolsas, San Juan Cajón, la Habra, and los Coyotes, constituting a total of 177,000 acres. The ranchos were subdivided into forty acre parcels priced at from five to thirteen dollars an acre and sold to immigrants moving into Southern California. By the end of 1869, 20,000 acres had been sold through heavy promotional campaigns. In all, the land company cleared some \$2 million and Stearns was able to pay off his debts.

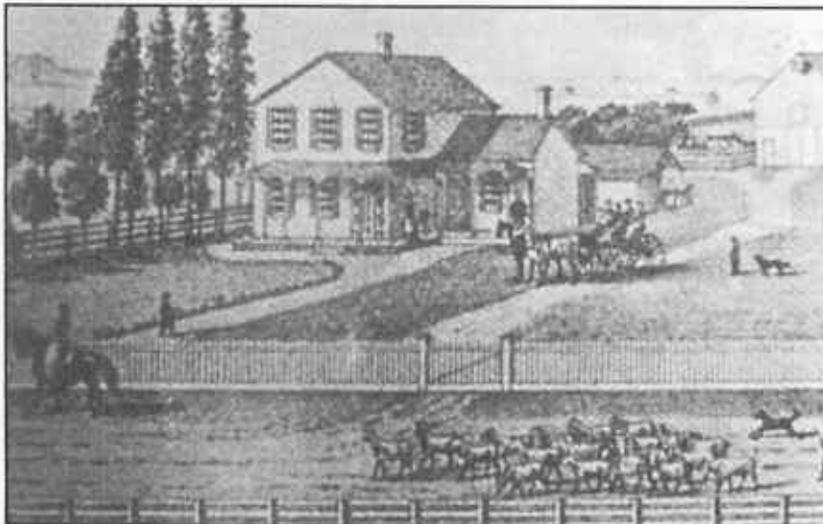
It was rumored in the fall of 1867 that Stearns, in an attempt to extricate himself from his own financial troubles, was about to force a partition of Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana by a law suit against the Yorba and Peralta heirs. This was of interest to several American settlers who sought to move into the area. By September 1868 the courts had awarded most

of the Yorba heirs their rightful shares of the ranch. Abel Stearns was awarded 1,385 acres in his suit against Inez Yorba and her husband Leonardo Cota.

The breakup of the Stearns holdings came at the time small urban settlements were springing up. Stearns sold a parcel to Alfred B. Chapman who, with his law partner Andrew Glassell, formed the city of Orange. In 1868 N. O. Stafford and Columbus Tustin paid \$2,000 for a portion of Rancho de Santa Ana which had been the legacy of Paula Peralta de Domínguez, daughter of the eldest Juan Pablo Peralta (of Chapter VI). It amounted to 1,360 acres upon which the community of Tustin was laid out. To form his new town of Santa Ana, William H. Spurgeon bought 74 acres from the Yorbas for \$594 and later bought adjoining land from Jacob Ross, who had acquired deeds from the Yorba heirs. Rancho las Bolsas was partitioned and a part sold to the Reverend L. P. Weber for the Westminster Colony. The cities of Westminster, Huntington Beach and Garden Grove later grew up on this property.

Don Abel Stearns died in San Francisco 23 August 1871 leaving the bulk of his estate, which was still considerable, to his wife, Arcadia Bandini. She later married Colonel Robert S. Baker and died 15 September 1912 in Santa Monica. Having no children, Stearns' will remembered a number of brothers and sisters, all of whom still resided in Massachusetts.

Abel Stearns' life magnified, as did few others, the changing times in which he lived. In his marriage he bridged the gap of cultures. In building his financial empire he rode the crest, only to be nearly swamped. Yet he managed to ride the waves of change, shifting his position as needed. As the *ranchos* became farms, *pueblos* became cities and the population grew, Abel Stearns provided the example: Adapt to changing times or perish.



Typical American Farm on Rancho las Bolsas in the 1870's
(*Saddleback Ancestors*, 1969)

Dollars and Pesos

Another early "*Norte Americano*" was Jonathan Temple, born 14 August 1796 at Reading, Massachusetts, the son of Jonathan Temple and his first wife, Lydia Pratt. In 1825 Jonathan Temple was a sea captain in the Sandwich Island trade, i.e. a "*Bostone*." At San Diego in 1827 he converted to Catholicism with the name Juan. Don Juan Temple would become one of California's leading citizens and among the richest land owners in all California. A shrewd businessman, his activities were so diversified that he was able to withstand the double shock of first the floods of '60-'61 and then the drought of '63-'65.

Don Juan married 17 September 1830 at Santa Barbara, Rafaela Cota. She had been baptized 22 March 1812 at Santa Barbara, the daughter of Francisco Cota and María de Jesus Olivera. Juan Temple married well. Rafaela was directly connected with nearly every prominent family in California, a fact which no doubt facilitated the building of his financial empire. Juan Temple and Rafaela Cota had only one child, Francisca Borja de Jesús, baptized 10 October 1831 Los Angeles Plaza Church. In 1844 the couple constructed a new adobe home on Rancho los Cerritos, which he had purchased from the heirs of Guillermo Cota and Manuela Nieto. The materials used included brick brought around the horn and beams of northern redwood. In 1852 Temple regularly ran 15,000 head of cattle, 7,000 head of sheep, and some 3,000 head of horses on the ranch. In 1866 Temple decided to sell Rancho los Cerritos to Flint and Bixby for which he received \$20,000.⁶⁰ This figure amounted to about 75 cents an acre which included the stock, as opposed to approximately 13 cents an acre which he had originally paid.

The Bixbys maintained the 1844 adobe for many years as the headquarters of Rancho Los Cerritos. In the 1880's the old adobe was abandoned when a new house was built. In 1931 Llewellyn Bixby, Jr. purchased the 5 acres on which the old adobe stood from the Flint Bixby Company and began to restore it. He died in 1942, and his widow continued to live there until 1954 when the Long Beach Public Library and Park Department took over upkeep of the house and gardens.⁶¹ Surrounded by trees and gardens which isolate it from the community around, it offers a better feeling of what the old rancho homes looked like than many others now surrounded by modern cities.

In 1845 Gregorio de Ajuria, a handsome Basque who had been born about 1817 in Bilbao, Spain, arrived on the California scene. As a merchant and speculator, he soon came into contact with Juan Temple, and married his daughter Francisca on 1 September 1848 at San Gabriel. Ajuria, as an international speculator, about 1854 lent Ignacio Comonfort of Mexico \$60,000 to finance a civil revolt through which Comonfort hoped to make himself

⁶⁰Berner, 1974, *Los Fierros*, Vol. 11, No. 2, p. 102.

⁶¹*Ibid*, passim.

president of Mexico. The revolutionist agreed to pay \$250,000 if the revolt were successful. It was, and Ajuria made a sizable profit on his gamble. Seeing other possibilities for quick profit in the unstable Mexican scene, he moved there in 1856.

Soon after his arrival in Mexico City, Ajuria saw an opportunity to gain control of its mint, *La Casa de Moneda*. Lacking adequate



Juan Temple's Los Cerritos Adobe
(Courtesy of Los Cerritos Museum)

funds for so large an undertaking, he acted as agent for Juan Temple. Alexander states that Temple advanced \$5,000,000 for a ten-year lease (although this may well be an exaggerated amount). This new money helped Comonfort hold down counter-revolution. In addition, Ajuria made other loans to help support Comonfort's reign. In a message to the Mexican nation 4 March 1857 President Comonfort observed, "Although it is true that the transaction grants considerable advantage to the lender, it must not be forgotten that without this aid, it would have been impossible to have sustained the revolution." [as quoted by Alexander]. Bancroft (1963, XXII:745) alludes to Temple's highly profitable investment in the mint.

In 1858 Comonfort's reign collapsed, and Ajuria fled to Paris where he lived in exile until his death in 1864. In the same year the newly-created Mexican Empire nullified Temple's lease on the mint; but through judicious arrangements, the lease was regranted. Succeeding Mexican governments renewed the lease to the Temple heirs until 1893. Death had come to Juan Temple on 31 May 1866 in San Francisco. Soon after, his wife and daughter moved with the Ajuria children to Paris. When the widows died, they were buried in their adopted France.

In 1841, Don Juan Temple's younger half-brother came to join him. Francisco Temple had been born in Reading, Massachusetts on 13 February 1822, the son of Jonathan Temple and his second wife Lucinda Parker, with the name Pliney Fiske. In order to marry, he was baptized into the Catholic faith and prefixed to his name "Francisco." Hence he was F. P. F. Temple, except to his California friends who nicknamed him "Templito". A gentle, generous man, he made his successes by hard work, not by craftiness.



Rafaela Cota de Temple, Gregorio Ajuria and Juan Temple
(Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History)



F.P.F. Temple
(Security First National Bank)

On 28 September 1845 at San Gabriel, Templito married Antonia Margarita Workman, the only child of William Workman (later in this Chapter). In the late 1840's Templito acquired the Rancho la Merced near Fort Tejon, which had been granted in 1844 to Casilda Soto. He and his father-in-law joined forces to open The Temple and Workman Bank in Los Angeles in 1872. In 1875 financial panic struck Los Angeles. Templito mortgaged his extensive holdings, as did Workman, in a vain attempt to buoy up the bank, but all was lost. They retreated to Rancho la Puente, where he died 27 April 1880. His wife Antonia died there twelve years later on 27 January 1892.

Templito Temple and Antonia Workman had eleven children, providing the only California heirs to the Temple and Workman names. It was a grandson of this couple, Thomas Workman Temple II, who abstracted many early Mission records in 1930's through the 1960's. These have made a significant contribution to California family historians.

Mountain Hideaway

Lemuel Carpenter did not amass a great financial empire, as had Stearns and Temple, but still he also was one of the rancheros of Orange County. Born about 1810 in Kentucky, son of Frank J. and Susan Carpenter, he had come to California before the Los Angeles 1836 *Padron* was taken, where he is listed as a common laborer. About 1838, he entered into a relationship with Espiritu, a *neofita* of San Gabriel, by whom he had at least two children:

Susana, born about 1839, living in 1851; and

Juan José Antonio, born about 1841, living in 1851, and probably married
Deogracia Jaramillo 23 March 1862 Plaza.

On 28 June 1844 at San Gabriel, Lemuel, under the name of Santiago, married María de los Angeles Domínguez. She had been baptized 9 March 1825 at Santa Barbara, the daughter of José María del Carmen Domínguez and María Isabel Romero, but for some reason had lived for many years with other relatives in the Los Angeles area. She assumed the care of Lemuel's two children by Espiritu, and then added at least six other children to the family circle:

María del Refugio, baptized 20 July 1845 Plaza, married Joseph Edward Pleasants
15 July 1868 Plaza, buried 27 January 1888 Plaza;

Francisco de Paula, baptized 21 May 1848 Plaza, married Inez Gradias 1 April
1871 Plaza;

Juan Enrique, baptized 11 June 1852 Plaza;
Mary Elizabeth, baptized 18 September 1854 Plaza;
Isabela, born about 1856; and
Adelaida "Lola", baptized 8 January 1858 Plaza.

About 1843 Lemuel Carpenter purchased Santa Gertrudis from Josefa Cota de Nieto. There were unhappy times ahead. Financial reverses threatened the family, so that Lemuel had to sell part of Santa Gertrudis in 1855. This did not suffice to cover his debts and on 5 November 1860 he committed suicide, four days before a forced Sheriff's sale of his remaining property. There was so much ill feeling against the new owners, John G. Downey and James P. McFarland, they deeded back to the surviving family the house and a hundred acres of land.

The eldest child of Lemuel and María de los Angeles Domínguez, was María del Refugio. While grieving the death of her father, she was sent to live in the household of Guillermo Wolfskill to complete her education. The diaries, which Refugio kept from the age of 14, privately published by Beverly Waid, tell a poignant story of her ongoing battle with depression. The one bright point in her diaries is a mention of Edward Pleasants, whom she would marry in 1868. Although she had worked as a school teacher, her health was not good because she had tuberculosis. In 1870 Edward Pleasants homesteaded a plot up Santiago Canyon, where he hoped his wife would do better than in the low lands. There they built a house and remained until her death in 1888.

Edward Pleasants and María del Refugio Carpenter had no children, and with her death, Ed Pleasants lost interest in their mountain hideaway. He and Refugio had entertained the famed European opera singer Madame Modjeska. After Mary's death, he accepted the offer of purchase from her. Madame Modjeska replaced the Pleasants' modest cabin with a grand home, still in the style of a mountain hideaway. In 1986 the house was purchased for one million dollars by the County of Orange and is now a part of a wildlife refuge, so appropriate as Madame Modjeska particularly loved the property for the songbirds that she heard.

West From Abiquiu

The Old Spanish Trail, as it was called, was opened about 1830 as a route for trapper traders from Santa Fe, New Mexico through southern Colorado along Mancos Creek to the San Juan River valley through Utah and Nevada, across the California high desert to San Bernardino and then to Los Angeles. This circuitous route through mountainous country avoided the territory of the Apaches and Yumas to the south, but was only passable by

horses and mules. In January 1830, Antonio Santesteban led the first caravan over this trail with Salvador Armijo as his scout. A historical marker in the Mesa Verde National Park, overlooking Mancos Creek, commemorates Salvador Armijo. Annual trips followed, with other early traders along this route being Santiago Martínez, Lorenzo Trujillo and Hipolito Espinosa. Armijo was one of first from New Mexico to settle permanently in Southern California, filing his *informaciones* at San Gabriel on 28 April 1833 to marry Jacoba Ybarra.

Americans had moved into New Mexico, settled there, married and had families. By the early 1840's the then current governor of New Mexico had become more and more disturbed by the events in Texas, and the political situation was becoming increasingly uncomfortable for Americans as well as some New Mexicans who had opposed his administration. From this situation derived the composition of immigrants from New Mexico to California for the next ten years. Some were Americans who had settled in New Mexico; some were the families of the New Mexican traders who liked what they had seen of California; and others were truly New Mexican *mestizo* recruits who hoped for better lands than they currently had in New Mexico.

The New Mexican government required exit permits, which were issued at Abiquiu, the rendezvous point for the Old Spanish trail. In the fall of 1841 John Rowland, William Workman and their associates went from Taos to Abiquiu to move west. Having just missed the fall trade caravan, they organized a party to move their families and businesses to Southern California, hoping to catch up with the regular caravan. Benjamin Wilson joined them there to make the journey, bringing with him his employee Lorenzo Trujillo, who had made the trip before. Organizing a party of twenty-six immigrants and driving a herd of sheep for food along the way, they arrived in Los Angeles on 5 November 1841. They were in fine fettle to put down roots, having crossed the desert without accident or injury. The commander of the party was José Antonio Martínez with Lorenzo Trujillo as his first lieutenant.

Californian authorities also required a certain amount of paperwork at the end of the trail at a staging point near San Bernardino. Both the regular trade caravan and the Rowland-Workman party arrived about the same time and were processed together, but a list of the members of the party is preserved (Thomas 1959:36):

List of the persons who accompanied the undersigned on his arrival in
the Territory of Upper California:

William Workman
William Gordon and families
James D. Meade, Physician
Benjamin D. Wilson
----- Knight
Jacob Frankfort, Tailor
William Campbell, Naturalist
Thomas Lindsay, Mineralogist
Hiram Taylor, Musician
Wade Hampton, Gunsmith
John McClure
James Dokes
L. Lyman, Physician
Daniel Sinton [?Sexton], Carpenter
Albert G. Tibiana
----- Batchelder, Cooper
Francis Bedebry, Carpenter
Francis Gwinn, Blacksmith
Michael White
Juan Manuel Bara [Baca] and family
Lorenzo Trujillo and family
Ygnacio Salazar and Servants
----- Tomes, Carpenter
William Moon, Cooper

Each one with his firearm, which is needed for defense on the journey.
Those with families have come with the intention of settling in this Department,
and those who have trades, in pursuit of employment, and some of the others to
see and examine this Department with a view of settling now, or of returning after
they go back to their country.

John Rowland

Copy. Office of the First Justice of the Peace, Los Angeles, February 29, 1842.
Manl. Domínguez

In order to submit a petition for a land grant, it was necessary that the applicant be a Mexican citizen, which both Rowland and Workman had become in Taos, New Mexico. Each had already married a woman of Taos. María Encarnación Martínez was Rowland's wife and Nicolosa Urioste Rodríguez, Workman's. In 1842 they applied for and received a grant of nearly 50,000 acres just north of Rancho la Habra. Reminiscent of the bridge built by Portolá's men across a small river on the property, it was called Rancho la Puente – "the bridge." The grant was ultimately confirmed in 1845. The families erected adobe houses in the style of the times and lived as neighbors a quarter of a mile apart. Later, in 1869, the property was formally partitioned between the two, Rowland claiming the south and Workman taking the north half of the holdings.

Juan Rowland had been born in Port Deposit, Cecil County, Maryland, with the name John Albert, son of Robert Rowland and Esther McCoy on 15 April 1791. He went west as a trapper-trader, settling in Taos, New Mexico, where he married 27 October 1825 Encarnación Martínez. She had been born about 1809, the daughter of Felipe Martínez and María Trujillo.

Juan Rowland and Encarnación Martínez had a number of children. Their eldest reportedly died soon after birth. The others included:

- María Nieves, born about 1828 in Taos, New Mexico, married Juan (John) Reid shortly before coming to California about 1843, living in 1880;
- Margarita, born about 1830 Taos, married Santiago (James) Barton 3 May 1845 San Gabriel, living in 1851;
- Juan Bautista, born 7 February 1832 Taos, married Leonor Yorba 5 February 1853 Capistrano, died 15 December 1869;
- Thomas, born 29 November 1834 Taos, married Zenobia Yorba 12 January 1861, died 20 August 1900, buried Calvary Cemetery, Los Angeles;
- Roberto, born about 1840 Taos, living in 1851; and
- José Julian (William), baptized 12 November 1843 San Gabriel, married Manuela Williams 30 July 1874 Plaza.

Juan Rowland also brought with him their adopted daughter, María de la Luz Martínez, born about 1830 Taos, who married Julian Purdue on 3 May 1845 San Gabriel, in a double ceremony with Margarita.



John Rowland
(Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History)

Judge Benjamin Hayes in his diaries (Hayes, 1929:69) refers to his frequent stays at the Rowland home at Rancho la Puente. He describes Mrs. Rowland as "a New Mexican, whose manners are very agreeable; a delightful little woman". He also writes at length of the succulent produce in abundance and of the many Indian servants and ranch hands who assisted on the ranch. He notes that the lush rolling hills were dotted with hundreds of cattle, sheep and horses, and that vast vineyards and extensive orchards of fruit trees were under cultivation. Mr. Rowland sold large quantities of his wine commercially during the fifties and sixties. His fine table grapes reportedly sold for as much as 70 cents a pound in 1851 and 1852.

Both of Juan's eldest sons married daughters of Bernardo Yorba. John Rowland, Jr., baptized as Juan Bautista, and his wife Leonor Yorba, baptized 13 March 1838 Capistrano, daughter of Bernardo and Felipa Domínguez, had at least eight children:

(María Encarnación) Antonia, baptized 1 August 1854 San Gabriel, married Juan Bautista Yorba, son of Teodosio, 16 April 1873 San Gabriel, died 16 October 1928;

Carolina, baptized 23 May 1856 San Gabriel, buried 28 June 1867 Plaza;
María Gregoria (Isabel), baptized 14 January 1859 San Gabriel, married Francisco
Grazide 30 September 1874 San Gabriel;
(Xista) Margarita, baptized 19 May 1861 San Gabriel, married Francisco Antonio
Sánchez 5 March 1885 San Gabriel;
Juan (John A.), baptized 4 June 1863 Yorba Chapel, married first Viviana
Monroy and second Alice Karstens;
William Ygnacio, born 12 October 1865, married Rafaela Yorba 18 September
1895 San Gabriel;
Roberto Pedro, born 26 October 1869, married Ramona Yorba 27 February 1896
San Gabriel; and
Pedro Antonio, born 26 October 1869, died soon after birth.

Thomas Rowland married Zenobia Yorba, baptized 30 June 1845 San Gabriel, daughter
of Bernardo and Felipa Domínguez, in 1861 at Rancho Rincon, and their children included:

Roberto, baptized 22 February 1863 San Gabriel, died 24 December 1864;
Bernardo Felipe, born 19 May 1864, married Carolina Sánchez;
Samuel Prudencio, born 28 April 1866, married Margarita Temple 16 November
1889 at San Gabriel;
Thomas L., married Guadalupe Ortiz;
Celeste Aurelia, born about 1869, buried 26 February 1880 Plaza;
Juan Bautista, born 24 May 1872, died 12 March 1882;
Fidel Gregorio, born about 1874, living in 1886;
Ernesto, married Angela Emilia Yorba;
David Benjamin, baptized 3 September 1877 Yorba Chapel;
Alejandro [no recorded dates found];
Aurelia Helena, born 24 October 1881, married first Ricardo Véjar and second
Joe Colling;
Albertina [no recorded dates found];
Juan Capistrano, born 7 February 1883, married Virginia Negri; and
José Gilberto, born 14 August 1884, who died soon.

William later made a name for himself as Sheriff "Billy" Rowland of Los Angeles.
Educated at Santa Clara College, he married Manuela Williams in 1874. She had been
baptized 21 January 1852 San Gabriel at the age of 8 months, the *hija natural* of Julian Isaac
Williams and María de Jesús Villanueva. He was elected to his law enforcement position

the same year. Outlaws in and around Los Angeles were running rampant when Billy took office, but in a matter of some two years he had brought law and order to the city. The capture of Tiburcio Vasquez, one of the west's most notorious bandits, was directed by Sheriff Rowland.

Juan Rowland's first wife, Encarnación, was buried 29 November 1851 at San Gabriel, and he then, on 16 September 1852, married Charlotte Gavitt Gray, born about 1821 in Ohio. Her first husband, John B. Gray of Covington, Kentucky had been killed by Indians on the trail somewhere west of El Paso in 1851. Two children of John Gray and Charlotte Gavitt are known:

María Antonia Gray, born about 1843 in Missouri, married Carlos Foreman 15 October 1862 San Gabriel; and
Santiago Gray, born about 1845, Covington Kentucky, married Rufina Weeks 30 December 1865 Plaza.

Juan Rowland and "Carlota" Gavitt had at least four children:

Emma, born about 1853, buried 8 May 1857 Plaza;
Alberto Celedonio, baptized 11 January 1855 San Gabriel, married Abby Lewis 28 May 1879 San Gabriel;
Victoria Regina, baptized 14 January 1857 San Gabriel, married Josiah Hitcomb Hudson 21 August 1879 Plaza; and
María Liria, baptized 9 July 1859 San Gabriel.

The history of John Rowland and William Workman is closely allied to their joint ranch operations as well as in their participation in the political struggles of the times. In 1860 Rowland and Workman were listed with identical assessment figures: \$27,000 in real estate and \$15,000 in personal property. Rowland reported thirty people in his employ while Workman reported only five; reflecting the fact that Rowland had gone into agriculture while Workman remained into cattle. As partners they operated a widely patronized grist mill, whose millstones were brought from Santa Fe. The two men joined with other "southern foreigners" in 1845 to oppose Governor Micheltorena. Michael C. White, who had come with them in 1842, later reported that in the assembled forces, William Workman served as Captain and John Rowland, his Lieutenant, although other sources differ. Rowland was one of the prisoners taken in the fight at Rancho Chino in 1846 but was quickly released. Between that year and the next, while the United States secured its grasp on California, Workman was influential in helping prevent open warfare.

John Rowland replaced his adobe house with a new one built of brick in 1855. He made arrangements in 1870 for the division of his lands among his eight surviving children so as to bequeath 3,000 acres of land and 1,000 head of cattle to each upon his death. He died on 14 October 1873 at 82 and was buried in old Calvary Cemetery Los Angeles.



William Workman
(Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History)

William Workman had been born about 1800 in England and had made his way to Taos, New Mexico by 1829 when he married there Nicolasa Urioste, born about 1816 New Mexico. Workman came to be known as Don Julian. Their only known child was:

Antonia Margarita, born July 26 1830 Taos, New Mexico, married 28 September 1848 Plaza to Francisco "Templito" Temple, died 27 January 1892 on the Rancho La Puente.

Like Rowland, Workman erected his first house about 1843 or 1844. It was constructed of the materials at hand — adobe bricks from the soil for walls and tar from nearby Canon de la Brea for sealing the flat roof. Built "U-shaped" with wings seventy-five feet long, it housed both domestic and work rooms. These included everything necessary for the administration of the ranch. There was a commissary where clothing, hats, blankets and other apparel for the vaqueros were supplied. The blacksmith shop provided horseshoes, spurs, bits, branding irons and other appurtenances for range life. There was a butcher shop as well as storage rooms for grains. Unlike most houses in the area, this home had two large cellars for wines which were adjoined by a basement kitchen considered most unusual for the times. Several hundred feet west of the house was the family cemetery, "God's Acre," and beyond it a cluster of cornstalk and tule huts which housed the Indian families who made up the labor force.

At Don Julian's, too, overland travelers on their way west for gold or settlement stopped and rested and bought food and such necessities as were available. Aid of every description was given to them by the taciturn, yet generous, Workman, whose industry produced copious amounts of everything needed by man and beast.

Antonia Margarita, Workman's 15 year-old daughter and only known child, married Francisco P. F. Temple in 1845, the first Los Angeles marriage of a bride and groom who both bore English surnames, although Juan Warner and Anita Gale had been married about 1836 in San Diego County. The collapse of the banking house of Temple and Workman caused the loss of his portion of Rancho la Puente. The dishonor he felt for the failure of his bank drove old Don Julian to suicide on 17 May 1876.

The 75 acre homestead protected by law from foreclosure was inherited by Workman's grandsons, Francis Temple, William Temple and John Harrison Temple, each holding it in succession. Around 1889 John Harrison bought William's interest, but sometime afterward lost it through indebtedness.

Another grandson dreamed of bringing what was left of Rancho la Puente back into the family once more. Walter P. Temple, next-to-youngest of Templito's sons, accomplished this feat in 1919. (By that time Los Angeles County had long been divided to form Orange County, the 1889 division leaving only forty acres of the ranch within the new county.) With great plans Temple brought architects and laborers from Mexico to restore the old home on Turnbull Canyon Road. He also constructed a substantial mausoleum for the Workman and Temple families, which also included a resting place for Pío Pico and his wife after their remains were removed from the Old Calvary Los Angeles Cemetery, acquired for a road extension.



Benjamin D. (Benito) Wilson
(Title Insurance and Trust Company)

Conflicting Loyalties

Another member of the Workman party of 1841 was Benjamin "Benito" Davis Wilson. A colorful figure, Wilson soon became well known in his adopted territory, the native Californians holding a high regard for "Don Benito." Born near Nashville, Tennessee 1 December 1811, Wilson had trapped and hunted on the plains of New Mexico as a young man, and then settled in Taos as a merchant. In 1841 he joined the Rowland-Workman party to come to California, from which he planned to book passage to China. Failing to find a ship to China, he stayed in California and purchased one and a half leagues of Rancho Jurupa from Juan Bandini in 1843. On 19 February 1844 at the Plaza Church, with Juan Rowland as a witness, Benito Wilson married Ramona Yorba, baptized 22 April 1828 San Gabriel, daughter of Bernardo Yorba and María de Jesús Alvarado (of Chapter VI). Before Ramona was buried 24 March 1849 they had two children:

Maria de Jesús, baptized 28 February 1845 San Gabriel, married J. H. de Barth Shorb 4 June 1867 San Gabriel; and
Juan Bautista, baptized 28 January 1847 Plaza, living in 1851.

Don Benito was in an awkward position when war broke out between Mexico and the United States. His sympathies were with the Americans, but his wife's relatives naturally had strong ties with the Mexican administration. In fact, the hand of his wife's sister, Inez Yorba, was at that time being sought by Leonardo Cota, who was to fight under Andrés Pico at San Pasqual. Wilson was commanded by Governor Pío Pico to help repel the invaders. He refused. As a former American citizen, but now a Mexican citizen, he remained neutral until Los Angeles was taken by Commodore Stockton, at which time he was made Captain of an American Frontier guard. He was assigned twenty-five men to watch for, and if need be, prevent the return of General Castro from Mexico. Since Don Benito doubted that Castro would ever return and was harmless anyhow, he went about his life as usual.

Returning from a hunting trip one day in September 1846, he learned of a new insurrection in Los Angeles. Unexpectedly, the town was back under the control of some of General Castro's old officers. Wilson positioned his frontier guard about twenty-five miles east of Los Angeles at Rancho Chino, then owned by Isaac Williams. There he and his men would have water and a supply of powder. The little group had just taken its position two days before two contingents of Californians appeared and demanded surrender. José del Carmen Lugo commanded one of the cavalry units while Diego Sepúlveda, Ramón Carrillo and Serbulo Varelas led the other – a total of about seventy horsemen. The adobe house in which the frontier guards had taken their posts consisted of three sides with few openings and a tarred roof. A ditch and some adobe corrals made their position difficult to attack. Don Benito refused to surrender. Darkness approached, and the night was spent in tight anticipation.

The next morning the Californians attacked. Carlos Ballesteros was killed and two or three Californians wounded, while the others sought shelter next to adobe house walls where they could not be fired upon. It was not difficult for the assailants to set fire to the tar-covered roof with dry grass.

Isaac Williams stumbled out through the clouds of black smoke. Leading his motherless children, aged eight, seven and five, he asked to be spared. Varelas repeated the demand for surrender and promised the group trapped inside protection as prisoners of war. The terms were accepted, and Wilson and his party marched out, some of them wounded. Sepúlveda was all for shooting the whole company in revenge for the death of Ballesteros, but honor ruled. They were taken to Los Angeles and held prisoners. Upon his release

about three months later (after the American forces regained Los Angeles), Benito Wilson was one of those able to bridge the differences between the Californians and the newly arrived Americans.

In 1848 and 1849 Louis Roubidoux purchased Wilson's portion of Rancho Jurupa, which would become the future site of the city of Riverside, and Wilson moved to other properties in Los Angeles County. On 21 March 1849 Don Benito lost his wife, Ramona, when she was less than 21 years of age. On 1 February 1853 Benito Wilson married Margaret Hereford, a widow with two sons. There were two daughters from this second marriage:

Anne, born 1858, never married, died 1931; and

Ruth, born 1861, married George S. Patton, died 1928. Ruth and George were parents of General George S. Patton, Jr., who was killed 1945 in Europe during World War II.

The Wilsons, after 1850 lived on his grape and orange ranch, called Lake Vineyard. The ranch took its name from a real lake which was originally formed from the water dammed to operate "el Molino Viejo". By 1900, the lake was reduced to a mudhole, and in 1923 it was filled to form Lacy Park. Benito was elected the first Clerk of Los Angeles County under American rule. He also served as the second Mayor of the City of Los Angeles and was very active in getting rail connections for the city. He died 11 March 1878.

Increasingly the "*Norte Americanos*" who came into the Saddleback country bridged the gap between nationalities by their marriages to women of Hispanic origin. Although many like Workman, Rowland and Wilson applied great industry to their ranches, their empires, like those of Hispanic owners, failed to survive them. Even the stoutest and shrewdest were trampled by the march of progress.

Last Ranchero

The Indian owners of the land had lost almost all their holdings by 1840. The Hispanic landowners were becoming a thing of the past by 1865. Even the old Norte Americanos were losing their hold on the ranchos. But one of the greatest ranchos was yet to be created by a total and complete *gringo*. The Irvine Ranch comprising some 125,000 acres arose in 1864 by the purchases of James Irvine.

James Irvine had been born 27 December 1827 in Anabilt, County Down, Ireland to a family of comfortable farmers. With the devastation of the potato crop failures in the 1840's, he emigrated to the United States in 1846, and came west in the gold rush. Initially working as both a miner and a merchant, he soon gave up mining and concentrated on

merchandising. Moving his operations to San Francisco, he began ventures with the Bixby brothers and their cousin Benjamin Flint. Their commercial operations were soon extended to ranching in Monterey County. In 1864 they purchased Rancho San Joaquín from José Andrés Sepúlveda.

James Irvine remained a San Franciscan all the rest of his life. There he married Henrietta Marie "Nettie" Rice on 25 July 1866. She had been born about 1841 in Cleveland, Ohio, daughter of Harvey Rice. On 16 October 1867 their first child, James Harvey, was born. Their only other child, also a son, named Harvey Rice, was born in March 1874, but he died in October 1874. Shortly thereafter he was followed by his mother on 23 October 1874. James married a second time in 1880 to Margarite Byrne; there were no children. James died 15 March 1886 in San Francisco and was buried there.

The great Rancho San Joaquín offered no accommodation suitable to the elegant sophisticated lifestyle of Mr. Irvine. In 1868 he had built a two-story wooden house on the ranch to serve the dual purpose of a place for him to stay when he visited to review and conduct business and also as a suitable residence for a ranch manager. At the time of the purchase, wool was a premium commodity, necessary for uniforms and blankets, so the ranch was stocked with blooded herds of sheep. In 1876, Irvine bought out his partners, the Bixbys and Flint, with whom he seems to have had some differences of opinion.

The original house, which was very convenient for supervising ranch operations, was rather distant from any other people and the wives of the ranch managers complained. Accordingly, in 1876 a new residence was constructed in the area of present day Tustin. In 1886 James Irvine died leaving suitable bequests to family members including a tract of land (2,880 acres) to his 21 year old son. He had appointed trustees for the major portion. In 1892, on his 25th birthday, James Harvey Irvine came into possession of the entire ranch.

That same year of 1892, James Harvey Irvine married Francis Anita Plum. His namesake James Harvey, Jr. was born 11 June 1893 at San Francisco, and plans were made to train him to take over operations for a third generation of Irvines on the great Irvine Ranch. James Harvey, Jr. was followed by Kathryn Helena, born 29 September 1894; and then Myford Plum on 25 April 1898 both in San Francisco. At this point the Irvines were still absentee owners firmly rooted in San Francisco society. The great earthquake of 1906 changed all that. The Irvine family immediately moved to the Irvine Ranch and after forty years of absentee ownership became Orange County residents.

James Harvey Irvine, as soon as he gained control, actively began a change of policy. Cattle replaced sheep, which were no longer greatly profitable. Also plots of land were rented out for farming, much of it on a sharecropper basis. Orchards and other agricultural crops were planted. Sharecroppers were carefully controlled in how they plowed and what they planted, as judged best by the owners. In 1894 ownership was transferred to The Irvine

Company, a newly formed corporation. Some acreage around Tustin, Newport and Laguna were sold off to raise the money to eventually drill 44 wells for more dependable irrigation.

Shortly after the turn of the century, the Irvines began planting sugar beets. In 1911, they formed the Santa Ana Cooperative Sugar Company, and built the brick sugar beet factory, a landmark for many years on Dyer Road. This was sold off to the Holly Sugar Company. Other land was lost to the Navy for the El Toro Marine Base and the Tustin Lighter-than-Air Base during World War II. A park was early deeded to the County of Orange, and The Eddie Martin Airfield was formed, now the John Wayne Airport.

James Harvey Irvine, Jr. died in 1935 and destroyed his father's plans for the succession of operations. The other son Myford was not an option in his father's eyes, since Myford was not interested in farming and too unaggressive to run an empire. Therefore he formed the Irvine Trust/Foundation to provide for his heirs and continue operations.

James Harvey Sr. died in 1947 and the struggle began among the heirs as to the direction that development would take. The residents of the communities of Newport Beach, Costa Mesa, Santa Ana, Tustin and Laguna Beach had strong opinions. One faction led by Myford Irvine favored industrial and residential development, accompanied by donations of lands for public use. The other faction, led by Joan Irvine Smith, daughter of James Harvey Jr., fought for continuing ranching and farming interests, although she favored the formation of the Irvine Campus of the University of California. Part of the public sentiment came from an earlier transfer of Newport Bay front property to the City of Newport. Instead of establishing a public beach on Newport Bay, the city formed the Balboa Bay Club, a private yacht club, with lifetime memberships for the members of the City Council at that time.

Nonetheless, the University got the land, and industrial and residential development continued. Not without strings however. Much of the residential development is on land still owned by Irvine with leases of as little as 25 years, although 99 years are more common now. One amusing sidelight on community opinion about the Irvine operations is the development of a sandbar island in Newport Bay, long known as Shark Island. When elite houselots were formed and development began it was renamed Linda Isle. Just more developer dressing up was the local opinion. Not true. It was named for Linda Irvine, eldest daughter of Myford.